

actually believed most foreign and domestic problems could be solved by well-intentioned individuals acting for the common good" (p. xix). Movements are made of people who think that the individual matters.

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Museum Masters: Their Museums and Their Influence. By Edward P. Alexander. (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1983. Pp. x, 428. Notes, select bibliography, illustrations, index. \$22.95.)

Museums were not always the public institutions they are today. It was only in the past two hundred years that they evolved from closed private collections into open and accessible facilities.

Museum Masters treats twelve men and women styled by Edward P. Alexander as imaginative museum leaders, the men and women who created the modern museum. The twelve represent Europe, Great Britain, Scandinavia, and the United States. These are people "who gave thought to the purposes of museums and took the institutions with which they were connected in new directions that have significance today" (p. 4).

They are a varied and fascinating lot, as befits museum directors with strong personalities. Some, like Charles Willson Peale, worked for a popular museum. He was "the first great American museum director, warm, personable, and outgoing; creative and driving" (p. 48). A showman, like so many of the great directors, Peale had ideas for exhibit openings that would attract attention today. The opening of his Mammoth Room was publicized by the museum handyman dressed like an Indian riding a white horse, and preceded by a trumpeter. Here is ample precedent for new job descriptions for museum employees!

Dominique Vivant Denon sought to make the Louvre the symbol of national glory. Alexander relates that he labored during the day and "No one pursued social and erotic pleasures more ardently than he at night, in salon, cafe and boudoir" (p. 85). No doubt he simply sought further recognition and appreciation of the museum! Denon also understood a director's role in drawing to his staff experts to advise him on particular subject areas.

George Brown Goode, an Indiana product, devoted his efforts to the Smithsonian Museum, deserving in Alexander's opinion "to be known as the father of the modern American museum" (p. 305). One of his thoughts that is pertinent today is often ignored: "The degree of civilization to which any nation, city or province has attained is best shown by the character of its public museums

and the liberality with which they are maintained" (p. 299). How many museum directors would like to have this thought carved on their museum portals?

Here are creators of moated zoos (Carl Hagenbeck), open-air museums (Arthur Hazelius), historic house museums (Ann Pamela Cunningham), botanical gardens (William Jackson Hooker), science and technology (Oskar van Miller), community service (John Cotton Davis), the British Museum (Sir Hans Sloane), and the decorative arts (Henry Cole). In their diverse personalities may be found the roots of virtually all museum trends today.

The book affords a clear view of the importance of personality to museums, and of the need for creative thinking, unfettered by convention. These men and women stand as examples of the importance of sudden change, not just gradual evolution, in museum work. They are also a reminder that there is much truth in the saying that all is old wine in new bottles, for the ideas they espoused are ideas that are very current. Alexander's is a well-written book, which for the reader not familiar with museum history will open avenues to its fascinating development. For those in the profession, perhaps John Cotton Davis's words ring truest of all, "I've had a lot of fun. . . . A whole lot of fun. . . . I am going ahead as fast as money permits . . ." (p. 399). It is a book well worth reading.

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Oral History: An Interdisciplinary Anthology. Edited by David K. Dunaway and Willa K. Baum. (Nashville, Tenn.: American Association for State and Local History, 1984. Pp. xvii, 436. Figures, table, notes, bibliographies, index. Clothbound, \$29.50; paperbound, \$17.95.)

After thirty-five years of active practice by historians, school-children, and community groups, oral history seems to have come of age. This anthology simultaneously represents and celebrates that event. In the preface, the editors explain the book's genesis: "At one time the greatest need [in oral history] was for basic procedural manuals for beginning practitioners." That need having been more than adequately met at the present, they continue, "our goal was the upgrading of the oral history process and end product" by aiming the collection "at a broad spectrum of already initiated individuals" (p. xv). To this end, they sifted through the now voluminous literature on oral history and selected thirty-seven articles for inclusion here.

Most of the major figures in the field are represented, from Allan Nevins, universally acclaimed as the father of oral history