

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, March 13th, 2024 – 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 February 21st, 2024
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. Meeting Work Session – Museum Support Organization Discussion
9. Public Comment
10. Board Comments
11. Adjournment

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, April 10th, 2024 @ 7 pm
Monroe County Museum
126 South Monroe Street
Monroe, Michigan 48161

2024 MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES	2024 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 Anne Noland, 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, Anne Noland, Mary Strevel, 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, 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
February 21st, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.
at the Monroe County Museum, 126 South Monroe Street, Monroe

Present: Brian Egen, Chairman Jeremy Potter, Vice-Chairman Michael Humphries, Secretary
Tom Heywood, Member Michelle LaVoy, Member Anne Noland, Member
Hobby Nels, Past Chairman

Excused: William Conner, Member Nick Guthrie, Member Richard Micka, Emeritus
Mary Strevel, Member

Museum Staff: Director Clark J.J. Przewozniak, Deputy Director Lynn Reaume, County Historian

Guests: Rick Grassley, Laurie Schultz GSMC Jeanne Micka, Sawyer Homestead
Charmaine Wawrzyniec, Ellis Reference Library and her daughter Dana

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. and roll was called; there was a quorum.

Approval of the Agenda: Motion was made to accept the agenda by H. Nels, seconded by M. Humphries and passed.

Approval of Minutes of January 17th, 2023 Meeting: M. Humphries made a motion to accept the meeting minutes as written, seconded by T. Heywood, and passed.

Public Comment #1: none

Committee Updates: A. Noland has been added to the Awards Committee.

Executive: Chairman Egen said the group has not met.

Spirit of Service Awards Committee: Chairperson LaVoy presented the 2023 awards.

The Explorer Award went to Charmaine Wawrzyniec, Reference Librarian at Ellis branch library and Curator of the Lawrence Frost Custer Collection for all her hard work.

The Connection Award went to the Monroe County Genealogical Society (GSMC) for their continued promotion and hard work in raising awareness of genealogy, such as the digitization of Monroe County newspapers (using our Projects Grant.) This was accepted by Rick Grassley and Laurie Schultz, members.

Building Committee: Chairman Egen had no update.

Historical Markers Committee: Chairman Potter said the 'War with the Happy Ending' will be moved to outside the Erie township hall and not be returned to its prior site.

Projects Grant Committee: Chairman Humphries reported that the applications are live online and due in April.

New Business: Staff Reports: T. Heywood made a motion to accept the reports as presented, seconded by J. Potter, and approved.

Old Business: There was discussion about the 2024 updated Actionable Objectives to the museum support goals. It was noted that though they were ranked in a certain way, the higher objectives may be harder to attain, and that the objectives may be achieved in any order, not particularly how they are ranked here.

There was discussion led by Director Clark about objective #10 about developing and implementing a MCMS Friends group. The goal would be to have a museum-led group to support areas not covered by staff or the county, with possibilities, for example, of maintaining a gift shop and fundraising. Chairman Egen said this Objective would be discussed at the next trustee work session.

Discussion continued about the Objectives. It was decided to leave #9 as ‘Network with other community entities’ and move the second part of #9 ‘identify potential new museum audiences’ as a new position under #7 Marketing.

Also TBD ‘Review directional signage along roadways’ was also moved to under #7 Marketing. TBD “Document decisions...” and ‘Develop policy of guidelines’ were assigned as #11 and #12, respectively.

After the above discussions, M. Humphries made the motion to accept these adjustments to the Actionable Objectives list, seconded by T. Heywood, and passed.

Public Comment #2: none

Board Comments: There were congratulations to the present Award recipients. Chairperson LaVoy remarked at the quality of these winners. Chairman Egen encouraged all to seek out new nominations for the awards.

Director Clark and Deputy Director Przewozniak outlined some activity ideas for the Monday, April 8th solar eclipse event. Eclipse-viewing sunglasses will be widely distributed by multiple groups.

With no other business to discuss, motion was made by M. Humphries to adjourn, seconded by H. Nels and the meeting was concluded at 7:41 p.m.

The next Trustee meeting is Wednesday, March 13th at 7:00 p.m. at the Museum.

Lynn W. Reaume
Acting recording secretary
22 February 2024

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM
Director's Report
Submitted by Andrew Clark, Director
Wednesday, March 13th, 2024

Organizational Operations

County Museum: Hours of operation are Sunday to Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm.

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

Territorial Park: Closed for the season. Will reopen Memorial Day Weekend 2024.

Vietnam Veterans Museum: Closed for the season. Will reopen Memorial Day Weekend 2024.

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

Upcoming Closures

The Monroe County Museum System will be closed for the following holidays:

March 29th – Good Friday – Closes at Noon

March 31st – Easter – Closed All Day

Maintenance and Operations

Museum and Archives

The strange museum odor has decreased significantly but can be found lingering from time to time.

Still awaiting proposals from the contractor regarding front entrance repairs.

First floor multi-function photocopier is still out of commission and awaiting approval for replacement.

Museum staff installed a new concrete pad in the museum basement for a double tub work sink, upright freezer, and washer/dryer.

Territorial Park

Buildings closed for the winter.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Museum

Buildings closed for the winter.

St Antoine's Historic Site Memorial

Nothing to report.

Exhibits

Robert and I retrieved two crates of paintings from ICA Art Conservation in Cleveland.

Minor maintenance of cases and artifact reinstallations took place.

2024 Territorial Park Trail Project

No new report from Mannik-Smith regarding project timeline. As previously reported, Spring was targeted as the release dates for the RFPs by the county so a definite

timeline is a ways off from being reported. So far, there is no expectation that the seasonal operational schedule for Territorial Park will be altered by the project.

2024 Eclipse

YesterWays and Spring Break programs are scheduled. On April 8th, our main efforts will be at the battlefield and assisting with programming there.

On-site glasses distribution has already begun.

Later this week, batches of glasses will be going out to Luna Pier, the Old Mill, and Sterling State Park.

Awards Program

Had an enquiry regarding a Spirit of Service nomination from a new source.

Still in the process of scheduling the presentation of Trudy Urbani's award to her but expect to have that taken care of prior to the April meeting.

Applications are due March 30th.

Building Program

Nothing to report.

Markers Program

Mike, Robert, and PB installed the *War with a Happy Ending* historical marker off of Erie Street in Erie, directly behind the Erie Township Hall. It is now conveniently visible from the Township Hall parking lot. In its original location, the marker had been obscured by a tree, had lost a great quantity of paint, and had no easy pull off access.

British Victory at Frenchtown, University of Michigan, and *Bridge School* should be reinstalled within the next few weeks.

Historical Projects Fund

I continue to receive inquiries regarding the Projects Fund. Presently, I anticipate that most of the funds will be earmarked for projects in the Spring and there will probably not be a second round of projects this year.

Applications are due April 30th.

Personnel Updates

There are no personnel updates at this time.

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM
Deputy Director's Report for February 2024
Submitted by Jeffrey J. (JJ) Przewozniak
Friday, March 8, 2024

Our arborist continues to conduct seasonal work on the RRTP fruit trees. Aside from a minor wound from a deer rub at the schoolhouse orchard, all trees are currently healthy.

February's *YesterWays* was a reboot of a classic: a watercolor painting workshop in honor of Robert S. Duncanson. Thanks to the programs division staff for all the fun creative enhancements.

On Saturday February 17, we hosted a new event: *Maple Sugaring from A to Z*. The purpose of this exhaustive classroom-style program was to equip attendees with the knowledge and confidence to tap trees and process maple sap at home.

The celebrated arrival of some new appliances occurred early in the month. Prior to installation, on Wednesday, February 21 a concrete pad was installed. Thanks to Mike for coordinating and directing the pour.

Salt curing was successfully completed. Every few days, staff reset or reapplied the curing salt to the pork cuts and refreshed the area in the schoolhouse until the meat was thoroughly dried and preserved. The cuts will soon be wrapped and frozen, adding an additional layer of protection. Thanks to this effort, not only have we gained a season's supply of mainstay heritage pork for our historic foodways demonstrations; we've also gained a distinct element of authenticity through the curing-preservation process. This will be reflected in the meat's look and feel, the cooking methods, and in the presentations by staff who have been invested in the entire process.

I celebrated Presidents' Day by meeting with representatives of the French Heritage Society to firm up plans for our partnership with, and participation in, this year's 4th annual [French Heritage Corridor conference](#) to be held at the RRNPB. I'll be a speaker on Saturday, and on Sunday, conference attendees will visit RRTP for an encounter with the past. Coordination continues.

On Sunday, February 25, we hosted a photo shoot in Sieb Hall for a project with the Michigan Civil War Association. In preparation for a proposed new Michigan monument at the Antietam battlefield, detailed photos were taken of a model portraying Colonel Norman Hall who commanded the 7th Michigan Volunteer Infantry regiment. Thanks to Chairman Egen for coordinating.

The ongoing degradation of the stone portions of the barn floor due to regular/heavy use have inspired several meetings throughout the month with contractors to look at options for repair/reset in the near future.

Finally, thanks to volunteer Sabrina Miller for the robust and highly organized donation of living history supplies!

LOCAL HISTORY DIVISION Report

For February, 2024

We were open by appointment with 12 visitors, 6 walk-ins, and about 22 GSMC members.

Topics included the obituaries, the Little Brown Bear statue, DuMoulin, Otto Marten, Martin Shoes & Boots, Berlin township, VanWashenova, city houses, Sullivan Road house, Vietnam Veterans, photographs, McGeady's building, West Side groceries. I sent images and info to the City for the rededication of the Cairns Field/park. I spent 3.5 hours retrieving indexes and deed books for researchers.

Rachel processed 19 obits from 11 requests. She handled 9 phone call requests and 18 emails. Topics included an Ilgenfritz will. She worked the front desk for Guest Services, also working on the weekends, and handling visitors.

Robert had 26 outside calls and answered 15 emails. He completed the 2023 Jean Siebarth collection and continued processing the William Capaul collection images. He and Director Clark retrieved the paintings on loan to the ICA Art Conservation in Cleveland OH and worked to reinstall them here. We filed the examination results from the artwork. He also assisted during the installation of the new concrete pad outside the boiler room. He removed the clear panels for the 2nd floor hall storage shelving for insertion of more books.

Robert and Rachel worked on a downstairs office to restructure it. This was mainly for MEN topical file storage on rolling racks. Old worktables were re-purposed elsewhere. We are waiting on rack wheels to continue the rack assembly. I continue to work on the files in that room when I get time.

Accessions during February:

2024.3 Lucas County OH Sheriff's Office: communication re 1951 National Guard Armory (Monroe) theft

2024.4 Mark Brandt: apple butter stirring paddle bought at a sale from the Jennings farm in Raisinville

2024.5 Allan VanDusan: Copies of cabinet card of Robert S. Duncanson

2024.6 Steve Baillie: photograph of Sally Lake Lunn

2024.7 John Kirtland: Kirtland family heirloom rocker, originally belonging to Sarah Mulholland Rowe

2024.8 Monroe Co. Historical Society: two metal and enamel Thomas Custer commemorative coins

Examples of what potential donations I turned down this past month (just in case you wondered): Vietnam Veteran letters concerning a veteran from Ypsilanti; more books we always have; a handmade 'village' used for Christmas- from Detroit area, no Monroe provenance.

I am still (and will be for a while) processing the extensive Everett Payette Collection we received from the Monroe News/Gannett last year. We were locked out of PastPerfect for 2 days while IT updated the system since we were having errors and glitches. We are now over 55,000 images in the collection, and we are not done yet!

Incorporating the topical files from the MEN will be a (forever?) on-going project. I have unfolded, flattened, made file folders for, organized, added to the topical file listing, large files of the Monroe County Fair, the Monroe County Fair Association, 4-H, Monroe County Fair Parade, etc. I decided to box up large topical files in order to spread out the filing cabinet files. Topical files are kept in the Archives and consist of mainly newspaper clippings.

County Obituary page: February 2024: 8,663 page views.

Lynn W. Reaume, County Historian
29 February, 2024