

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, April 10th, 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 March 13th, 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
9. Public Comment
10. Board Comments
11. Adjournment

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, May 8th, 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
March 13th, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.
at the Monroe County Museum, 126 South Monroe Street, Monroe

Present: Brian Egen, Chairman Jeremy Potter, Vice-Chairman
Nick Guthrie, Member Tom Heywood, Member Michelle LaVoy, Member
Anne Noland, Member

Excused: William Conner, Member Michael Humphries, Secretary
Richard Micka, Emeritus Hobby Nels, Past Chairman Mary Strevel, Member

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

Guests: Dave Hoffman, Monroe Co. Commissioner Elizabeth Rubel

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m., roll was called and there was a quorum.

Approval of the Agenda: motion was made to accept the agenda by N. Guthrie, seconded by J. Potter, and passed.

Approval of Minutes of February 21st, 2024 Meeting: T. Heywood made a motion to accept the meeting minutes as written, seconded by N. Guthrie, and passed.

Public Comment #1: none

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

Spirit of Service Awards Committee: Chairperson LaVoy announced that on Friday the last 2023 award would be presented at the Bedford library to Mrs. Trudi Urbani. She also said that the autumn 2-year public reception will be September 18th.

Building Committee: Chairman Egen had no update.

Historical Markers Committee: Chairman Potter said the 'War with the Happy Ending' was installed by museum staff at the Erie Township Hall area. New markers are expected for 2024, including the Oak St. Dundee POW camp, and Ida extended text.

Projects Grant Committee: Applications are due in April.

New Business: Staff Reports: J. Potter made a motion to accept the reports as presented, seconded by T. Heywood, and approved. There was a little discussion on the installation of the basement appliances.

Old Business: The discussion on the possibility of a MCMS-supported group was again brought up. Topics included such a group's merits, such as providing food for events, support for events, millage advocacy, museum awareness, etc. At one time the Monroe County Historical Society served as a museum fiduciary, the Guild provided gift shop and buildings volunteers. M. LaVoy suggested a work session dedicated to this topic for discussion.

Public Comment #2: Commissioner Hoffman thanked the trustees on behalf of Dundee for the historical grant awarded to the Dundee Old Mill.

Board Comments: A. Noland commented she appreciated all the background of the different historical entities, and their past uses.

J.J. Przewozniak commented he intended to grow wheat or rye at the farm this season and Commissioner Hoffman suggested to could donate decent soil for the field.

With no other business to discuss, motion was made by N. Guthrie to adjourn, seconded by A. Noland and the meeting was concluded at 8:24 p.m.

The next Trustee meeting is Wednesday, April 10th at 7:00 p.m. at the Museum.

Lynn W. Reaume
Acting recording secretary
3 April 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

There are no planned closures.

Maintenance and Operations

Museum and Archives

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

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

Nothing to report.

Awards Program

All 2023 awards have been distributed. Many thanks to awards committee chair LaVoy for presenting the award to Trudy Urbani at the Bedford Branch Library.

The 2024 nomination deadline has closed. The nominations will be forwarded to the committee chair later this week for review by the committee.

Building Program

On March 28th, the county issued a request for proposals for a feasibility study to explore the potential and costs of an addition to the existing museum site. Proposals will be due on April 22nd.

Markers Program

Museum staff (primarily Mike Nelligan and Robert Lutey) made great progress in the reinstallation of historical markers.

British Victory at Frenchtown was moved a few yards to a new location inside Heck Park; the new location allows visitors to drive up to it and read it from their vehicles or they can now read it from a pathway. Unlike all of our other markers, this marker had a circular mount rather than an octagonal one that required the reuse of the old post.

University of Michigan was reinstalled at its original location at Second and Macomb Streets. With a simple modification they were able to reuse the pre-existing aluminum post.

Bridge School was reinstalled in its original location at the Raisinville Township Hall (Dixon and Ida-Maybee Roads). Though it was an old style post (concrete wrapped in aluminum) it was reused as it was a custom post – very, very short – and we were unsure if we would be able to remove it without a disruption of the current landscape. The marker is highly visible from quite a distance when driving west on Dixon.

Sandy Creek Settlement was reinstalled by DNR staff at Sterling State Park. They moved it from its location next to the fish cleaning station to a little spot of land next to the boat launch. It adds to the small number of markers viewable from both land and water.

Historical Projects Fund

Only one application has been received so far. (This is fairly typical as most applications don't arrive until closer to the deadline.) I continue to receive enquiries – including from a potential first time applicant.

Applications are due April 30th.

Due to the unseasonable weather conditions this winter, the Old Mill was able to proceed with its roof project earlier than planned.

2024 Eclipse

Many thanks to JJ and the programs staff for coordinating and executing our eclipse related activities. We distributed approximately 2,600 eclipse viewers (2,500 glasses and 100 cards) to the community not including the numerous pinhole shadow box viewers staff made during YesterWays and Spring Break activities. Leading up to the event, 300 pairs were distributed to the Old Mill Museum, Sterling State Park, and the City of Luna Pier; and 200 pairs were distributed to the River Raisin Battlefield Foundation. We only ran out on the Sunday before the event.

2024 Michigan in Perspective Local History Conference

Despite being late on account of the pop-up winter storm that appeared between Monroe and Rochester Hills, I presented my *Custers of Monroe* program at the Historical Society of Michigan's annual Michigan in Perspective Local History Conference on March 22nd.

Personnel Updates

There are no personnel updates at this time.

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM

Deputy Director's Report

Friday, March 1 through Friday, April 5, 2024

Submitted by Jeffrey J. (JJ) Przewozniak

On Saturday, March 2, we hosted a special hands-on workshop with fiber arts expert (and museum supporter) Donna Casaceli. The topic was exploring 19th-century knitting, focusing in the brioche stitch, intended for experienced knitters. Attendance was limited, and all slots were filled.

One Book One Community planning has metamorphosed into community events! In addition to attending the kickoff event on Tuesday, March 12, our main support for OBOC was hosting an event with author Barb Barton on her book *Manoomin: the Story of Wild Rice in Michigan* on Thursday, March 14, and also presenting a museum tour with an emphasis on Native American lifeways on Friday, March 15. Thanks to Jill and all staff who assisted with OBOC involvement this year.

You could say that museum operations have been “eclipsed” by the coming lunar phenomenon. Eclipse happenings include:

- Eclipse glasses have been provided by the MCMS to our community free of charge. A couple thousand pairs have been distributed across the community to museum visitors, and to organizations around the county.
- The March YesterWays was dedicated to making shadow box pinhole cameras.
- In the two weeks prior to the eclipse, the shadow box activity station was staffed each day except Sundays.
- On Monday, March 25, a very brief pre-recorded interview with me aired on WDET, during which Pat Batcheller and I talked about all manner of things eclipse-related.
- On Friday, April 5, we hosted a field trip from Arborwood Elementary to make pinhole camera eclipse viewers.
- On the day of the eclipse, our pinhole camera M.A.S.H. unit bugged out to Sterling State Park, where we interacted with a sizable audience of community eclipse fanatics.

Miscellany:

- Our schoolhouse orchard trees are currently enjoying a relaxing stretch: their limbs have been gently pulled and staked to encourage full growth. The stakes and ropes should be removed within the next month.
- Andy and I both attended the Local history conference held March 22-23 at Oakland University.

LOCAL HISTORY DIVISION Report
For March, 2024

We were open by appointment with 10 visitors, 5 walk-ins, and about 20 GSMC members.

Topics included the obituaries, the Wilson, Hall, Deland families, and house histories.

Rachel processed 11 obits from 15 requests. She handled 5 phone call requests and 16 emails. Surnames included Koster, MacMurdo, Smit, Cousino, Taft, Hayward and the topic of the London Methodist church. When upstairs she continues to move and label the obituary drawers, plus answer requests and look up obits. She works the front desk for Guest Services, also working on the weekends, and handling visitors.

Robert had 26 outside calls and answered 15 emails. He continues processing the William Capaul collection images. Processed from FIC: Monroe Catholic Elementary schools pen, pennant and lanyard; Exeter Historical Society COVID-19 themed Christmas ornament. He is now being used to remove & install historical markers, posts, etc. with Mike Nelligan.

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

Accessions during March:

2024.9	Robert Sieb: mostly archival materials re Monroe politics and city events of his father
2024.10	Nancy Rhoads: OFD Muskrat Ball program
2024.11	Ted Zeitz: misc. archival documents re the Navarre family
2024.12	Laurie Schultz: genealogical materials from Jean Siebarth

I am still (and will be for a while) processing the extensive Everett Payette Collection we received from the Monroe News/Gannett last year. I have returned to the Verhoeven collection to make it more useable and have a more helpful finding guide.

County Obituary page: March 2024: 8,814 page views.

Lynn W. Reaume, County Historian
3 April, 2024