



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Boyle County Public Library hires Maggie McAdams as Story Center manager

DANVILLE, Ky, July 4, 2024 – The Boyle County Public Library (BCPL) is a vibrant hub of information and activity for the Danville-Boyle County community. Earlier this year, BCPL announced that it had received a \$1 million grant from the Mellon Foundation for the creation of a Story Center, a five-year project to significantly expand its local history collection and programming by preserving and sharing stories of local life. The library is pleased to announce that Maggie McAdams will serve as the Story Center Manager. She brings over a decade of experience as a museum professional and cultural historian.

The Story Center will provide a home for the memories of Boyle County with a particular focus on collecting and digitizing archival materials such as letters, diaries, manuscripts, scrapbooks, audio/visual materials, and photographs that represent the diverse lives of Boyle County residents. The Story Center will also prioritize active oral history and story collection to ensure that our community's storytellers have the opportunity to contribute to the County's history.

With her educational and professional background, McAdams is well-suited for this new role as Story Center manager. She has a B.A. in History from Hanover College and an M.A. in Historical Administration from Eastern Illinois University. Her graduate degree was a museum studies option for work in the field of history. Course work focused on the research, interpretation, and management of material culture and the built environment, with specific classes on collections care, material culture analysis, historic preservation, historical interpretation, museum education, and exhibition design and development.

Prior to joining the BCPL staff, McAdams spent time in historical institutions in Indiana, Illinois, Florida, Ontario, and most recently at Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill. Her introduction to the history of Kentucky was through the lens of the Shaker experience. She spent six years researching, writing about, and presenting on the Shakers. While there, she managed the department tasked with interpreting the Shakers for the public through programming for public and school audiences, as well as exhibit development.

She is excited about her role as Story Center manager since it combines so many of her interests and skills. She is eager to work with the community to build a cultural and historical repository for the future. "I love history, but more than that, I love making history accessible, and this position will allow me to find creative ways to engage with the stories of our community," said McAdams. The Story Center exists to preserve and share stories of local life. "My hope is that by doing this we will be able to promote community and get Boyle County excited about their diverse stories," said McAdams.

McAdams grew up in Carmel, Indiana, just north of Indianapolis. Her love of history and museums began at a young age with numerous childhood visits to the Indianapolis Children's Museum. "I love museums and libraries because they provide necessary space for informal learning in our communities," said McAdams. "I am naturally curious and a self-proclaimed lifelong learner so I am always seeking out information. I love the feeling of having seemingly infinite information at my fingertips when I am at the library."

BCPL plays an important role in the community, and McAdams' hope is that the Story Center will continue to strengthen that role. Not only will the Story Center focus on sharing stories through digital and physical exhibitions, it will provide necessary services to the community to ensure that everyone is able to preserve their own history. "By expanding the library's existing Memory Lab into the Story Center, we will be able to help more members of the community digitize their records by scanning family photographs and personal papers, and transferring VHS and reel film to digital formats. This digitization effort will result in the preservation of more community records and, if shared, will increase our understanding of the community -- past and present," said McAdams.

When asked about the importance of preserving history, she explained that history starts on the local level, and that we would not be able to understand the broad trends and themes in history without the local groups who passionately preserve the stories of their communities. “Preserving local history is also an important way to ensure that all are represented in the historical record,” said McAdams. As the manager of the Story Center, McAdams will work with the Boyle County community to preserve and share stories of local life, making them highly accessible to the broader public.

Most topics fascinate McAdams, but 19th and 20th century U.S. cultural history has always been of particular interest to her. “I enjoy examining the daily lives of individuals in the past and do the best I can to tell their stories. In fact, the best thing about working in this field is that I get to research, write, and tell stories on a daily basis. I am constantly learning, and I, in turn, get to share that information with the public in exciting and engaging ways,” said McAdams. She will be introducing the Story Center in greater detail at the upcoming Kentucky History and Genealogy Conference, which will be held at the library in August 2024. McAdams can be reached at the library by calling 859-238-7323 or via email at mmcadams@boylepublib.org. Information about the Story Center grant can be found online at BoylePubLib.org/StoryCenter.

Outside of work, McAdams enjoys visiting museums, traveling, working with textiles, reading nonfiction and mysteries, and spending time with her family.

The Boyle County Public Library serves the city of Danville and the surrounding communities, and is actively committed to enriching the lives of its patrons. The library is located at 307 West Broadway in Danville, KY.

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