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Meet the New Clarke Team!

Eureka, November 15, 2025

We're happy to announce that the Clarke Historical Museum has a new Executive Director, Marketing/Events Coordinator, and Concierge!

Our new **Executive Director, Shawn DeNell Wagner**, brings a rich background in arts administration, public service, and community engagement to her role as Executive Director. A graduate of Dell'Arte International School of Physical Theatre and Humboldt State University, she has dedicated her career to storytelling, education, and the preservation of local history.

Before joining the museum, Shawn served as Administrative Director for North Coast Repertory Theatre and as Tourism Director at Blue Ox Millworks and Historic Village. Most recently, she worked with California State Parks, deepening her expertise in visitor services and regional history.

Shawn is passionate about connecting people to their heritage through engaging programs and creative experiences. She is excited to lead the museum into its next chapter, fostering deep community connections and celebrating the stories that shape our region.

Marketing/Events Coordinator Dana Fredsti is a multi-published novelist with a background in acting, stunts, event planning, office management, and feline rescue. Her love of history is reflected in her writing. She served on the board of Sisters in Crime NorCal for several years, as chapter President and events planner. She was the Marketing/Events Coordinator for the Clarke Historical Museum from March 2020 through September 2023, retiring to do some traveling and devote more time to her writing. She then joined the Clarke Board in 2025, volunteering to help coordinate A Very Victorian Tea and Tarot. She had so much fun doing this that she stepped off the board and returned to her former position at the museum, which she considers her home away from

home. She has a new fantasy novel coming out in December 2025, cowritten with her husband, David Fitzgerald during her two year "retirement."

Concierge David Fitzgerald will no doubt be a familiar face to many visitors—before his official hire, he filled in at the front desk at the museum as needed on a volunteer basis. When he's not covering the front desk, David is an award-winning author, historical researcher, activist, a frequent guest on podcasts, and an international public speaker.

A San Francisco expat, he now lives in Eureka with his wife Dana, their dog Pogeen (the Clarke's other official greeter) and their ten cats. Working with the Clarke's awesome staff at such a beloved and treasured history museum is a real dream come true for Dave.

In addition to our three new hires, Clarke Canine **Pogeen** is the *real* official greeter of the Clarke Museum. Her name (Pógín) means "Little Kiss" in Irish and she thinks every day should be Bring Your Dog to Work Day.

The mission of the Clarke Historical Museum is to celebrate the rich and varied history of Northwestern California by preserving, sharing, and interpreting that history in ways that increase knowledge, enrich the spirit, engage the mind, and stimulate the imagination.

Photos:

1. Shawn Wagner
2. Dana Fredsti
3. David Fitzgerald
4. Pogeen