



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

Tuesday, 20 May 2025 @ 7 pm
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 12 March 2025
5. Public Comment
6. Markers Committee
7. Projects Fund Committee
 1. 2025 Historical Projects Fund Recommendations - **Action Needed**
8. Awards Committee
 1. 2025 Spirit of Service Awards Recommendations - **Action Needed**
9. New Business
 1. Staff Reports
 2. Acceptance of Accessions
 3. Approval of Deaccessions
10. Old Business
 1. Museum Addition Update
11. Public Comment
12. Board Comments
13. Adjournment

Next Meeting

Wednesday, 11 June 2025 @ 7 pm
Monroe County Museum
126 South Monroe Street
Monroe, Michigan 48161

2025 Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees

(All terms expire 31 December 2026)

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

2025 Board of Trustees Committees

(Appointed annually by the board chair)

Executive Committee	<i>Board:</i> Brian Egen (Chair), Michelle Lavoy, Michael Humphries, Hobby Nels <i>Staff:</i> Andrew Clark, JJ Przewozniak
Awards Committee	<i>Board:</i> Michelle Lavoy, Anne Noland <i>Staff:</i> Andrew Clark
Markers Committee	<i>Board:</i> Nick Guthrie (Chair), Brian Egen, Michael Humphries, Barbara Roe <i>Staff:</i> Andrew Clark, JJ Przewozniak, Lynn Reaume
Projects Committee	<i>Board:</i> Michael Humphries (Chair), Bill Conner, Brian Egen, Nick Guthrie <i>Staff:</i> 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 reach 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 12th, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.
Monroe County Museum, 126 South Monroe Street, Monroe

Present: Barbara Roe, District 1	Tom Heywood, District 2	Sue Wagers, District 3
Brian Egen, District 6	Anne Noland, District 7	Michael Humphries, District 8
Nick Guthrie, District 9	Richard Micka, Emeritus	Hobby Nels, Past Chairman

Excused: William Conner, District 4 Michelle LaVoy, District 5

Museum Staff: Director Clark	J.J. Przewozniak, Deputy Director	Lynn Reaume, Co. Historian
Guests: Robin Miller, clerk	Jeanne Micka, Sawyer Homestead	

Prior to 7:00 the attending trustee was sworn in by clerk Robin Miller.

At 7:00 Chairman Egen called the meeting to order and roll was called by Secretary Humphries. There was a quorum.

Approval of the Agenda: Motion was made to accept as written by N. Guthrie, seconded by R. Micka and passed.

Approval of Minutes of January 15, 2025 Meeting: M. Humphries made a motion to accept the meeting minutes as written, seconded by A. Noland and passed.

Public Comment #1: none

Committee Updates:

Historical Markers Committee: Chairman N. Guthrie updated the group that the new Gertrude Crampton side of the Ida Railroad well is at Sewah to be installed in Ida before' Christmas in Ida' in December. Also in the works is the new marker for WWII POWS in Dundee and Ottawa Lake. Refurbishments with the new colors and perhaps new posts will continue this year after evaluations are complete.

Projects Committee: Chairman Humphries outlined briefly the City of Monroe request to have the deadline extended for repairs at the Sawyer Homestead, due to the need for the final accounting paperwork. There are no extra funds involved. He made the motion to extend the deadline for six months. R. Micka supported and it was passed unanimously.

Spirit of Service Committee: There was no report, however Director Clark suggested should the awards be given annually or bi-annually as is done now- discussion later.

New Business: Staff Reports were accepted as written. No motion.

America250MI Grant: Director Clark outlined this Michigan grant possibility for museum needs. There are two rounds of awards, three tiers, and after some discussion motion was made to support the actions of the Director in pursuing this grant, supported by A. Noland, and passed. The website has more on this National theme that can be applied with local scope.

New Accessions or Deaccessions: Motion was made by N. Guthrie to accept the January & February Accessions to Archives & Collections, supported by M. Humphries and passed.

Motion was made by N. Guthrie, supported by M. Humphries to accept the Deaccession from February; passed.

Old Business: Director Clark noted that grant approvals may take place in May. Popular Great Lakes presenter Ric Mixter will be at the RRCA Thursday March 20th.

Public Comment #2: J. Micka remarked the large Christmas tree in December was very nice.

Board Comments: JJ Przewozniak remarked that the sap was running well this spring. He tapped maple trees in front of the IHM Motherhouse.

S. Wagers asked about the IHM and was answered we have no authority- they have their own staff run Archives & Museum. It was announced from Chairman Egen that the Sisters are having a State of Michigan historical marker erected at St. Mary's Park.

Tom Heywood was reappointed- welcome back!

With no other business to discuss, motion was made by N. Guthrie to adjourn, seconded by M. Humphries and the meeting was concluded at 7:33 p.m.

Lynn W. Reaume
Acting recording secretary
19 March 2025

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM

Director's Report

Submitted by Andrew Clark, Director

Tuesday, 20 May 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 and Saturdays, 10 am to 4 pm.

St Antoine's Historic Site

Grounds are open year round.

Upcoming Closures

None planned.

Maintenance and Operations

Museum and Archives

The county museum has had to contend with some unplanned water events at the museum during the tail end of winter and early spring. A faulty pipe leaked into the bound newspaper collection in the basement, impacting more recent volumes. An overflowing toilet in the first floor women's restroom leaked through and hit the bound volumes next to the ones that had already been hit with water. When the pipe leak was discovered, the museum was temporarily closed to allow staff to remove some of the less damaged volumes and air them out until disaster recovery services could put in some air cleaning equipment and dehumidifiers.

The bound newspaper volumes have always been vulnerable to water leaks as several pipes run overhead. However, due to a general lack of storage space, it was about the only option where they could be stored. Disaster recovery services were contacted but the price was not economically viable or they were non-responsive. Museum staff, outfitted in respirators, goggles, layers of gloves, and coveralls have transported most of the damaged books to Papermill School for additional assessment; a second and final transfer of books is slated for later this month. Several volumes, unfortunately, on initial assessment, were complete losses. We expect that after a light cleaning, most volumes will be recoverable. Luckily the bound volumes also exist in a microfilm format.

Additionally, a clog in the plumbing that services the second floor prevented the toilets from flushing and also resulted in a minor leak onto the first floor ceiling. An outside contractor cleared the lines but we will need some additional work on the system which is pending.

Territorial Park

Loop Trail construction around the park continues. Current updates from the project manager indicate that the most impactful part of the project (bridge installation) will likely be completed sometime in early July but that the road will definitely be open prior to Fair Week.

Temporary signage is in place to redirect traffic to our alternate site entrance for the summer.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Museum

Bathrooms have been brought into operational order for the season. Staff performed a thorough clean out of the bathroom building's utility access area (we found helicopter parts were being stored inside!) and the museum building in preparation of the 2025 season. With a repositioning of the desk it has opened up the entrance of the building.

As our staffing situation has improved the site will be open regularly two days a week, Fridays and Saturdays all summer, the first time in several years.

St Antoine's Historic Site Memorial

Nothing to report.

Building Program

As of this writing, no notification for our grant application to the State of Michigan's Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity.

Markers Program

Custer Farm was removed for storage as it was in the way of the Loop Trail project. Lutherans in Monroe County has been reinstalled. Depending on staff availability, hoping to have two more markers reinstalled sometime in June.

Historical Projects Fund

See May agenda item 7.1.

Awards Program

See May agenda item 8.1.

Personnel Updates

Hannah has started as a part-time visitor services specialist to help with front desk coverage at the museum on weekends.

America250MI

In April I submitted a grant proposal to the state committee for \$50,000 to fund the construction of new exhibit cases. As has been detailed in separate staff reports, they are needed. Will likely hear from them sometime in June whether we received the reward or not.

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM.

Deputy Director's Report for March 2025

Submitted by Jeffrey J. (JJ) Przewozniak
Friday, April 4, 2025

The weather was kind enough to accommodate two maple sugaring programs at the Saint Therese IHM Senior Living campus on Friday March 7 and 14. We put in about 45 spiles throughout the property early in the month, and hauled sweet sap to our storage tank every few days, as other prep work continued to build up a temporary sugar camp near the power house building. The programs and overall cooperation with Saint Therese IHM went very well, and I'm pleased to report an overall success. A high point of our relocated maple sugaring program was access to MCES St. Michael campus, just walking distance away. As such, we coordinated with Principal Jagielski to have a mini field trip, amidst engaging with the friendly campus residents throughout sap boiling days. Special thanks to Lori Fischer, Cassie Dillion, Steve Grigsby, and Keegan Sawyer for their great support and cooperation, to the Saint Therese IHM residents for welcoming us to the campus, and to MCES Principal Jagielski and teacher Alex Lepiarz for allowing their students to experience the magic of maple sugaring. In the days following the final public program, all equipment was put away for next year.

In close cooperation with mother nature, scion wood was harvested from multiple pear trees at RRTP and successfully grafted onto OHxF 97 root stock. At this time, 7 new "Jesuit" pear trees are recovering well from surgery in a neonatal care unit (greenhouse) offsite. Stakes have been put in along the eastern fenceline where the new trees will grow, eventually becoming a foliage barrier that'll be a pleasing aesthetic feature. Special thanks to Dan Foster for coordinating and executing this meaningful project.

Work at RRTP is gradually ramping up as we prepare for the upcoming operating season. To make space for the new pear trees and to tidy up the eastern lot, we culled our assorted lumber stock and restacked piles near the pole gate. At this time, the plan is to begin 2025 RRTP operations as usual regardless of N Custer Rd construction, which will require visitors to enter through the staff entrance. As such, we've planned an extension of the existing fence and the addition of a second pole gate to accommodate visitor traffic.

Over the course of a couple weeks, we've spread about 3 tons of manure at RRTP. Thanks to Mike, Josh, and the programs division for the diligent coordination and heavy work, and special thanks to Star Llama Company of Dundee, and the many llamas that made this all possible.

Miscellany:

- *YesterWays* continues to be offered Saturdays and Sundays from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The March activity was paper making, inspired by the many paper mills that once operated in our community.
- Participation in *One Book, One Community of Monroe County* has come to a head. The main event with author Shelby Van Pelt occurred on Wednesday, March 19, and our interactive program at the MCM featuring "Detective Otter & the mysterious disappearance of the aquatic mammals of the fur trade" happened on Saturday, March 29. Thanks to Jill Jablonski and the rest of the MCMS staff who contributed to the events and overall effort.
- On Tuesday, March 18, we hosted a living museum evening event with the students of Trinity Lutheran. Thanks to Shannon Wiley for coordinating a wonderful event and program for the students. A great time was had by all.
- On Thursday, March 20, all hands were needed to assist with the water intrusion event in the basement.
- Special thanks to the Egen family for the donation of a beautiful Rockingham pottery bowl on Wednesday March 26.

Museum Outreach for March 2025:

Date	Location	Program	Est. Attendance	Notes
Wednesday, March 5	Saint Charles Borromeo Catholic Academy 8125 Swan Creek Rd Newport, MI 48166	<i>Aquatic Mammals of the Fur Trade</i>	48	
Friday, March 7	Saint Therese IHM Senior Living 610 W Elm Ave, Monroe, MI 48162	<i>Maple Sugaring</i>	25	
Saturday, March 8	MCM	Museum Tour (DAR)	10	
Friday, March 14	Saint Therese IHM Senior Living 610 W Elm Ave, Monroe, MI 48162	<i>Maple Sugaring</i>	104	Includes field trip from MCES
Wednesday, March 19	Monroe County Community College 1555 S. Raisinville Road, Monroe, MI 48161	OBOC Author Visit	100	
Thursday, March 20	River Raisin Centre For The Arts 114 S. Monroe St. Monroe, MI 48161	<i>Third Thursday: Shipwrecks and a Few Tails</i> With Ric Mixter	80	
Wednesday, March 26	MCM	Museum Tour (ProMedica Womens' Auxiliary)	26	
Saturday, March 29	MCM	<i>The Case of the Aquatic Mammals of the Fur Trade</i> (OBOC event)	11	

Saturdays & Sundays throughout March	MCM	<i>YesterWays:</i> <i>Marchment</i> (paper making)	69
TOTAL			473

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM.

Deputy Director's Report for April 2025

Submitted by Jeffrey J. (JJ) Przewozniak
Thursday, May 8, 2025

Preparations are ramping up at RRTP in preparation for the operating season. I and the programs division staff have gradually increased our presence out there and have been taking care of chores big and small, including but not limited to: expanding the early 1800s gardens (3 new beds), planting, deep cleaning the structures, processing lumber and assorted detritus, grounds work, and a host of miscellaneous essential work for an 1817 farm. Thanks to the programs division for their diligence in creating a beautiful space for visitors to encounter the past. Work continues!

On Tuesday, April 1, a sizable stack of cut lumber was picked up from Mast's Sawmill in Gladwin. The ton-plus order of white oak timbers and beams make up the first chunk of material to re-build the wooden footbridge at RRTP. Throughout the month, Mike has been diligently cutting the timbers to size and prepping them for install on a fresh new deck, set to be installed prior to Memorial Day with the help of a work crew from up north. Special thanks to Mike for ensuring a smooth future install by executing all the heavy and detailed work in advance.

A substantial project at RRTP was begun on Tuesday, April 15: repairing the plaster damage from last year's construction on the kitchen. At the time of this writing, the job is almost completed, and the kitchen looks fantastic inside! Thanks to contractor Patrick for the application of time and talent to the task.

On Saturday and Sunday April 26 & 27, we hosted a seminar on 1860s womens' clothing, led by Carolann Schmitt of Gettysburg, PA. Carolann is a renowned expert on historic fashion, textiles, and material culture, and for decades has been a guide, mentor, and leader for the living history community, whose seminars and various presentations have been in high demand across the U.S. The seminar was a private event, coordinated by Sue Dayfield, and supported by local living historians, that attracted participants from Wisconsin to Connecticut in a sold-out in-depth exploration of ladies' Civil War-era fashion. Many thanks to Chairman Egen for making the connections that made this opportunity possible.

Miscellany:

- This was the final month of *YesterWays* for the season, offered Saturdays and Sundays at the County Museum from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The April activity highlighted patriotic ribbon cockades.
- On Friday, April 4, I assisted with transportation of the furniture donation.
- On Monday, April 7, Andy and I attended Scott Bentley's retirement party at the RRNBP.
- In celebration of Elizabeth Custer's birthday (not really), we opened the Civil War case on Tuesday, April 8. With the intention of removing the Confederate apron for review and some general upkeep, what started as a simple operation was struck by chaos as the unwieldy glass shattered in our hands. Though a tremendous mess was created, no artifacts were damaged, and the only injuries were superficial. As a result, the entire "case" was dismantled and temporary flat cases were installed, after the artifacts were inspected and cleaned. Currently, we wait in joyful hope for a new exhibit case system that doesn't require 5 museum employees to open. Thanks to all staff who helped, and especially to Robert and Nicholas, who both earned a "Red Badge of Courage" in the Battle of the Exhibit Case.
- On Saturday, April 12, we participated in the annual Earth Day expo at MCCC, where *maple sugaring past and present* was our topic of discussion.
- On Sunday, April 27, we participated in an Earth Day Fair event in Milan. Congratulations to *Moving Milan Forward* for a great first event.
- Special thanks to Sabrina Miller for the generous donation of living history supplies from Sabrina Miller on Thursday April 3, including 4 mid-19th c. chairs for use during fair week!

Museum Outreach for April 2025:

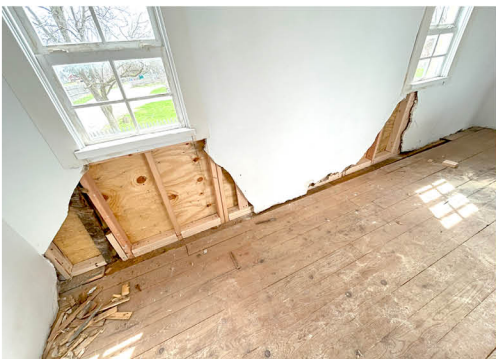
Date	Location	Program	Est. Attendance	Notes
Thursday, April 10	Trinity Lutheran School 315 Scott St, Monroe, MI 48161	<i>Aquatic Mammals of the Fur Trade</i>	78	Several class programs
Saturday, April 12	MCCC Welch Health Education Building 1555 S. Raisinville Road Monroe, MI 48161	<i>Maple Sugaring Past & Present</i>	246	
Saturday & Sunday, April 26 - 27	MCM	1860s Fashion Seminar <i>Sew Many Sleeves</i>	18	
Sunday, April 27	Wilson Park (Milan) 98 Park St., Milan, MI 48160	Earth Day Fair <i>Aquatic Mammals of the Fur Trade</i>	170	
Wednesday, April 30	Custer Elementary 610 W Elm Ave, Monroe, MI 48162	<i>Aquatic Mammals of the Fur Trade</i>	97	
Saturdays & Sundays throughout March	MCM	<i>YesterWays: Patriotic Cockades</i>	21	
TOTAL			630	



Earth Day Expo
@ MCCC



Sew Many
Sleeves



Kitchen wall
repair @ RRTP



Earth Day Fair @
Wilson Park (Milan)



Behind
the scenes

LOCAL HISTORY DIVISION
Archives & Collections
For March, 2025

Research Requests/contacts:

Phone 40

Mail 12 (62 obits)

Email 66

In-person 45

Museum artifacts continue to be transported by staff to professional conservator Mark Gervasi, and retrieved when he has completed his work.

I am anticipating the May return of our archaeological artifacts on loan to Dr. John Chenoweth from U-M Dearborn.

A student was researching for her dissertation "'Influence of Protestantism during the Common School Era."

A Yale student used our resources to research his paper on "Labor Organizations, Economics, Anxieties and Political Realignment in the Rust Belt."

Historian and author Sandy Barnard submitted permission to include former photographs of Libbie Custer for his newest upcoming book. He had obtained the images years ago.

Interest was noted on the World War II Dundee POW camp, and the displaced Japanese-Americans working at Greening's Nursery.

Staff worked on interleaving wet newspaper books from Newspaper storage. The dripping leak will probably cause several books to be destroyed from their quick-growing mold. All others have been dried and saved.

The Collections Committee had one meeting in March, and items were discussed and action formulated.

Backlog FIC items continue to be found and processed 2025.0.100-.154 included some Spanish-American War items.

County Obituary page: 5,771 page views, 674 users; 12,811 total for all events

Lynn W. Reaume, County Historian

3 April 2025

Archival and Collections Accessions during March, 2025:

2025.13	Rodd Rinness	Monroe High school items
2025.14	Wendy Kennedy	Book: Building the Bridge School (illustrator)
2025.15	Jesse Mayo	Book: Bill Blue Spruce Christmas (author)
2025.16	Ron Basile	Color postcards and Barnaby family documents
2025.17	Connie & Chuck Tyrrell	Book: <i>With Custer in '74</i> , autographed by author Dr. Frost
2025.18	Museum FIC	Color photographs relating to the Battlefield
2025.19	Diane Metz	Ida Centennial hat and button
2025.20	Lynn Reaume	Color photographs on Eby Log Cabin activities
2025.21	Anonymous (FIC)	Black & white Dundee dam photographs & dam maps used in a Supreme Court case Potters vs the Dundee Hydraulic Power company 1917

Archival and Collections Transfers during March, 2025:

See 2025.21	A second set of photographs and dam maps to Dundee Old Mill museum archives (not accessioned)	Black & white Dundee dam photographs & dam maps used in a Supreme Court case Potters vs the Dundee Hydraulic Power company 1917
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Recommended deaccessions by staff to the Collections and Exhibition Committee for March, 2025. Items are pulled from the collection.

A78.3.8.1	Briggs	Paper program to an out of the county school event
A81.7.17.1.9	Childs	Typical 1950s 'pioneer' map of Maumee Valley, OH
A87.9.14.1	Paxson	J. L. Hudson Michigan publication; no Monroe connection

LOCAL HISTORY DIVISION
Archives & Collections
For April, 2025

Research Requests/contacts:

Phone 23

Mail 10 (30 obits)

Email 50

In-person 45

Museum artifacts continue to be transported by Robert Lutey to professional conservator Mark Gervasi, and retrieved when he has completed his work.

The Collections Committee had one meeting in April, and items were discussed and action formulated.

Backlog FIC items continue to be found and processed in 2025.0, including a small postage stamp vending machine that was probably used here in the Post Office. This has been added to the main floor Post Office display.

Topics included the Monroe Armories, use of obituaries, family research, house research, Buick dealership, Labor History, Monroe Bank & Trust stock certificate, etc.

While removing a glass portion of the Civil War case, the glass unexpectedly shattered (safety glass!) Many items went off-display and we are awaiting future display options.

Several of our Monroe High School yearbooks were loaned to MHS and forwarded for their yearbook digitization project.

The Confederate-made ladies' patriotic apron was taken out of the Civil War exhibit, photographed, and detailed for a pattern. It has been returned to storage.

I met several times with Monroe Evening News retiree Barbara Krolak who is recruiting items for possible display for June and at the Fair, celebrating the 200th anniversary of newspaper publishing in Monroe County. This incoming loan is L2025.1-.4 and may have additional items.

I went through bedding that was pulled by staff from the Eby cabin, ID'ed a few in PastPerfect, and some were destroyed due to their poor condition of being in the cabin.

We attended a digital microfilm scanner demonstration.

Monroe Evening News online (via GSMC) included 43,800 clicks for 2024, a rise of 352% over 2023. Page views were 955, with an average of 15-20 pages used.

County Obituary page: 5,545 page views, 643 users; total for all events 12,286

Lynn W. Reaume, County Historian

3 May 2025

Archival and Collections Accessions during April, 2025:

2025.22	Barbara Krolak	Documents concerning the Young farm Syndicate, 1928
2025.23	Kaysi Shopshire	US Army Cuban Pacification medal, ca. 1906-1909
2025.24	Robert 'Mickey' Duffey	Nims' family bed, dressers and mirror
2025.25	Robert Sieb	Items concerning Gene Anderson and Monroe Jaycees
2025.26	Robert DeSloover	Photo of Bronco McKart
2025.27	Monroe County Museum	Color images of the archaeological dig at the Zimmerman farm on North Custer Road (Deloeuil site-probably D. Au)
2025.28	Lynn W. Reaume	Toys, documents, children's clothing
2025.29	Rachel Reaume	Monroe High School yearbooks
2025.30	Barbara Krolak	Monroe Evening News supplement and images
2025.31	Jim Dombrowski	Monroe Evenings News items & 20 Creative award statuette

Archival and Collections Transfers during April, 2025: none

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Recommended deaccessions by staff to the Collections and Exhibition Committee
for April, 2025 and subsequent action. Items were pulled from the collection, and these were destroyed.

3101.3532		Mattress straw tick
255.1096		Mattress feather tick
74.5.30.4.1		Mattress stuffed with horsehair
417.1537		Red and white striped tick; examined wool batt was retained