

Employee Spotlight – Amber Raney

Contributed by Molly Rooney and Mary Hammer

Amber Raney has been at the Archives since March 2013, and is our Historical Records Project Coordinator. Amber manages over a hundred volunteers, comes up with online indexing projects for volunteers, coordinates events and outreach activities, creates promotional materials, and puts together this very newsletter (among many other things)! You can often find her manning Archives' booths at fairs and conferences, so dart over and tell her you want to volunteer! Amber's creativity and energy are valuable assets to the Archives team. We put together a list of questions for her to answer, so read on to find out more about her:



M&M: What is your professional background?

AR: I got a BS (yes, BS—I started out in Marine Biology) in History from Oregon State University and an MA in History/Archives and Records Management from Western Washington University. While at WWU I worked at the Whatcom Museum and fell in love with museum work. From 2005-2013 I was the Curator for the Lacey Museum.

M&M: Do you have any pets, and if so, have any of them ever tried to kill you?

AR: Ah, pets. I have two cats, Ringo and Henry; a step-dog, Jack; two aquariums full of a multitude of fishes; and a hamster. And sadly, yes. Two of my pets have tried to kill me. Ringo gave me cat scratch fever twice...no—three times, sending me to the ER once. He's a huge, orange tom cat and the biggest chicken I've ever met. His claws and teeth are lethal to me, but he's really very sweet unless he's scared...Ahem, big chicken. And Jack (pictured above)—also has anxiety issues. But—I've since learned how to read his triggers. And his bite was nowhere near as deadly as Ringo's!

M&M: What's your favorite thing about working at the Archives?

AR: I absolutely love putting together *Out of the Archives*, but without a doubt, my favorite thing is the people! I love the folks I am fortunate enough to work with, and the amazing people I meet as I travel around—fans of history are some of my favorites.

M&M: What was the last concert you went to?

AR: I saw the Lumineers with Dr. Dog at Marymoor Park in Seattle, fall 2013. Sadly, that was the last one.

M&M: Where did you grow up?

AR: I spent the first 13 years of my life in Toledo, Ohio, followed by a brief stint in a tiny town in Illinois called Chrisman. I think the sign said "Population 2,400" and 2,406 after we moved in. After that, we moved to the Lacey area, where I graduated from Timberline High School.

M&M: What is your favorite flavor of ice cream?

AR: I love mint chocolate chip. But I prefer the ice cream to be white, not green. No idea why.

M&M: Do you have a summer vacation planned? If not, how many barbeques/hoedowns do you hope to attend this summer?

AR: No concrete plans, but we'll likely do some weekend camping trips around this gorgeous state of ours and spend some time with my son's other family in Chelan. Aside from that, I fully intend to barbeque the life out of our grill and dance the night away with all the people I love around our fire pit until the fire department is called.

M&M: What's the coolest animal you have ever seen in person and why?

AR: That's a tough one. But I'd have to say the leafy sea dragons at the Oregon Coast Aquarium in Newport. I don't know if they still have them there, but I was amazed by them. Oh—and I saw Keiko there when he was transitioning back to the wild. My marine biology love is showing, I'd say!

M&M: What's your favorite moment in Washington State history?

AR: I don't know that it's a moment, per se, but I focused on WWII in college, and love learning about that time period in Washington State history, too.

M&M: What music is on deep rotation in your headphones during work?

AR: This is a Molly question, because she knows the real answer and wonders if I'll reveal my truly nerdy self...I daily listen to one of two playlists I've created on Spotify. One is movie soundtracks. Not the music they play on the radio, but the film scores. And the other—Disney music. That's right. I'm not ashamed. I've been to Disneyland 10 times.

M&M: Who is your favorite film maker of all time and which of their movies is your favorite?

AR: It's hard to compare film makers for me. I think I really have two—Alfred Hitchcock and Wes Anderson. And my favorite films by each—"Rear Window" and "The Darjeeling Limited." And if you ask me another day, I might say "North by Northwest" for Hitchcock.

M&M: What is your favorite place to visit in Washington?

AR: The coast. Especially Westport. I think because I grew up landlocked (not counting Lake Erie), I am attracted to the ocean. And I like Westport because it's never as crowded as the other beaches and you can't drive on it.

M&M: What is your favorite Washington State museum?

AR: The Lacey Museum right now. But that's selfishly just because the exhibits on display are still ones I created, and I dearly love the history that I learned while employed there.