



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE

Humanities

DIVISION OF PRESERVATION AND ACCESS

Narrative Section of a Successful Application

The attached document contains the grant narrative of a previously funded grant application. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the NEH Division of Preservation and Access application guidelines at <http://www.neh.gov/divisions/preservation> for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Preservation and Access staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

Project Title: Staff Training and Purchase of Climate Monitoring Equipment to Preserve Collections of the Center for the Arts and History

Institution: Lewis-Clark State College

Project Director: Lisa Jones

Grant Program: Preservation Assistance Grants for Smaller Institutions

Narrative for NEH Preservation Assistance Grant for Smaller Institutions

What activity (or activities) would the grant support?

This grant would support the purchase of environmental monitoring equipment and preservation supplies and materials required to fulfill recommendations made in an on-site survey of the rehabilitated Lewis-Clark State College Center for Arts & History (CAH) building and its Beuk Aie Temple Collection after a March 2009 fire.

A National Endowment for the Humanities Preservation Assistance Grant funded this 2011 assessment.

A 2012 NEH grant would also support a site visit from objects conservator Diana Dicus to train staff members in the use and care of the new monitoring equipment and to consult with them on current and future storage arrangements of the temple and its artifacts.

Since the fire, our primary long-range goal has remained the same—to recreate a permanent exhibit that meets museum standards.

What are the content and size of the humanities collections that are the focus of the project?

The Lewis-Clark State College Center for Arts & History (CAH) has approximately 1000 Chinese artifacts in its permanent collection. Previous to the March 2009 fire these artifacts had been well curated, interpreted, and presented in a gallery setting as part of a permanent open exhibit titled “Chinese at the Confluence: Lewiston’s Beuk Aie Temple.” After the 2009 fire, O’Connell International Arts (OIA) working through Travelers Insurance and in concert with CAH staff, packed and moved the materials from the CAH building to a local warehouse where OIA professionals carefully examined, cleaned, inventoried, photographed, and securely stored every artifact. In August of 2010, OIA packed and moved the artifacts back into the refurbished (but much altered) CAH building where they remain in storage.

A very few of the objects in this collection could conceivably date back to the mid-1800s when Lewiston was the capitol of Idaho Territory (1861) and Chinese miners first began to enter our region. Most of the objects arrived in Lewiston after 1875: that year Lewiston’s first Chinese temple of record was rebuilt after being destroyed in a fire that threatened the entire city. In 1888, Lewiston’s Chinese residents determined to build a new temple in a different location, and a deed dated 1890 proves that they succeeded. Decades later, after Lewiston’s oldest Chinese residents died and the city began to lose even its remnant Chinese population, Chinese elders began serious efforts to preserve the temple’s artifacts. The last original temple building was demolished in 1961. Fortunately, by then the elders had safely secured the temple altar and its furnishings under lock and key and given many other artifacts into the safe keeping of trusted families. Saturday December 21, 1993, the altar and its furnishings were moved to CAH with the permission of the same Beuk Aie Temple Society that was first formed in 1865. Grants paid for much of the restoration work. Then, from 1995 until 2009, the Center exhibited the artifacts in a permanent open display that recreated the interior altar area of Lewiston’s Beuk Aie Temple as it appeared from 1900 until approximately 1959.

The most splendid piece in the collection is a 6’ x 15’ x 3’ hand-carved and hand-painted temple altar that dates back to the 19th century. The collection includes four wooden plaques displaying the names of individuals in the Lewiston Chinese community who donated small amounts to purchase and ship the temple altar from China. Each of these rare wooden plaques is approximately 6’ long and 18” deep. Under the stewardship of curators Sara Nunes (San Jose Historical Museum) and Roger Broussal (Asian Art Museum) and others, a 1994 grant from the Idaho Heritage Trust (IHT) enabled us to complete the initial cleaning and restoration of the temple altar and donor plaques as well as dozens of other objects. A few of these objects (taken from a list included with our 1993 grant application to IHT are described below:

- Three horizontal deity plaques and two vertical deity plaques. Approximate size: 2’ deep x 7’

- One hand-painted sign
- Two large and exquisite Chinese lanterns, hand-painted glass with extensive beadwork. Approximate size: 12” in diameter x 24” high.
- Two beautifully carved wooden candles, hand-painted and mounted on metal bases. Approximate size 18.”
- One pewter incense holder. Approximate size: 24” X 12” x 4.”
- One earth deity plaque.
- One prayer on rice paper.
- One handmade cabinet: Approximate size 6’ x 3’ x 18.”
- Six handmade incense pots.
- Four cloth ribbons, used on the altar and plaques.
- Three sets of fortune sticks, one of which has at least 80 sticks.

Dates for most of these items fall somewhere between 1880 and 1910. Other objects in the collection include a second altar and a motto plaque, an earth deity plaque, and a hand-painted table from the meeting room of Lewiston’s Chinese men’s secret fraternal association, The Hip Sing Tong. Having these artifacts from the temple’s caretaking society distinguishes the collection’s significance and might qualify it as unique.

Materials in the collection include paper-based items, pewter ware, ceramic, wood, textiles, cast iron, medical, household, women’s accessories, food and beverage utensils and containers, writing implements, opium pipe and can, Chinese paper banners, scales, abacuses, festival items that include paper and fabric, temple decorations, a statue of Beuk Aie, Tong objects, and funeral objects. There are artifacts related to the laundry business, construction, cooking, local restaurants, and interpreter work.

Nevertheless, the artifacts associated with the sacred spaces created by Lewiston’s first Chinese residents in the Beuk Aie Temple are what truly distinguish this collection. Relatively few early Chinese temples in the U.S. had statues of the gods they honored. Our collection, however, purportedly includes a beautiful statue of Beuk Aie, Emperor of the North, the God of Water, the Protector against Floods, and, according to Chinese mythology, First Lord of Heaven, capable of directing the destiny of the world.

A large and exquisite scarlet altar cloth embroidered in gold, two 19th Century Chinese prayer books, a gong, cymbals, and beautiful porcelain altar bowls and cups of various sizes all contribute to the special contents of this collection, as do black and white photographs of Chinese miners and other early Chinese residents of Lewiston.

C. How are these Humanities Collections Used?

The Beuk Aie Temple collection is unique in its continuity, condition, and community significance. The collection also exemplifies a high level of community pride. It serves scholars interested in 19th century western American history; local and regional fourth grade and eighth grade teachers and students required by state law to study Idaho history; Lewis-Clark State College faculty and students; tourists; and the general public.

Previous to the 2009 fire, hundreds of fourth grade and eighth grade students from throughout the city and region made annual field trips to CAH to see Lewiston’s Beuk Aie Temple for themselves. In 2000, CAH published an exhibit guide authored by University of Idaho historian Priscilla Wegars, who specializes in the presence of the Chinese in the 19th century United States. Volunteers to CAH frequently made use of this guide when giving tours to young students. Each teacher took responsibility for creating her (or his) own lesson plans. Likewise, History and English faculty members at both Lewiston High School and Lewis-Clark State College also arranged field trips to CAH for their students.

There, in the sacred ambience of original temple altars embellished with Chinese calligraphy and amid the associated artifacts, including statues of deities, these students could perhaps begin to see connections. For example, if they listened to volunteer tour guides, they could make connections between early Chinese religious life and the gold mines along the rivers. After all, the temple was the one place a

nineteenth century Chinese miner might come to learn about his luck. He might shake out a numbered stick from one of the cups on the altar table and then locate a corresponding number in a nearby copy of the *I Ching* where he could read his fortune. Like our other visitors to the temple, these students could also view a Chinese prayer card (and its English translation), an altar bouquet, or Chinese fortune sticks and fortune blocks. Best of all, these students could see and hear and smell something similar to what it must have been like to visit a sacred site in both another culture and another time.

The permanent exhibit of our collection presented an accurate microcosm of the Chinese presence in early Lewiston only a few hundred yards from the site of the original temples. Consequently, regional scholars like R. Gregory Nokes have also made extensive use of it. "The [Beuk Aie Temple] altar was draped in rich brocade embroidered with gold and featured a green plaque that listed in gold lettering the names of five principal deities," Noakes writes in his recent book, *Massacred for Gold* (Oregon State University Press, 2009, page 37). "Chinese religious beliefs were syncretic, blending features of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism. Chinese visited the temples to worship, honor an ancestor, or simply capture something of the spirit of their native land. Bowing before the altar, they might light a stick of incense or make an offering of fruit or liquor to one of the deities."

As a signature exhibit, the Chinese Collection has also been particularly especially useful to the college and the state of Idaho at large. To cite but one example, this year will conclude a four-year summer project called "Chinese Remembering" sponsored by the college. This annual two-day event for teachers and the general public has included formal lectures, catered luncheons, and field trips, including one by jet boat to Massacre Cove (site of the 1887 Chinese massacre) and one to view Lewiston's Beuk Aie Temple. (Indeed, one of the morning lectures by a scholar has traditionally focused on Lewiston's Chinese temple.)

Although there is no conclusive evidence to prove a direct link between Lewiston's Chinese Beuk Aie Temple and the victims of the worst atrocity ever inflicted upon Chinese by European Americans in U.S. history, this brutal incident occurred just sixty-five miles upstream from Lewiston in 1887. Because of Lewiston's close proximity to the spot where the murders took place, it is probable that some (if not all) of the victims knew Lewiston and its Beuk Aie Temple very well. By 1887, the temple had already been rebuilt once (in 1876). Moreover, the Lewiston temple was among the only places in an enormous region where a Chinese man or woman could practice his or her religion in a traditional temple setting. Furthermore, in 1887 Lewiston was the only place of substantial size that could fully equip and supply miners in the area. Regardless, what is now a Lewiston city park (and was then "The Chinese Cemetery") became the final resting place for the bodies of those Chinese miners who were murdered. Consequently, any accurate history of the Chinese presence in early Lewiston must include The Beuk Aie Temple and the 1887 Chinese massacre.

D. What is the nature and mission of your institution?

CAH functions as a separate unit within a four-year public college whose annual enrollment is about 4,000 students. The CAH building is located off campus at 415 Main Street in downtown Lewiston, Idaho, and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Our stated mission at CAH is to "educate and engage community in an appreciation of culture, history, and arts." The exhibit of our Chinese collection reminds residents and visitors alike that tolerance, mutual respect, and true understanding not only exist here but they have done so for a century and half.

With an FY10 budget of \$172, 061, CAH operates the largest art gallery in northern Idaho. In addition to providing office space for a half-time director who reports to the college's Dean of Community Programs, The Center's building also provides offices for four staff members: one full-time special projects coordinator (40 hours); one full-time development coordinator (40 hrs a week); one full-time programming and exhibition coordinator (40 hrs a week); and one office specialist (30 hrs a week). Currently, five community volunteers contribute twenty hours of labor to CAH each week: a total of 780 hours of labor a year. Although the college uses designated funds to pay staff salaries, CAH relies exclusively on individual memberships, corporate sponsorships, and a series of fundraising events to pay

for its annual programs. Our gallery is open four days a week (WTFS) five hours a day, twenty hours a week, approximately 1040 hours a year.

E. Has your institution ever had a preservation or conservation assessment?

Yes. We received a 2011 Preservation Assistance Grant for Smaller Institutions to hire objects conservator Diana Dicus. She assessed the post-fire CAH building exhibit and storage environment, security, collection policies, disaster preparedness, and collection condition; she created short-, medium- and long-range prioritized suggestions. She made recommendations for storage and exhibition areas, for acquiring environmental monitoring equipment, for creating appropriate storage and exhibition furniture, and for increased security. She also conducted a Preservation Workshop for the CAH staff and supervised the completion of current storage arrangements for the majority of the Beuk Aie Temple objects on the second floor of the building.

F. What is the importance of this project to the institution?

The preservation and restoration of the Beuk Aie Temple collection is among the Center for Arts & History's highest priorities. Planning for the continued storage, preservation, and conservation of this collection is therefore critical to the Center's role and mission. As artifacts, however—that is, as highly symbolic objects with the ability to bridge the distance in space and time between the historic past and the present—this collection holds literally priceless values for Lewis-Clark State College, the City of Lewiston, the State of Idaho, and the region.

Not so long ago, in the 1990s, resident hate groups like the Neo-Nazis and the Aryan Nations, and incidents like Ruby Ridge, made Idaho infamous as a site of racial intolerance and violence. CAH's permanent exhibit of the Beuk Aie Temple and associated Chinese artifacts counters the stereotype of Idaho as a violent and racist place, not to mention stereotypes of Chinese Americans. By and large, despite racial prejudice on all sides, early Lewiston's mixed general population of Chinese, Nez Perce, and European Americans got along well and co-existed peacefully. These artifacts also remind us, however, that we must all remain allied and ever vigilant against the forces of injustice, ignorance, and malignancy that have also historically surrounded us. The project of full restoration for Lewiston's Beuk Aie Temple in a second "permanent" exhibit is but one attempt to counteract the malevolent forces that always threaten human attempts to achieve peace, harmony, and balance.

In this sense it is entirely fitting that the nature and purpose of the original Chinese temple in Lewiston was sacred.

The Chinese not only played a prominent role in the development of the City of Lewiston, the former capitol of Idaho Territory, but they also played a substantial role in developing the entire western United States, which is geographically speaking, two thirds of the nation. Knowledge of their presence and influence, however, remains largely a historical void. Continuing to follow our short-, medium-, and long-term preservation plans for the Lewiston's original Beuk Aie temple (indeed, for the entire Chinese collection) will be in best interests of the college, the state, and the nation.

G. What are the names and qualifications of the consultant(s) and staff involved in the project?

Diana Hobart Dicus (Consultant) is an accredited conservator who specializes in ethnographic objects and the treatment of ethnographic, social history, and natural history objects and flat textiles. She has performed surveys and assessments of collection condition, storage, and exhibition for governments, corporations, museums, and private clients. She received her Conservation Certificate with distinction from the Institute of Archaeology, University of London; Museum Studies Certificate, Anthropology Department, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; Master of Science, Design and Environment Department, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Bachelor of Arts *cum laude*, Sociology Department, Lewis and Clark College (Portland, Oregon).

Lisa Jones (Project Director), the head of two distinct units at Lewis-Clark State College (Continuing Education and Community Events and the Center for Arts & History) will administer the grant funds.

Dr. James R. Hepworth (Special Projects Coordinator) is Professor of Humanities at Lewis-Clark State College, the publisher of Confluence Press, and a specialist in Western American Literature.

Ellen Vieth (Program and Exhibition Coordinator) studied at the Kansas City Art Institute in Kansas City, Missouri, and at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in Chicago, Illinois. She earned her M.F.A. in visual arts at the University of Idaho. Ellen now holds the position of Program and Exhibition Coordinator for CAH at Lewis-Clark State College. She is in charge of environmental monitoring.

H. What is the plan of work for the project?

- Upon notification of the award, the Project Director will initiate the purchase of the monitoring equipment, the ultraviolet light filtering film, and the safety film for the exhibition cases.
- The Project Director will finalize arrangements for the conservator to meet on site with the Dean of Community Programs, the CAH Director, the Special Projects Coordinator, the Exhibition and Program Coordinator, and a representative from the college's Physical Plant.
- The installation of the ultraviolet light filtering film and the safety film for the exhibition cases will be coordinated with the on-site visit of the conservator. *Labor cost of installation of the films will be covered by local funding.*
- During the onsite visit, a review of the environmental monitoring log covering May 2011 to January 2012 will be presented. The Integrated Pest Management program results will be discussed.
- An analysis will be made to assess the stability of the gallery environment. Modifications will be discussed. The Physical Plant representative will be invited to discuss possible environment modification ideas. If modifications are necessary, guidelines will be provided to the Special Projects Coordinator, the Exhibition and Program Coordinator, and the Lewis-Clark State College Physical Plant.
- An Onset® representative or the Lewis-Clark State College IT people will work with the Special Projects Coordinator and the Exhibition and Program Coordinator to install the HOBO U12 Temperature/Relative Humidity Data Loggers – U12-11 in galleries IX, X, and XI. The logging system will be reviewed.
- The conservator will train the Special Projects Coordinator and the Exhibition and Program Coordinator in the use and care of the Ultraviolet Monitor Type 763, the HOBO Data Loggers, and IPM.
- The Exhibition and Program Coordinator and the conservator will work together in Gallery IX. The storage area for the Beuk Aie Temple artifacts will be set up. The coordinator and the conservator will organize the stabilization work for the Beuk Aie Temple artifacts that will be installed in galleries IX, X, XI. All artifacts will be secured.

Off-site email and telephone contact:

- A follow-up contact will be scheduled after the installation of the HOBOS and the installation of the filtering and safety films. All systems will be reviewed and the logs will be examined online. This will include temperature, relative humidity, visible and ultraviolet light wave levels, integrated pest management, artifact storage and exhibition, and general handling.
- Discussion with the Dean of Community Programs, the Director of the Center for Arts & History, the Special Projects Coordinator, the Exhibition and Program Coordinator, the Physical Plant representative, and the conservator will be continued through email and telephone.