



**Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting**

Wednesday, 15 January @ 7 pm
126 South Monroe Street
Monroe, Michigan 48161

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Introductions
4. Election of Board Chair
5. Election of Vice-Chair
6. Appointment of Past Chair
7. Appointment of Trustee Emeritus
8. Committee Appointments
9. Approval of Agenda
10. Approval of Minutes from Regular Meeting of 11 December 2024
11. Public Comment
12. Markers Committee
 1. Marker Text Approval - Action Requested
13. Projects Fund Committee
 1. 2025 Application - Action Requested
14. Spirit of Service Committee
 1. 2025 Application - Action Requested
15. New Business
 1. Staff Reports
 2. Acceptance of New Accessions or Deaccessions
16. Old Business
17. Public Comment
18. Board Comments
19. Adjournment

Next Meeting

Wednesday, 12 February 2025 @ 7 pm

Monroe County Museum

126 South Monroe Street

Monroe, Michigan 48161

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 reach and varied stories, joining together to unearth meaning and illuminate relevant connections between the past, present, and future.

2025 Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees

(All terms expire 31 December 2026)

Officers	Trustees
Chair	Past Chair Hobby Nels
Vice Chair	Trustee Emeritus Richard Micka
Secretary	Trustee Barbara Roe, County District 1
Immediate Past Chair	Trustee Vacant, County District 2
	Trustee Sue Wagers, County District 3
	Trustee L William Conner, County District 4
	Trustee Michelle Lavoy, County District 5
	Trustee Brian Egen, County District 6
	Trustee Anne Noland, County District 7
	Trustee Michael Humphries, County District 8
	Trustee Nick Guthrie, County District 9

2025 Board of Trustees Committees

(Appointed annually by the board chair)

Executive Committee	
Awards Committee	
Markers Committee	
Projects Committee	

Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes: Wednesday, December 11, 2024 // 6:00 PM
Held at the Monroe County Museum
126 South Monroe Street, Monroe, MI 48161

Attendance:

Brian Egen, Chair	District 6
Richard Micka, Trustee Emeritus	
Anne Noland	District 7
Nick Guthrie	District 9
Sue Wagers	District 3
Mike Humphries, Secretary	District 8

Andy Clark, Director	
JJ Przewozniak, Deputy Director	

Not present:

Jeremy Potter, Vice-Chair	District 1	(excused)
L. William Connor	District 4	(excused)
Hobby Nels, Immediate Past Chair		
Michelle LaVoy	District 5	(excused)

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM, and roll call was taken by Chairman Egen. A motion was made to approve the agenda, which was supported by Mike Humphries, seconded by many, and passed unanimously. The minutes from the regular meeting of November 13, 2024 were then up for approval. Secretary Humphries supported a motion to accept the minutes as presented, which was then seconded by Sue Wagers and passed unanimously.

1st public comment: A comment was made in support of the Christmas decorations at the museum.

Old Business; County Museum Addition, Second Round Comments:

Nick Guthrie expressed appreciation for the detailed architectural plans for the proposed addition. Director Clark reported a grant opportunity offered by the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity within the last week, a one-time initiative aimed at supporting Michigan's museums and nonprofit foundations, and identified it as a potential benefit for the County Museum expansion plan. He said that he and JJ Przewozniak would attend a webinar tomorrow (December 12, 2024) to find out more information.

Secretary Humphries suggested coordinating with the City of Monroe's grant writing personnel to identify other grant opportunities that could support the project. All agreed. Chairman Egen expressed that the City would likely be supportive. Both he and Secretary Humphries agreed that it would be advantageous to work with personnel who could potentially identify and engage applicable grant opportunities that may be outside the wheelhouse of the traditional purview of the museum field.

Director Clark mentioned that should a grant opportunity arise, an official endorsement to proceed would be sought at the next County Board Meeting.

Chairman Egen inquired about the necessity of a BoT motion to formally authorize MCMS administration to conduct grant research/exploration. Secretary Humphries stated that an endorsement should be pursued so the museum administration can be unimpeded in acquiring any potential grants. Other trustees shared the sentiment, expressing that pursuing grants unimpeded was a no-brainer.

Secretary Humphries made a motion for the Board of Trustees to encourage museum administration to seek and pursue any available grants or financial opportunities related to the expansion. Nick Guthrie seconded and the motion was passed unanimously with no further discussion.

Sue Wagers suggested that we're in an advantageous position being in a historic building. Chairman Egen agreed and asserted the need to comply with SHPO and Secretary of the Interior standards. Conversation ensued about criteria, standards, and related information regarding the state, local, and national registries of historic places.

Dick Micka inquired as to whether the grant process is connected to the Inflation Reduction Act, expressing concern that funding could potentially be frozen. Some discussion ensued.

Brian reminded all that the decision to proceed with the County Museum expansion will be monumental, and that all trustees should be 100% invested in moving forward. Director Clark mentioned the importance of coordination with the Central Office, and Secretary Humphries suggested moving forward at speed to ensure no opportunities are lost.

Dick Micka asked how the millage would be affected should matching funds be necessary. Some discussion ensued.

Secretary Humphries stated that if necessary, he could help facilitate a special millage to fund the expansion project. Discussion ensued regarding the potential support of County Commissioners, should such an endeavor take place. Director Clark voiced a concern about how a special millage would impact the operating millage. Discussion ensued on assorted financial matters.

Chairman Egen stated the importance of bringing the total amount down with the help of outside known companies who could potentially review the cost estimate from PLY. Discussion was drawn to a close.

2nd public comment: (none)

Board comment: Holiday wishes and thankful sentiments, were expressed by all. Brian complimented the dynamism of the BoT.

Nick Guthrie made a motion to adjourn that was seconded by Secretary Humphries, and passed unanimously at approximately 6:50 PM.

12.1 Marker Text Approval - Action Requested

HISTORICAL MARKER PROGRAM COVER SHEET

Title/Subject:

Side A: The Railroad Well
Side B: Gertrude Crampton

Location:

Ida Branch Library
3016 Lewis Avenue
Ida, Michigan

Marker Maker:

Sewah Studios

Marker Style:

Georgia Series, 24" H x 36" W

Text Size:

5/8" (estimated maximum of 135 words per side)

Text Style:

Justified

Text:

SIDE A: From original marker
SIDE B: New text

Notes:

This marker was split during the removal of Christmas decorations in January 2022.

The Railroad Well is text from the original marker.

Gertrude Crampton is new text for Side B to keep in line with the marker program's goal of having different text on each side of the marker.

Staff recommendation:

Approve for production.

SIDE A

The Railroad Well

In 1836, a well was placed at this site for the use of the Southern Michigan Railroad Company to supply water for its steam locomotives. This rail line was used for passengers and freight between Monroe and Adrian. Because the water from this well proved to be an excellent supply, a stop was established here and the township of Ida was born and flourished. As time passed, the well was closed by the railroad. In 1939, the new Ida Volunteer Fire Department re-opened the well and leased its use from the railroad to provide fire protection for the community of Ida.

Word Count: 105 words

SIDE B

Gertrude Crampton

Ida's most famous author, Gertrude Crampton, was born June 26, 1909 in New York to Faust and Ruby Crampton. A resident of Ida for 25 years and teacher at Mason Consolidated Schools, she began her writing career producing science textbooks for first through third grade students. After writing her first three textbooks, Crampton turned to children's fiction. Crampton was best known for the works she created under the Little Golden Books series. Her most well-known books include *Tootle*, a story about a train that lost its way, and *Scuffy the Tugboat*, a toy boat that sailed down the river looking for adventure. Together, the two books have combined to sell over 17 million copies. Crampton died in Arizona in 1996, at the age of 86.

Word Count: 128 words

13.1 2025 Historical Projects Fund Application - Action Requested



2025 Historical Projects Fund Application

For 2025, the Monroe County Museum System has a total of \$60,000 available in project funding to assist area non-profit historical organizations, local units of government, and qualifying non-profit organizations in the preservation, presentation, and promotion of Monroe County's history.

The following pages detail the qualifications, procedures, and the historical projects fund application. All proposals must use the attached historical projects fund application and must be submitted electronically. Acceptable file formats are .doc, .docx, .pdf, or .jpeg. Applications must be sent to Monroe County Museum System Director Andrew Clark at andy_clark@monroemi.org by 11.59 pm, **Saturday, 3 May 2025**. Once the application is submitted, the only additional documents permitted are those requested by the Monroe County Museum System Projects Fund Committee or the committee's designee. No supplemental materials may be presented after the deadline. The application and supporting materials (such as quotes/estimates) must be submitted as a single, printable document.

Please note that it is a requirement that all applications must be submitted electronically. Applications that are incomplete, submitted by mail, in-person, or handwritten will be automatically disqualified. Any organization requesting funds that operates out of a municipally owned facility or is located on municipal property, must submit the application jointly with that municipality and include a letter of support from that municipality.

After reviewing the applications, the Monroe County Museum Projects Fund Committee will make its funding recommendations to the Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees.

If you have any questions or need technical support in completing your application, please contact Andrew Clark, Monroe County Museum System, 734.240.7781 or andy_clark@monroemi.org.

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM

At the Monroe County Museum System, 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.



ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS

1. Must be a non-profit organization with a primary focus on local history;
2. or a local unit of government within Monroe County;
3. or a non-profit organization within Monroe County, Michigan that owns and primarily operates out of a historic building;
4. inactive historic cemeteries;
5. active historic cemeteries;
6. and must have received non-profit status prior to the date of application.

INELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS

1. Properties owned by the County of Monroe, Michigan.
2. Support groups of properties owned by the County of Monroe, Michigan.
3. Private individuals or privately owned properties.

RULES AND CONDITIONS

1. The project must occur within the land and water boundaries of Monroe County, Michigan.
2. In order to allow for and encourage the participation of multiple organizations each project funding cycle, the maximum project award will not exceed \$20,000.
3. Organizations may only submit one grant per grant cycle.
4. All aspects of the application must be completed thoroughly, professionally, and all requirements fulfilled in order to have consideration.
5. All projects must be free and accessible to any visitor or guest.
6. Awards may or may not be equal to the full amount requested based on the availability of fund, quantity of requests, or merit of the project.
7. Approval of funding in one project fund cycle does not mean approval of future project fund applications.
8. Each award will be made as a standalone award although project funding may be awarded for a phased project.
9. Funds may not be used for recurring charges such as utility payments, service contracts, rental payments, employee wages, etc.
10. Projects may commence upon initial notice of the award to the recipient.
11. Projects must be completed within twenty-four months of receiving the official award letter and agreement.
12. Projects taking more than one year to complete must submit a written progress report at the twelve month mark.
13. Payments will not be disbursed until a signed award agreement is received.



14. Project requests that duplicate the core mission, programs, or services of the Monroe County Museum System will not be considered.
15. Projects started before the initial notice of the award will be disqualified.
16. A reasonable effort should be made to find vendors and contractors based in Monroe County, Michigan.

HISTORICAL PROJECTS FUND CATEGORIES

All Historical Project Fund Awards must fit within one of the following priorities of the Monroe County Museum System.

Preservation (Sites and Collections)

Funds which will go toward special projects that aid in the care, maintenance, and restoration* of a site or an organization's artifact or archival holdings. Examples of fund usage are: windows, roofs, foundation repairs, equipment (mechanical equipment, sump pumps, etc), interior or exterior painting, collections care materials, collections database systems, collections technology needs, shelving, cabinets, installation or repair of HVAC, installation of security systems, or scanning and digitization of historical collections.**

*Restoration projects must be done in accordance of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines of the Treatment of Historic structures (<https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm>).

**The Monroe County Archives must receive a complete copy of any digitization projects.

Presentation (Exhibits and Programming)

Funds may be used for exhibit creation, exhibit rentals, history related presenters, museum quality display cases, preservation lighting, interpretive signage, historical marker refurbishment and replacement, audio tours, fees associated with hiring outside contractors for exhibit construction or design, IT equipment (not to exceed one computer and one projector per organization over a five year period), and accessibility enhancements, etc.

Promotion

Funds that may be used to aid in the promotion of an organization, program, or exhibit such as brochures, rack cards, websites, and the professional costs associated with the creation of said materials.



HISTORICAL PROJECTS FUND DEFINITIONS

In-Kind Support

All projects must include in-kind or cash support. In-kind support is support that is directly attributed to the project your organization is applying for. In-kind support may come through volunteer hours, donated materials, services, or labor. For example: In-kind support can be claimed for a volunteer installing drywall for an exhibit that has been donated by a local hardware store for your project. The volunteer's time and the drywall are in-kind support. However, if the volunteer is mowing your site's lawn and it has nothing to do with the scope of your project, those hours cannot be included as in-kind support.

Final Report

All organizations must submit a final report when submitting their reimbursement paperwork. Paperwork submitted without a final report will not be processed by the Monroe County Museum System. Additionally, the Monroe County Museum System will not be responsible for reminding organizations to submit a final report with their reimbursement requests.

The final report must include a cover letter (not to exceed one page), a project narrative (not to exceed two pages), listing of volunteers with recorded hours, listing of in-kind donors with contact information, before/after photographs or event photographs, media coverage, proof recognizing the Monroe County Museum System, final budget, invoices, and receipts. The report must be submitted as a single document in one of the following formats: .doc, .docx, .pdf, or .jpeg.



Part I.

Application Cover Sheet

Organization

Address:

Website:

EIN:

Project Type (select one):

Preservation Presentation Promotion Estimated Project Total:

Amount Requested from the MCMS:

Project Contact

Prefix:

Name:

Address:

Email:

Phone:

(The Project Contact is the sole point of contact for the management of the project, submits the application, and has the responsibility of submitting the final report to the Monroe County Museum System.)

Past (if any) experience in managing a project and award funds:



Municipal Partner Contact (if required)

Municipality:

Municipality Contact:

Address:

Email:

Phone:



Part II.

Project Description

Start Date:

End Date:

Describe the project and how does it support local history:

What do you hope to have accomplished at the conclusion of the project?

What specific activities will need to occur as part of the project? When do these happen along the project's overall timeline?

Does this project/event occur annually?

Target Audience

Describe your target audience:

How many adults and children do you hope to impact by this project each year?

How do you plan to promote awareness of your project/program to reach your target audience?



Part III.

Project Budget

All funding requests must complete the summary Project Budget. If additional space is needed, please attach it to the application. All applicants must provide a 15% cash match and a 10% in-kind match or a 25% cash match by applicant.

Please note: According to [IndependentSector.org](https://www.independentsector.org/), the value of an hour of volunteer time in Michigan is currently estimated to be \$31.59 an hour. Valuations of volunteer time greater than this number will not be accepted in the Project Budget section.

A. Amount Being Requested from the MCMS:

- Provide a detailed list of items or services that you will be looking to purchase through the HPF.
- This number should be the same as located in Part I: Application Cover, Amount Requested from the MCMS.
- Requested amount must be supported with at least three price quotes/estimates per item to be purchased or service to be provided. If three quotes/estimates are not provided, a written reason must be submitted with the application.
- A lack of quotes/estimates will be considered an incomplete application.

B. Cash Match Amount:

- This should be either 15% or 25% of your total project.

C. In-Kind Support:

- Provide a detailed list of items or services that will be donated along with their values and a general outline of the work that volunteers will be providing.
- Volunteer Hours: Number of hours x \$31.59 = Volunteer In-Kind Support.

D. Estimated Project Total:

(Requested Amount + Cost Share Amount + Cost Share In-Kind = Estimated Project Total. This number should be the same as located in Part I: Application Cover, Estimated Project Total.)



Part IV.

Required Application Attachments

- Outside Letter(s) of Support/Commitment from Collaborators
- List of Current Board Members for Applicant Organization Organization Non-Profit Status Documentation
- Last three years of 990s
- At least three quotes/estimates for items and/or services to be purchased through the Historical Projects Fund is mandatory

Part V.

Authorizing Official

Enter the name of the person (such as the president, executive director, etc.) who is authorized to submit application for funding on the organization's behalf and who will agree to comply with the certifications set forth below.

Prefix:

First Name:

Last Name:

Organization:

Email:

I agree to acknowledge support from the Monroe County Museum System in all publicity and media materials used to promote the activity/project/program.

I agree to submit a final report within sixty (60) days following the conclusion of the last program or project completion.

I agree that if, for any reason, the project/program is canceled, I will immediately contact the Monroe County Museum System and reimburse any expended funds.

The submission of this application by the Authorizing Official indicates that the Sponsoring Non-Profit or Local Unit of Government agrees to the commitments made as part of the project proposal and the named personnel will perform the duties outlined in the proposal.

Signature:

Date:

14.1 2025 Spirit of Service Awards Application - Action Requested



2025 Spirit of Service Awards

OVERVIEW

About the Awards

Established in 2018, the Spirit of Service Awards are presented by the Monroe County Museum System's Board of Trustees and honors individuals, groups, and scholars who have significantly contributed to the field of local history in Monroe County.

Award Categories

Illumination Award

The service of this **individual** has made a lasting contribution or impact on the history and community of Monroe County. Their service is clearly recognized and valued by peers, community members, and community leaders for their dedication and accomplishments. (This award may be granted posthumously though the preference is to recognize living individuals.)

Connection Award

This award honors **a school, organization, or municipal body** that has demonstrated service to the field of local history through a commitment of time and energy that has actively engaged the wider community through heritage stewardship.

Exploration Award

This award recognizes **a scholarly publication, project, or initiative** that has contributed towards a better understanding of Monroe County's history.

Publications should appear in a magazine, periodical, or book from a reputable publisher. Online articles will be considered as long as they are part of a reputable publisher and not the product of a personal blog or website. Publication must have occurred within the previous five years.

Projects may take a variety of forms such as an archaeological dig, new exhibit, phone app, preservation efforts, etc. However, they must be related to a Monroe County site or personage.

Eligibility

There is no residency requirement but the focus of the individual or group receiving the award must have primarily occurred or be located within the historical or current boundaries



of Monroe County, Michigan. For projects within historical boundaries of Monroe County, it must have happened when that location or personage was part of Monroe County. (For example, a publication about the history of Port Lawrence Township, Michigan would be acceptable. A publication primarily about Toledo, Ohio, which now occupies Port Lawrence, would not.)

Service to a historical site or by a historical society must have occurred within the current boundaries of Monroe County, Michigan.

Current members of the Monroe County Board of Commissioners, Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees, or current County of Monroe employees cannot be nominated in the Illumination or Connection Award categories. The above groups may be eligible for an Exploration Award if the project is separate from their day-to-day duties and responsibilities.

Award recipients are not eligible for renomination within five years.

The Spirit of Service Awards Committee may use a previous year's nomination for any category.

Submission Guidelines

All applications for the Spirit of Service Awards are due by 11.59 pm, Saturday, 5 April 2025.

All applications must be submitted electronically to the Monroe County Museum Director, Andrew Clark, at andy_clark@monroemi.org.

Supplemental materials such as newspaper clippings, magazine articles, etc that support the nomination should be attached to the application as a pdf or jpeg. Website links may be included in the body of the email of the application. (Website links should be free to access.) No letters of support please.

Awards Process

All nominations will be reviewed by Spirit of Service Awards Committee. The committee will then make their recommendations to the Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees for approval.

Awards can be granted annually. The public awards program will take place every other year. For questions or technical assistance besides the email above, you can contact Andrew at 734.240.7781.



2025 Spirit of Service Awards

APPLICATION

1. For which award is the individual or group being nominated?
(Select only one.)

____ Illumination

____ Connection

____ Exploration

2. Name of group or individual being nominated:

3. Contact information of nominee:

Address:

Phone:

Email:



4. Describe the work or project that inspired you to nominate this individual or group?



5. Why do you believe this nominee has advanced the field of history or historic preservation in Monroe County?



6. When and where was this volunteer service or historic preservation project performed?



7. How has this work impacted or benefitted the citizens of Monroe County?



8. Submitted by:

Name:

Address:

Phone number:

Email:

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM

Director's Report

Submitted by Andrew Clark, Director

Wednesday, 15 January 2025

Organizational Operations

County Museum

Hours of operation are Sundays through Saturdays, 10 am to 5 pm.

County Archives

Research is by appointment and via phone, mail, and email.

Territorial Park

Planned reopening is for 22 May 2025. Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, 10 am to 4 pm.

Vietnam Veterans Museum

Planned reopening is for 23 May 2025. Fridays, 10 am to 4 pm.

St Antoine's Historic Site

Grounds are open year round.

Upcoming Closures

The Monroe County Museum System will be closed Monday, 20 January for the Martin Luther King Jr Holiday, a county holiday.

Maintenance and Operations

Museum and Archives

No significant maintenance projects to report.

Territorial Park

No maintenance projects to report.

The privately owned auxiliary field across from the park that we have used for Octobernight parking the last couple years is now filled with mounds of dirt. If these mounds are maintained on the site or are harbingers of a new building project, it will be unusable for our previous purposes. I'll be reviving efforts to have the county property across from the school on Raisinville Road be modified for parking in October.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Museum

No maintenance projects to report.

St Antoine's Historic Site Memorial

Nothing to report.

Exhibits

Among his various projects, our Exhibits Specialist, Mike Nelligan, has been busy building new artifact platforms for our La-Z-Boy Chair Collection on the second floor. The new platforms will be installed later this month.

Building Program

Work on the grant reported on at the December meeting continues.

Markers Program

Included in this month's meeting packet awaiting board approval (agenda item 12.1) is the marker text for "The Railroad Well"/"Gertrude Crampton."

Those of you who have been on the board long enough may recall when the original marker was irreparably damaged following a Christmas de-decorating incident. The original marker had the same text on both sides. In keeping with the marker policy of having different text on each side of the marker, the new marker is being submitted to include local educator and author Gertrude Crampton.

Due to their volume of work, Sewah Studios currently estimates that new marker production will take six to eight months.

Representatives from the Ida Civic Club would certainly appreciate the marker's return in time for the 2025 Christmas in Ida event held annually in the first weekend in December.

Historical Projects Fund

The draft 2025 Historical Projects Fund Application (agenda item 13.1) has been included for approval at this month's meeting.

Changes are relatively limited. Active Historic Cemeteries have been included in the eligibility list and the project timeframe has been expanded from twelve months to twenty-four months with the requirement of a written progress report after one year for two year projects.

If approved, the application will go live on our website no later than 31 January 2025 and be due no later than 5 April 2025.

Awards Program

Included in the meeting packet for this month (agenda item 14.1) is the 2025 Spirit of Service Awards Application.

Aside from updating it to 2025 dates, there have been no significant changes to the application.

If approved, the application will go live on our website no later than 31 January 2025 and be due no later than

Personnel Updates

All current and new trustees have been appointed or reappointed by their commissioners through 31 December 2026.

The situation regarding an appointment for District 2 remains unresolved.

Barbara Roe of Dundee is the new trustee for District 1.

The Monroe County Museum has rejoined the contracted county cleaning services to have the bathrooms cleaned on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Once Papermill School and the Vietnam Veterans Museum have opened for the season, they will be cleaning the bathrooms at those locations once a week. The company that the county contracted with is All Inclusive Commercial Building Solutions out of Ypsilanti.

While I've attempted to keep the cleaning of bathrooms in-house in recent years as past contractors have been quite uneven in quality, it has also resulted in oddly fusing this job duty into the Exhibits Specialist position. We've had graphic designers cleaning the bathrooms and we've had skilled carpenters cleaning the bathrooms. Admittedly, once in the rhythm of cleaning the bathrooms, it doesn't take a tremendous amount of time to clean them, it also ends up as a bit of a distraction from primary job duties in exhibits. As our current Exhibits Specialist Mike Nelligan increasingly shows his broad range of talents and skill sets, I wanted to provide him with more time focusing on exhibit builds and mounts and less time on routine maintenance.

There are no staff updates to report at this time.

Hodge Podge

While my report is not a reflection on the entirety of activities performed by museum system staff, please review the reports submitted by JJ and Lynn to get a broader reflection of staff activities.

Many kudos to the museum staff that decorated and programmed the county museum during the holidays. As always, event conversations have generated more ideas and suggestions on improvements for Christmas 2025. Our *Ghosts of Christmas Past* partnership with Nocturnal was a great addition to our programmatic offerings.

The Juneteenth Holiday has been added to the County of Monroe's list of holidays beginning this year.

Please join us on Thursday, 16 January at 7 pm as we host our first Third Thursday of 2025, a program by Jeff Morrison regarding Michigan architecture.

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM

Deputy Director's Report

Friday, November 2, 2024, through Friday, January 10, 2025

Submitted by Jeffrey J. (JJ) Przewozniak

Christmas with the Monroe County Museum

- At this time, the remains of a festive array of holiday decor, program supplies, temporary exhibits, and assorted chestnut-roasting equipment have been just neatly packed away for the season. *Christmas at the Monroe County Museum* was a season-long assortment of museum programming presented November 22 through December 29. We generally followed the pattern from last year, but added additional elements for a more robust suite of community offerings.

It all started with a chestnut roast at *Hometown Holiday Lights* on Friday, November 22, where our 1860s strollers mingled with the downtown throng as several hundred visitors dropped in to the museum to see the decor and write letters to Santa. 25 lbs of chestnuts were gone in what seemed like a flash! *Ghosts of Christmas Past* was a new element this year, inspired by the success of *Shadowed Sips* in October. On three following Wednesdays, the team at Nocturnal Monroe was kind enough to host us for dramatic evening readings of *A Christmas Carol*, serialized around the three ghosts.

Saturday, December 7 was *Cocoa with the Conductor*! Last year's format was re-imagined, and a daytime event was tried out, with all participating staff sporting wonderful conductor uniforms for on-demand dramatic readings of several holiday classics for visitors young and old. Sunday, December 15 was our second chestnut roast at the Eby House, as a crowd gathered for the Vintage Market's *Merry Masquerade* at the County Fairgrounds. Good cheer abounded as the 1860s strollers again mingled with the crowd.

YesterWays, our signature hands-on weekend activity was offered throughout the month, and paper Froebel stars were added as a new historic holiday craft to accompany the ever-popular pomanders. Finally, it was our pleasure to be a drop-off location for *Toys for Tots* again this year, and to act as Santa's official North Pole mail forwarding service. Thanks to all staff who worked together to develop, execute, maintain, and strike a merry season of holiday happenings for 2024.

Territorial Park:

- The restoration of the kitchen building at RRTP was completed on Wednesday, November 27. A crew of 5 worked throughout the day until approx. 6:30 PM, completing the project by the light of Andy's and JJ's headlights. The day's work focused on removing the old roof and installing a new one of cedar shakes, and completion of the clapboard siding installation begun on October 23. As if on schedule, cold weather made a dramatic appearance the day after completion, and it's with no small degree of satisfaction that we rested knowing the building was appropriately dressed in its winter clothing. In the following days, the site was cleared of debris and leftover material, and the domestic yard reopened. The interior plaster remains damaged due to the heavy exterior work, which will be repaired when the weather decides to cooperate at the end of winter. Kitchen furnishings and supplies have been temporarily relocated to the Navarre house.

This project was enveloped by much research and preparation to ensure that this historic building would be both adequately protected from the elements using up-to-date materials and techniques, and also presented with the utmost attention to historic details to ensure a period-correct appearance. As the work was in-process, MCMS staff provided excellent support in multiple ways, from critical site preparation and demo work, to jobsite leadership, to detailed cleanup, and much more. Special thanks to Andy, Mike,

Robert, Nicholas, Josh Satkowski, the Save Our Stories committee, Chairman Egen, and others for their support, assistance, and consultation. And most especially, thanks to our talented work crew who journeyed from afar to help: Harvey, Jim, Mervin, Elmer, and Raymond.

Miscellany:

- Participation in *One Book, One Community of Monroe County* is ongoing. The County Museum is set to offer a special themed program on Saturday, March 29.
- The January *YesterWays*, continues to be offered Saturdays and Sundays from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. This month's activity was inspired by a navy blue wool sweater in our collection (Accession # 72.1.31.1) that was knit for the war effort in about 1918, and worn by Erwin Wagner (1894-1971) who served with the U.S. Navy. Using the original 1917 American Red Cross instructions, we're teaching participants how to knit.
- On Thursday, November 14, we stayed open late in support of the Downtown Monroe Business Network's Girlfriends Night Out event.
- Special thanks to Caleb Gilbert, Cody Pado, Lily Close, and the crew at Nocturnal Monroe for their diverse assistance and cooperation this reporting period. And special thanks to artist Carol James of Winnipeg, Canada for the generous loan of fingerweaving samples for the November *YesterWays*.

LOCAL HISTORY DIVISION

For December, 2024

We were open by appointment for about 8 visitors, 3 walk-ins, and 22 GSMC members.

Topics included many obituaries, different houses research, Monroe Farmer's Market, Duncanson family, the Waidner family, and one couple brought in their stereopticon to view some of the many stereo cards we have in the collection.

Rachel processed 6 obits from 6 requests. She handled 4 phone call requests and 14 emails. She had an interesting correspondence with Bruno Zenoni who discovered a World War II Monroe Paper Products ration box in a deserted building on the Genoa coastline. He asked if the company was still around and correspondence and photographs followed and were exchanged.

A possible new owner of the 'Blind Babies' house on East Vine inquired about the history of the house and we developed a timeline, images, etc. for her.

Robert had 13 outside calls and answered 24 emails. He continued processing Capaul collection photographs, assisted with the 'Cocoa with the conductor' event, made a searchable digital copy of the 1925-26 Monroe City Directory, watched the front desk, looked into blasting machines, Custer and Austin Blair.

Accessions during December:

2024.63	William Smith: currency
2024.64	William Smith: business coat hanger & yardstick
2024.65	Micaela Bogi: MHS 'letter jacket' and graduation photograph of owner
2024.66	G.S.M.C.: Overmyer family photographs
2024.67	Viola Switlik: maternity clothes of her mother and a handmade serving tray
2024.68	Marcia Rudzinski: Professionally made, woman's muskrat coat

County Obituary page: 5,886 views and 647 users; 12,914 total for all events

Lynn W. Reaume, County Historian

6 January 2025

LOCAL HISTORY DIVISION

For November, 2024

We were open by appointment for 20 visitors, 3 walk-ins, and 22 GSMC members.

Topics included many obituaries, genealogy including Leonard, Conlogue, Deputy Taylo, & Hoffman families; Stony Creek Road, George Custer; Frenchtown township, paver research, War of 1812 soldiers, photographs, Younglove Glove Company, Berlin township, maps.

Rachel processed 20 obits from 7 requests. She handled 7 phone call requests and 9 emails.

Robert had 29 outside calls and answered 17 emails. He began processing 2024.49 scrapbooks, helped at the Navarre-Morris cabin and the chestnut roasting at the tree lighting. He brought back items on loan to the conservator Mark Gervasi (Murphy painting, piano chair, Sieb pitcher and spoon, Nims saber and Custer trophy) and took other items up. He created a searchable 1921-1922 Monroe city Directory and did relabeling. He also processed more FIC items 2024.0.237-253.

Rachel & I went to the Berlin Township Historical Society presentation on Township Politicians.
Robert & I participated in a Collections meeting with Andy & JJ.

Accessions during November:

2024.57	W. F. Smith: obsolete currency
2024.58	West Ida Emmanuel church: electric record turntable
2024.59	Richard Miller: original 1908 Sanborn map for Monroe
2024.60	Jason Eichler: obsolete dollar note
2024.61	M. Van Wasshova: three Pacific 'Stars & Stripes' Vietnam era newspapers
2024.62	J. Alberg: color photograph of River Raisin Paper Co. building

U-M Dearborn Professor John Chenoweth came to Monroe on the 4th and picked up additional bags and box of River Raisin Battlefield archaeological artifacts to add to the previous artifacts.

The rest of time I spent setting up Christmas decorations on both floors, in time for the Nov. 22nd Downtown Tree Lighting. I set up a 'Cat's Meow' display of Monroe sites; made two "I Spy" style tabletop vignettes with Jim Peltier's Christmas village buildings and people; added red lights to a half-lit white tree; added touches of Letters to Santa in the existing Post Office display on the main floor. Staff put up the greenery in the Newton Room for me.

Robert & I hung the newly conserved Royal Potter homestead painting on the second floor.

And all other things as necessary...

County Obituary page: 4,833 views and 606 users; 10,745 total for all events

Lynn W. Reaume, County Historian
5 December 2024