

Internship essay

Muzeum Powstania Warszawskiego

My internship with the Polish Rising Museum started July 1, 2009 and lasted until July 31, 2009. When I first arrived at the museum my internship supervisor showed me around the museum and explained Polish safety standards in the workplace. I was also provided with a headset and took audio and visual tour of each exhibit. The first few days I was asked to get more acquainted with the museum and what happened between August 1 and October 3 1944 in Warsaw.

My first project was to research on the US involvement in the Polish Rising. I requested documents from the United States Archives, but unfortunately they have never sent me anything back. Even so, I requested multiple times and will continue to do so. I promised my internship supervisor that once I return to the US I will keep following up with the archives until something is produced. While studying I learned of the US supply drop that occurred on September 18, 1944. The United States sent 110 B-17 flying fortresses to Warsaw to aid in the Rising. During this mission the United States only lost one aircraft. "I'll Be Seeing You" was the name of the American B-17 that was shot down. The story can be found here:

<http://www.inproudremembrance.com/Francis%20E.%20Akins%20Story.html>). A monument has been erected to the American aircraft that met its demise in Lomianki, Poland. Unfortunately, this was the only time the United States sent supplies to Warsaw during the 63 day fight against the Nazi's. Joseph Stalin, the Soviet leader, would not allow the other allies to use nearby airfields under the Soviet control for landing. Due to this, the missions became too risky due to fuel requirements and the length of the mission. The Polish people would find themselves alone fighting against the Germans.

After this research our attention was moved to an announcement of Hardkor 44. Hardkor 44 is a movie that will be directed in Hollywood, California by Polish director Tomasz Baginski who is known for his special affects in films, and his former hit “Cathedral”. This film is to be created in English and the focus of the project is to educate the world about what happened in the 63 days of the Rising.

My project consisted of helping create an environment that would be suitable for the announcement of this film. The museum, through great connections, found an abandoned factory in Pragua- a district in Warsaw. This factory was dirty, old, and falling apart; which is why it was perfect for what we were about to embark on. What I did, due to my height, was cover all the windows in the building to keep light out. Also, I repainted walls to make sure the projections of the images to be used in the film would show up correctly. The job took days, but the event turned out to be a vast success for the film, the museum, and most importantly the Rising itself. This film represents a story that is not well known outside of Central Europe, and it is one that needs to be told.

Currently in my last few days of the internship I have found myself to be a proofreader of the English language. I have gone through the museum and made suggestions for corrections, and have worked closely with my internship supervisor on future projects and exhibits that will have an English explanation.

Overall this internship has been extremely rewarding. The opportunity to work with Polish people, and to learn about their country and most importantly their history has been a great reward. The Polish Rising took place during one of the darkest times in history, but represents the most prideful occurrence in Polish history. I have recommended this internship to future Collegium Civitas students, and I look forward to returning to the museum in the future to visit the friends and colleagues I have made while working here.