

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Regular Meeting

Thursday, July 27, 2023 – 7 pm

Monroe County Museum
126 South Monroe Street
Monroe, Michigan 48161

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes from Regular Meeting of June 14th, 2023
5. Public Comment
6. Committee Updates
 - 6.1. Executive Committee
 - 6.2. Awards Committee
 - 6.3. Building Committee
 - 6.4. Markers Committee
 - 6.5. Projects Committee
7. New Business
 - 7.1. MCMS Reports
8. Old Business
 - 8.1. Strategic Plan-Vision 2029
9. Public Comment
10. Board Comments
11. Adjournment

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, August 16, 2023 at 7 pm
Monroe County Museum
126 South Monroe Street
Monroe, Michigan 48161

2023 MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES	2023 COMMITTEES
Chair Brian Egen, District 6 Vice Chair Jeremy Potter, District 1 Secretary Michael Humphries, District 8 Immediate Past Chair Hobby Nels Trustee Emeritus Richard Micka Trustee Thomas Heywood, District 2 Trustee Mary Strevel, District 3 Trustee L William Conner, District 4 Trustee Michelle LaVoy, District 5 Trustee Tony Trujillo, District 7 Trustee Nick Guthrie, District 9	Executive Committee Chair: Brian Egen Members: Jeremy Potter, Michael Humphries, Hobby Nels, Andrew Clark, and JJ Przewozniak Awards Committee Chair: Michelle LaVoy Members:, Thomas Heywood, Mary Strevel, Tony Trujillo, and Andrew Clark Markers Committee Chair: Jeremy Potter Members: Brian Egen, Nicholas Guthrie, Michael Humphries, Lynn Reaume, and Andrew Clark Projects Committee Chair: Michael Humphries Members: Bill Conner, Brian Egen, Tony Trujillo, and Andrew Clark

Mission Statement of the Monroe County Museum System

At the Monroe County Museum, we fuel and cultivate our visitors' curiosity through the exploration of Monroe County's rich and varied stories, joining together to unearth meaning and illuminate relevant connections between the past, present, and future.

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM
BOARD of TRUSTEES
MEETING MINUTES
June 14th, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.
at the Monroe County Museum, 126 South Monroe Street, Monroe

Present: Brian Egen, Chairman	Jeremy Potter, Vice-Chairman	William Conner, Member
Nick Guthrie, Member	Tom Heywood, Member	Michelle LaVoy Member
Tony Trujillo, Member	Hobby Nels, Past Chairman	Richard Micka, Emeritus
Excused: Michael Humphries, Secretary Mary Strevel, Member		

Museum Staff: Director Clark J.J. Przewozniak, Deputy Director Lynn Reaume, County Historian
Guests: Jeanne Micka, Sawyer Homestead

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Egen. Roll was called and there was a quorum.

A motion was made by W. Conner to approve the agenda, seconded by J. Potter; passed.

Approval of Minutes of April 12th, 2023 Meeting: Motion made by H. Nels, seconded by N. Guthrie to approve, and passed.

Public Comment #1: None

Committee Updates: Executive: Chairman Egen said the group has not met.

Spirit of Service Awards Committee: This committee has not yet met.

Building Committee: This committee has not yet met, but needs to meet.

Historical Markers Committee: Chairman Potter requests a meeting perhaps next week. Director Clark provided an update in his May report and said the erroneously painted markers have been verified as properly repainted and ready for the next pickup at Sewah. Comment was made on the possibility of moving the St. Antoine marker since it is partially blocked by trees.

Projects Grant Committee: Director Clark said there are sever applicants- some returning, some new. The deadline is July 15th. Dundee has not yet filed an application for the tornado damage to the bandstand tile roof, and it was noted that this would be a good example of what the grant program was intended for.

New Business: Staff Reports: Motion was made to accept the reports by T. Heywood, seconded by J. Potter, and passed after discussion.

A question was on what going to be developed in the old Country Store building, now housing the Sturgeon traveling banners. Director Clark said it would feature more on the history and interpretation of Papermill School, with using less floor space than the country store display style.

There was also a question concerning the hiring of staff (and seasonal), which director Clark explained. He does anticipate several staffers to be active next week, with one starting this week, and an upcoming interview.

There was a question concerning the Monroe News materials. L. Reaume explained that approved and cooperative retrieval of the Monroe Evening News (Monroe News) archival materials have already begun. The boxed obituary files have all been brought to the museum, and boxes of topical files (20 filing cabinets full!) have begun to be transported. Bound newspapers, photographs, images and more will also be transported to the museum in the upcoming months.

Old Business: Strategic Vision Plan

Quite a lot of discussion involved the #1 priority of theranking of the 2021 StEPs activities related to Strategic Priorities- #1 being the actionable collections storage plan. What attempts have been made, what specifications are needed for the acquisition of a building, and how can any approach be bettered in accomplishing the goal. Comments included the hiring of a realtor to help find properties for the museum's interest; the discussion of financing such a purchase, and locations considered for purchase.

It was noted that the storage need continues, and will only grow in the future as more large collections may be turned over to the museum from the City of Monroe, private donors, and other unexpected sources. Any decision must be sustainable, have potential expansion, and be affordable considering the whole museum millage and other museum area needs.

At one point, with no movement in the discussion, Chairman Egen called the meeting closed, at 8:19 p.m.

Lynn W. Reaume
Acting recording secretary
15 June 2023

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM

Director's Report

Submitted by Andrew Clark, Director

Thursday, July 27, 2023

Organizational Operations

County Museum: Public access to the galleries at the County Museum are Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 am to 5 pm, and Sundays, 12 pm to 5 pm.

County Archives: Research is by appointment and via phone, mail, and email.

Territorial Park: Operating hours for building access are Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, 10 am to 4 pm.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Museum: Operating hours for building access is Saturdays, 10 am to 4 pm.

St Antoine's Historic Site: Grounds are open year round.

Maintenance and Operations

Museum and Archives

Cleanouts continue in various parts of the building to increase storage capacity, primarily the basement and front office.

The front office was patched and repainted.

We removed several van loads of plant debris from the exterior of the Third Street Storage Facility. The neighboring house is in the process of being vacated by order of the City of Monroe and the weed growth has been allowed to run rampant and onto our building. This is, of course, nothing new but the accessibility to the building's exterior makes it difficult to maintain – especially since we're handling it ourselves.

Besides mowing Territorial Park, we've added the regular mowing of the museum and Third Street to our list of maintenance tasks.

Territorial Park

Papermill School lot was restriped.

See JJ's report for a more comprehensive list of new and continuing maintenance projects at Territorial Park.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Museum

After the parking lot resurface and repairs to the bathroom, the Vietnam Veterans Museum started its new schedule of opening at 10 am on Saturdays to match all other publically accessible sites in the MCMS.

The installation of new fencing in various parts of Heck Park started last week. New rail fencing is being installed around the memorial and in other areas of the park to control traffic. A new chain link fence between the park and Wendy's is being installed. (Fencing is a county parks project.)

The exterior bathroom building has been repainted.

Considering the small amount of foot traffic that the Vietnam Veterans Museum receives compared to the memorial, it would probably be advisable to begin considering some operational alternatives. (A memorial visitor does not equal a museum visitor, for some reason.) The uniqueness of the site from its original creation – getting to meet and talk with a Vietnam era veteran – has essentially disappeared.

Ways to potentially generate more visitation are increased directional signage at the memorial, more operating hours, a significant upgrade to the exhibit space, and new educational programs for school groups. Integrating elements of the park's Vietnam War exhibit into a reconstituted Vietnam War exhibit in the county museum should also be considered. There are a variety of costs to implement any of these projects. It is becoming clearer that within the next year or two a decision needs to be made regarding the future operations of the site.

As much as I hate to state this, I cannot recommend a larger investment into the exterior case exhibits. Even with regular cleaning, between birds and people smearing who knows what on the glass, the cases aren't always the most presentable space. Though the homeless situation at the park has so far been relatively minor this year, it can be a deterrent from visitors using the space.

St Antoine's Historic Site Memorial

There are no maintenance projects to report.

Exhibits

All exhibit preparation has been focused on getting the Eby Log House and the Tool Barn readied at the Fairgrounds. Mike has made some new crowd control fencing for inside both buildings. JJ, programs, and exhibits staff have been getting both buildings prepared for Fair Week visitation.

The Sturgeon exhibit is being removed from Papermill School and will, once again, be installed at our booth in the fairgrounds for the duration of Fair Week.

Historical Projects Fund

I've received a few applications but due to a two week extension, the total number of applications won't be known until Thursday morning. Once all applications have been received, I'll bundle them up into a single document for committee review and recommendation.

Spirit of Service Awards

I put together some draft language for the application that refocuses the award categories.

Markers Program

Last month I expected to pick up two markers (the St Mary's and Custer markers that had been painted incorrectly) and some new posts. Before I left for Marietta, I found out that I'd have four. When I got to their office to check-in there were five. By the time I got to the receiving dock there were six. Despite the many setbacks over the last few years, they are now refurbishing markers at a pace that I don't recall happening before.

Currently, *Editor Ellis, 1825, Waterloo Dam 1820, St. Mary's*, and *Custer* have been transferred to the City of Monroe for installation as they're in city property or road right-of-ways.

Edward D. Ellis awaits install by Library System or Museum System staff; *Monroe's Soldiers* should be reinstalled by museum staff prior to the August board meeting.

The remaining markers in Ohio are *Old Michigan Southern, Colonel Oliver Johnson's Home, Memorial Place*, and *LaZBoy/Knabusch*. Sewah has indicated that those markers will be available in the next few weeks.

Based upon the turnaround time I would make the recommendation to do one more small batch of markers for refurbishment in 2023 if Sewah is willing to take them.

Personnel Updates

Visitor services staffer Oliver departed in mid-July. As we are nearing the end of the summer season and programs staff will soon be returning to the museum to provide mutual aid to front desk operations, I do not intend to refill the position at present.

With the exception of the visitor services vacancy, all part-time positions have been filled and all part-time staff have started. It has been a relief.

Upcoming Closures

Territorial Park and the Vietnam Veterans Museum will be closed during Fair Week.

The next upcoming holiday related closure is Monday, September 4th for Labor Day. As all MCMS sites are already closed that day, it will have no impact on seasonal operations.

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM
Deputy Director's Report for June 2023
Submitted by Jeffrey J. (JJ) Przewozniak
Sunday, July 23, 2023

Territorial Park:

With summer in full swing, park operations and maintenance have been at the center of my efforts. Our field and gardens bear the scars of their battle with the late May - early June drought, but we've mostly bounced back in good order. Despite some discrepancies in plant development due to the drought, the second generation of our King Philip corn exhibited good germination and appears healthy at the time of this writing. In addition to regular cultivating, pest control, watering, general organizing/cleaning, and other farm chores, here are the June significant happenings:

- Fruit tree maintenance continues. Dead branches are being cut from the pear trees as time allows, and the apple trees have been carefully observed following their recent pruning. All apple trees have been mulched.
- On Saturday, June 3, volunteer Geoff H. and I raked in our flax. At the time of this writing, it appears healthy except for a portion adversely affected by the drought.
- Phil has repainted the interior of the summer kitchen.
- On Tuesday, June 13, we bid adieu to a large decaying Elm tree on the west side of Willow Run that was in danger of causing great damage whenever it decided to give up the ghost. A stunted maple was also removed, as well as a rotten limb overhanging the walking path near the bridge.
- On Wednesday, June 28, our contract blacksmith installed the first of several sets of prototype hinges on the eastern gate of the domestic puncheon fence. The hinges are patterned off those found on a door associated with the Navarre house, and are made of wrought iron (as per originals), salvaged from a demolished 1870s bridge near Lansing.
- Also on Wednesday, June 28, our seasonal brush-hogging took place. Following that Mike marked all stumps for removal at a later date, which will allow more access to mow, and be generally less hazardous for those who wander the woods.
- Territorial Park went unstaffed on Thursday, June 29, and Friday, June 30, due to poor air quality.
- Exhibits and programs staff pruned the mulberry tree and tackled the overgrown brushy area on the west end of the bridge, opening a new vista and making that corner of the park more tidy.

Outreach:

- On Thursday, June 1, and also the 2nd, 8th, and 9th. We once again welcomed Douglas Elementary (Garden City) to RRTP for a field trip and hands-on learning experience. Even

with a reduced staff since their visit last year, we delivered a meaningful program of activities, and we received great feedback from the teachers.

- On Tuesday, June 6, we hosted 2nd graders from Arbor Woods South at the MCM.
- On Friday, June 9, we hosted 4th graders from Custer Elementary at the MCM.

Miscellany:

- Welcome to new Museum Presenters Dana, Jill, and PB. Along with Phil, all have been great additions to team 1817, and have been instrumental in driving farm and programmatic efforts forward.
- Thanks to Geoff Hoerauf for volunteering on Saturday, June 3, and Friday, June 9.
- Thanks to Trustee Trujillo for providing used coffee grounds to aid in the ongoing battle to keep rabbits out of our crops.
- On Thursday, June 29, Andy and I went to Lansing to participate in the Michigan Historical Commission's MAAK Award ceremony, in support and recognition of Matt Switlik's lifetime of service and contributions to the history field. Congratuilaions Matt!

LOCAL HISTORY DIVISION Report

For June, 2023

We were open by appointment with 11 visitors, 6 walk-ins and about 20 GSMC members.

Research topics this month included: Jennings look-up (MEN files already), Ayotte & Nadeau, images of Matt Switlik, Port of Monroe & Turning Basin, City of Monroe Assessment books, DuMiller families, Monroe High School and sports fields

Rachel processed 85 obits from 14 requests. She handled 15 phone call requests and 16 emails. Surnames included Schmidt, Calkins, Phluger, Nearhood and Sylvanus Curtiss research. She assisted at the front desk as needed, also working on the weekends.

Robert had 9 outside calls and answered 3 emails. He has assisted in moving files from the Monroe Evening News to the Museum on several occasions. He helped clean the dock and handle moving tool equipment. Catalogued more FIC materials including 2023.0.75 Clinton/Gore campaign button and political buttons for Ike, Nixon; 2023.0.78 refrigerator container, 2023.0.95 incandescent lightbulb from the railroad; 2023.0.96 embalming table from Capaul Funeral Home. A few Lenawee County Political tickets were transferred to the Blissfield Area Historical Society & Depot Museum.

June Accessions:

2023.33	Monroe News Publishing via Gannett: MEN Topical Files (complete)
2023.34	Bruce Banning: V.V.A. Chapter 142 photographs and documents
2023.35	David Doss: 8 th grade diploma for Bertha Karniki, 1932
2023.36	Dundee Old Mill: digital records of the Dundee Historical District
2023.37	David Doss: business card for Brose's Restaurant in Petersburg
2023.38	James Morr: check from Dansard State Bank, 1928
2023.39	Lynn Reaume: family used games, family images, graduation tassels, phonograph record, misc.
2023.40	Dave Eby: dish from the Raisin Brook Rabbit Processing plant in Dundee

Deaccessions due to condition or lack of story:

3125.3637	Broken, woven fragile basket
75.4.23.1.3	Misc. stained wood box humidior with no provenance

I have mostly completed on updating the 1973 Monroe County Building survey cards. I am very busy moving rolling racks around, transferring boxes and working with the Monroe Evening News collection of obits, topical files, and more!

County Obituary page: June, 2023: 6,780 page views. No other info was supplied by the county.

Lynn W. Reaume, County Historian
17 July 2023

July 21, 2023

Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees

Guest Services Division Report ♦ June 2023

The Monroe County Museum hosted 282 visitors in the month of June: 217 adults and 65 youths. The most popular visitation day was Thursday, bringing 53 visitors to the Museum.

Several schools visited in the early part of June for end-of-the-year field trips:

- Garden City Schools brought all of the district's 3rd graders to the RRTP on June 1, 2, 8, and 9. The programs department provided hands-on activities at several stations around the park. Including teachers and chaperones, 240 people visited the RRTP over these four days.
- 25 students, teachers, and chaperones from Monroe's Arborwood Elementary visited the Museum on June 6.
- Monroe's Custer Elementary visited the Museum on June 9, bringing 115 students, teachers, and chaperones to browse the exhibits.

Papermill School is open to visitors every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday for the summer season. Many people have stopped in on their way to tour the River Raisin Territorial Park, but with it being closed for the last couple of years, most have come in out of sheer curiosity!

The Territorial Park was closed to the public on June 30 due to the poor air quality and staff reported to the Museum instead.

Recurring tasks for June included submitting invoices and reimbursements for payment, depositing our monthly donations and archival fees at the County Treasurer's Office, and ordering office supplies and archival items.

Respectfully submitted by Heather Piegza, Guest Services Coordinator

Monroe County Museum System Engagement Report - June 2023

Monroe County Museum

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD Total
Visitation	236	372	367	313	260	282							1830
Visitation Data	In June, we welcomed 282 visitors to the museum - 217 adults and 65 children. 74 people were visiting for the first time! Thursday was the most popular day of the week, bringing in 53 people total. Monthly visitors hailed from Grand Rapids, Gibraltar, Monroe, Arizona, California, Georgia, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Ohio.												
Notes	The Monroe County Museum is operating on a limited public schedule, currently Tuesday-Sunday. The Genealogical Society of Monroe County meets each Wednesday. The Frenchtown Spinners Guild meets on the third Thursday of each month.												

Monroe County Archives

[illegible]

Papermill School

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD Total
Visitation					0	254							254
Notes	Visitation numbers are based on visitors entering Papermill School.												

Territorial Park

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD Total
Visitation	1876	1800	2121	3033	3874	5460							18164
Notes	Visitation numbers are based on the vehicle counter at Papermill School.												

Vietnam Veterans Memorial

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD Total
Visitation	2366	2413	2232	3470	4412	4618*							14893
Notes	*Counter removed due to fencing project. June numbers are estimates based on 2022 data. Visitation numbers are based on the vehicle counter at Heck Park.												

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Museum

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD Total
Visitation					0	23							23
Notes	The VVMM opened on Memorial Day Weekend and will be open to visitors from 10-4 on Saturdays, through the end of September.												

Eby Log House - Monroe County Fair

	July 30	July 31	August 1	August 2	August 3	August 4	August 5		YTD Total
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Monroe County Museum System In-Person/Virtual Programs Engagement Report													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD Total
Education Kit Usage	0	0	0	0	1	0							1
Field Trips	0	0	0	1	1	407							409
MCMS2U Visits	0	1	0	1	1	0							3
YesterWays	12	10	25	28	4	on hiatus							79
Notes	June Field Trips to MCM: Garden City Schools (240) on June 1,2,8,9; Arborwood Elementary (25) on June 6; Custer Elementary (115) on June 9. June Field Trips to VVMM: Jefferson Schools (27) on June 6												

Monroe County Museum System Special Events Attendance	
Participation in the 2023 NPS River Raisin Battles Commemoration (January 21)	685
Duncanson YesterWays evening event with Stacy Hall (February 18)	35
Maple Sugaring at the River Raisin Territorial Park (March 11, 18, 25)	10
Urwin Lecture (March 10)	50
Screening of Glory & Urwin Talk (March 11)	30
Earth Day Event at MCCC (April 22)	225
Downtown Monroe Business Network: Art in April (April 27)	57
Agriculture Day at the Monroe County Fairgrounds (April 28)	450
Special Events total	1542

Totals for all sites (including all in-person and virtual events and programs)													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD Total
Visitation	4478	4585	4720	6816	8546	6019	0	0	0	0	0	0	35164
Special Events Attendance	685	35	90	732	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1542
TOTAL	5163	4620	4810	7548	8546	6019	0	0	0	0	0	0	36706

Monroe County Museum System *Social Media* Engagement Report

Facebook													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD Total
Post reach	6158	9923	7395	4588	744	8483							37291
Post engagement	1688	1296	3008	811	65	1692							8560
New followers	25	34	59	48	47	17							230
Total followers	6174	6196	6255	6293	6336	6341							6341

Instagram													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD Total
Accounts Reached	13	6	267	13	6	3							308
Profile visits	19	7	21	18	4	4							73
Total Followers	838	845	860	862	864	864							864

YouTube													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD Total
Hours Watched	103.4	78.1	110.6	62.6	48.1	54							456.8
Impressions	7093	2971	10254	11305	3413	4487							39523
Views	374	230	637	331	189	240							2001
Most popular video	Searching for Le Griffon - with Ric Mixer												