HMFM

Historical Museum at Fort Missoula

Memory Booth - User Guide

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Introduction

Hello! Thank you so much for taking the time to collect stories during your event for the betterment of The Historical Museum at Fort Missoula and our community's heritage. You are helping us gather precious stories and memories in order to help keep Missoula County's history alive.

The Memory Booth project was conceived with the intent of capturing one of the most important and intangible facets of history-human stories and memories. While some elements of history can be captured and remembered through physical objects and artifacts, the true difficulty is finding a way to capture those elements of history that don't necessarily have a physical manifestation. This is where the Memory Booth comes in: a program which collects the important elements of history of memories and oral-history.

By bringing the Memory Booth to your event, you are becoming a collector and harvester of one of the most vital elements of history. Thank you so much for helping us in our quest to keep Missoula County's history alive. We couldn't do this without you!

How It Works

Essentially, the Memory Booth is all contained within one 5' x 5' tent. The story collector will enter the tent with the story teller. The collector will record the teller's story (or stories), and both will exit the tent.

It is important that you have a minimum of one person (preferably two people) to staff the Memory Booth at your event. One person will be inside the tent collecting stories and the other person will be outside the tent recruiting people to share a memory. It is a requirement that the tent and equipment are *never* left unattended. It is the responsibility of the event coordinator/event manager and/or the executive director to recruit volunteers to staff the Memory Booth during its use. The Museum only provides equipment and <u>not</u> volunteer support. To discuss any special arrangements, contact Jessie (jrogers@missoulacounty.us).

All other materials and further instructions are detailed in the following guide. Review supporting document 2A, to see a list of all of contents included in the Memory Booth.

Check-Out Procedures

Using the Memory Booth for your event:

1. Go to the website www.fortmissoulamuseum.org and find the Memory Booth Section under "Education". Complete the request form to check out the Memory Booth. You can also email Jessie Rogers (jrogers@missoulacounty.us) to inquire about using the booth. We ask you to complete your request at least two weeks prior to when you are planning to use the Memory Booth.
2. Expect to hear back within two business days whether or not you have been approved to use the Memory Booth on the days you have requested.
3. If you have been approved, come to the museum at the day and time you specified on your request form or the time that you set up via an arrangement with HMFM.
4. Once at the museum you will be asked to sign the Memory Booth Borrower's Agreement (a copy of which can be found on supporting document 3A).
5. Once everything has been signed, you will be loaned the Memory Booth for your event.

Set-Up

The set-up:

1. Set up the tent in a place that is not too far from the event hub, but also that is not exceedingly noisy. (More detailed instructions for setting up the tent can be found on supporting document 4A).
2. Set up sandwich board close to the tent in a spot where it can be easily seen by event-goers
3. Lay down the rug within the Memory Booth
4. Put the chairs and table inside of the tent on the rug (and additional decor if desired).
5. Set the recording device on the table in a place that it will be able to easily pick up the voices of both the storyteller and the person manning the booth (instructions for using the recording device can be found on supporting document 4B).

Please Note: It is possible you will be asked about your affiliation with the Historical Museum while you are using the Memory Booth. We ask that you clarify you are not a part of the organization, and that you are just employing the Memory Booth program. For further talking points and FAQ's about HMFM, see supporting document 4C.

Make sure that you can check off all of the boxes below before you begin collecting stories:

- ☐ Tent is in a location where it is accessible to all event-goers, but not too noisy (some noise is alright, but too much will affect the recording quality)
- ☐ Sandwich board is set outside the tent in a spot where it can be easily seen
- ☐ Both chairs and the table are set up on the rug inside the tent
- ☐ Recording device is in a spot on the table where it can pick up the voices of both the storyteller and the story collector
- ☐ Waiver has been signed
- ☐ The door to the tent is closed (unless requested to leave open)

Once all of these line items are in place, you are ready to begin recording!

Storytelling/Memory Collection

This is the most important part of using the Memory Booth, so it is important to pay close attention and follow all of the steps laid out in this section. This ensures that the memories and stories are properly collected and can become a part of our collection at the museum!

1. Have the storyteller sign the Memory Booth Waiver of Liability and Disclaimer (found on supporting document 5A). The form gives all rights of the recordings and potential photography to the museum for use in the archives.
2. Make sure you talk with the storyteller about the approximate length that they will be recorded before they begin (this should be around 3 to 5 minutes, but it is flexible).
3. Turn on the recording device when the person is ready to tell their story (once again, the instructions for the recording device can be found on supporting document 4B).
4. To begin the recording, be sure to say the date and the event and have the storyteller say and spell their name before they begin telling their story. You can find a suggested script on supporting document 5B.
5. As the storyteller is speaking, the person recording should refrain from saying things like “uh-huh” or “oh, really?”, and rather should show they are listening through non-verbal cues (leaning in, nodding, making eye contact, and smiling).
6. Feel free to ask open ended questions if the storyteller seems to be getting stuck; avoid yes or no questions and focus on more feeling and story based questions.
7. Once the interviewer is done, end the recording and thank the storyteller for their contribution. We encourage photographs to be taken of the storytellers so there is a face to the story; however, if the storyteller prefers no photo, that is alright too.

Take-Down/Return

Following the steps below should help you seamlessly pack up and return the Memory Booth:

1. Fold up chairs and table
2. Shake out and roll up the rug
3. Put Recording equipment parts back in their case
4. Take down tent and pack back up in the same way that it came
5. Use the checklist on supporting document 6A to make sure all of the parts of the Memory Booth that were there when you checked it out are still with you and intact

If all of the items on the checklist are present and in the same condition as they were when they were checked out, you are ready to return the Memory Booth to the museum. Please make sure that all of the contents are clean and undamaged. As specified in the borrower's agreement, you are required to report any damage or loss to the Museum upon the return of the equipment. Please bring the contents on the date and time you specified on your check out sheet or earlier. Once you have returned the Booth, you are done!

Please note: The stories that you have collected are property of the museum, and we ask that you return the stories to us when you return the contents of the Memory Booth. You are certainly able to use the stories for your own organization's needs; we ask that you give them to us upon return of the Memory Booth and allow us 1-3 weeks to send a copy to you.

Thank You!

Success! Once you have completed the use of the Memory Booth at your event, you can give yourself a huge pat on the back. You just helped us collect precious stories and memories to be added to our collection at the museum. You are awesome!!!

We ask that you fill out the feedback form on supporting document 7A about your experience with the Memory Booth. This can help us to continue changing and improving the way we collect history through stories and memories. Any and all comments are appreciated.

Again, we cannot thank you enough for helping us collect these great stories and memories from people in and around Missoula County. You are helping us achieve our mission of keeping history alive.