

# MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES

*Regular Meeting*

**Wednesday, October 14, 2020 – 6:00 pm**

Monroe County Museum – 126 South Monroe Street – Monroe, Michigan 48161

IN PERSON AND  
ELECTRONIC VIDEO/TELECONFERENCE VIA ZOOM MEETING

**Please Note:** Though we will be holding this meeting in person at the Monroe County Museum, we are also providing the option to attend via Zoom – see details below on how to join the meeting remotely. Those attending in person must follow the standard COVID-19 protocols. You must wear a mask at all times and maintain a distance of six feet apart.

Pursuant to Governor Whitmer's Executive Order No. 2020-154 (rescinding previous orders), modifying the State's Open Meetings Act issued July 17, 2020, this meeting will be held using remote participation via Zoom Meeting.

Public Comments may be submitted to the Monroe County Museum System Director Andrew Clark at [andy\\_clark@monroemi.org](mailto:andy_clark@monroemi.org) until 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 14th to be included as part of the public record for this meeting. Click [here](#) for the required format.

## Zoom Meeting Details

**You are invited to a Zoom webinar.**

**When: Oct 14, 2020 06:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)**

**Topic: Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees**

**Please click the link below to join the webinar:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83208925515?pwd=MHhwOWQvL2xiL0FLZXM3S0xXcmx4QT09>

**Passcode: museum**

Or iPhone one-tap :

US:

+13017158592,,83208925515#,,,,,0#,,472273# or

+13126266799,,83208925515#,,,,,0#,,472273#

**Or Telephone:**

**Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):**

US:

+1 301 715 8592 (Maryland) or

+1 312 626 6799 (Illinois) or

+1 646 558 8656 (New York) or

+1 253 215 8782 (Washington) or

+1 346 248 7799 (Texas) or

+1 669 900 9128 (California)

**Webinar ID: 832 0892 5515**

**Passcode: 472273 (if joining by phone)**

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## AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes from Regular Meeting of September 9, 2020
5. Public Comment
6. Committee Updates
  - 6.1. Executive Committee
  - 6.2. Awards Committee
  - 6.3. Markers Committee
  - 6.4. Projects Committee
7. New Business
  - 7.1. Museum Reports
8. Old Business
  - 8.1. November meeting
9. Public Comment
10. Board Comments
11. Adjournment

**Next Meeting:** TBA

<b>2020 MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES</b>	<b>2020 COMMITTEES</b>
Chair: Brian Egen, District 6 Vice-Chair: Jeremy Potter, District 1 Secretary: Thomas Heywood, District 2 Trustee: Mary Strevel, District 3 Trustee: L William Conner, District 4 Trustee: Richard Micka, District 5 Trustee: Tony Trujillo, District 7 Trustee: Michael Humphries, District 8 Trustee: Nicholas Guthrie, District 9 Immediate Past Chair: Hobby Nels Trustee Emeritus: Richard Sieb	<b>Executive Committee</b> Chair: Brian Egen Members: Jeremy Potter, Thomas Heywood, Hobby Nels, Andrew Clark, and JJ Przewozniak <b>Awards Committee</b> Chair: Mary Strevel Members: Tony Trujillo, Thomas Heywood, and Andrew Clark <b>Markers Committee</b> Chair: Jeremy Potter Members: Brian Egen, Nicholas Guthrie, Michael Humphries, Lynn Reaume, and Andrew Clark <b>Projects Committee</b> Chair: Michael Humphries Members: Bill Conner, Brian Egen, Tony Trujillo, and Andrew Clark

### **Mission Statement of the Monroe County Museum System**

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

MONROE COUNTY HISTORICAL BOARD of TRUSTEES  
MEETING MINUTES

September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom

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

Excused: Richard Sieb, Emeritus

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

This meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. and audible roll was taken. There was a quorum.

Motion was made by M. Humphries to accept the meeting agenda with the change of moving New Business 7.1 Eby Log House Update with Phillip Goldsmith to 3.1; seconded by R. Micka and approved by audible roll.

Director Clark updated the situation with calls from Bill Saul of the Historical Society stating that they were going to work on the cabin soon and requested all items be removed from the house. The Society placed a new padlock on the door for no access to anyone else. A county commissioner pulled a county building permit.

County Attorney Goldsmith said the key item is that the cabin is affixed to the soil on county property, though the land is leased to the Monroe County Fair Association, who has no interest to own or maintain, insure or be responsible for the building. He does not believe the Historical Society owns the building.

He has suggested a letter of understanding between Monroe County the Fair Assn. and the Museum as to who is responsible. There is concern for the repairs being done on a historical building without a historical perspective. The lock should not have been changed. There may not be any accountability to the county or the museum system in this act. The Historical Society has not provided a repair plan, materials to be used, or the interest to protect the integrity of the building. There also needs to be a document for a working agreement with the Historical Society, concerning use of the building, who has access to the building, who has authority.

Director Clark said he feels responsibility for the building for the county. B. Egen said what about their investment and Attorney Goldsmith said they do so "at their own peril." M. Humphries commented the issues seem to be ownership, stewardship of the cabin, and who has interpretation of operations, volunteers and authority. Letters of understanding are definitely needed, and asap.

Attorney Goldsmith was clear on the situation, listened well to the discussion points and stated he was going to meet with CEO M. Bosanac soon.

Motion was made by H. Nels to approve the August, 2020 meeting minutes, seconded by N. Guthrie and approved.

Public Comment #1: none via internet.

Executive: Chairman Egen said there has been no new meeting of the group.

Awards Committee: M. Strevel said the process of nominations will start soon for the 2021 year.

Markers Committee: J. Potter reminded the group that the Berlin Township marker unveiling will be Saturday, October 17 at 10 a.m. and invited all to be there. A county board unveiling is hoped to be with the new St. Antoine marker. Plans are resuming to put up new posts, install repainted markers, and pull more markers to deliver to Sewah for refurbishment. The Hull Road marker has permission to be installed in Berlin township near Price's orchard on North Dixie Highway instead of its old position near the golf course and restaurants.

Projects Committee: Director Clark said that applications are being accepted now until October 17<sup>th</sup>. The committee will review the applications and make their approvals.

New Business: Museum Report: Motion was made by H. Nels to accept the report as presented; seconded by J. Potter, roll was called and it passed unanimously.

October & November Meetings: The October meeting has been planned at the Trading Post barn, starting at 6:00 p.m. The November date is Veterans' Day and that would be decided in October.

Old Business: Director Clark said the Monroe Mayor Robert Clark approached the museum for their interest for a discovery session concerning the Custer Statue. As of this date nothing solid has been developed. Discussion on the subject included the need for education on what the statue represents, information on things broader than Custer, perhaps columns in the newspaper, more interpretation including different historical markers. The group are interested in this topic.

Public Comment #2: none was received via the internet.

Commissioner comments: The group were interested in meeting in-person if it can be arranged within the state/county guidelines.

T. Heywood wondered if millage fundraising could be discussed at the next meeting.

Chairman Egen showed a preliminary video of scenes to be used for a museum system video that we being constructed.

With no other business, motion was made by M. Humphries to adjourn, seconded by R. Micka and with unanimous voice roll the meeting was ended at 8:37 p.m.

Lynn W. Reaume  
Acting recording secretary  
9 October 2020

## **MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM**

### **Director's Report**

Submitted by Andrew Clark, Director

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

### **COVID-19 Organizational Operations**

As Monroe County is in the Detroit Region, we remain in Level C of the state's MI Safe Start Map. Public access to the galleries at the Monroe County Museum are restricted to Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 am to 5 pm, and Sundays, 12 pm to 5 pm. Public access to the Monroe County Archives is currently prohibited. The grounds of Territorial Park and Heck Park are open but the buildings remain closed. St Antoine's is not impacted by any COVID-19 restrictions.

Staff members continue hybrid work schedules.

### **Maintenance and Operations**

#### *Museum*

Our pandemic proofed front desk is now complete.

An outdoor seating area has been provided as an alternate lunch and small meeting space for museum staff.

#### *Territorial Park*

Preservation work on the schoolhouse has been delayed by the contractor. We will be meeting with them this week to get an update.

Tree removal has been conducted in the park east of Willow Run. We carved out a new outdoor lower presentation area where the walking trail dead ends along the river. We also squared out the field between the barn and treeline. We now have a large pile of accumulated debris to remove. Trees in the Papermill School parking area remain to be removed.

### **Eby Log House**

Nothing of note to report in regards to Eby developments at the time of this writing. The historical society continues to conduct their work on the site.

### **Custer Statue**

There are no significant updates at this time.

I'll have an informational paper put together for our next meeting.

### **Historical Projects Fund**

At present I have only been notified of one applicant to the fall disbursement of the historical projects fund. Applications are due at the end of the week on October 17th.

### **Markers Program**

The new St Antoine marker was unveiled over Zoom at the Board of Commissioners meeting on October 6th. Many thanks to all of the committee members that were in attendance. Special thanks to Lynn for all the work she put into the research and writing. Additional recognition should be given to Bob Bashaw of County Parks and Recreation for installing the post and to our new staffer Mike Nelligan for installing the marker.

On October 9th, Brian and Mike relocated the refurbished Old Hull Road marker to Price's Orchard. Many thanks to them for all of their help.

And, as a reminder, the Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees are invited to the unveiling of the newest marker on Saturday, October 17th at 10 am. This unveiling is being hosted by the Berlin Charter Township Historical Society. Historian Joe Boggs will also be giving some remarks about prohibition in the area. The new marker will be located on the grounds of the Newport Branch Library at 8120 North Dixie Highway. This new marker is also a product of our Historical Projects Fund.

### **Personnel Updates**

Mike Nelligan has been hired as our part-time Operations Attendant. He started in September and has already been of immense help on different projects at our various sites. All vacancies at the museum have now been filled.

### **November Meeting**

The date of our regularly scheduled November meeting this year falls on Veteran's Day, a County of Monroe holiday. I would like to suggest an alternate meeting date of either November 4th, November 18th, or cancellation.

### **Upcoming Closures**

Aside from the continued closures on Mondays through Wednesdays due to the pandemic, the next planned closure of the MCMS is Wednesday, November 11th for Veteran's Day, a County of Monroe holiday.

## MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM

Deputy Director's Report Submitted by Jeffrey J. (JJ) Przewozniak

Friday, October 9, 2020

**COVID-19:** In pursuance to Monroe County's COVID-19 preparedness & response plan, and in consideration of *MI Safe Start* (<https://www.mistartmap.info/>), we remain vigilant and proactive in our obligation to keep our staff and community safe, exercising an abundance of caution.

**Continuing Education:** Staff continue to utilize opportunities to attend virtual continuing education programs. This month, staff participated in the following events: 1) *Learning from History at The Henry Ford – Two Perspectives*, presented by the University of Michigan Museum Studies Program; 2) the Historical Society of Michigan's Annual Conference; and 3) *Anishinaabe Heritage Day 2020*, presented by the Michigan History Center.

**RRTP:** Work continues pursuant to re-imagining the site as a working, accurate, and efficient early-19<sup>th</sup> c. farm. Hallmarks of this process include removal of rotten/potentially hazardous/useless detritus, general cleaning, and overall detailed organizing. Highlights of ongoing work in September include:

- Total cleaning out of the barn loft and subsequent extraction of the cutter stored there for many years. This organized space will soon allow for economical storage solutions for lumber, tents and accessories, and the like.
- Modern markings removal and oil treatment of the recently-acquired barrels.
- Total cleaning out of the Morris Kitchen basement in preparation for conversion into a usable space.

**Resource Library:** In pursuance of efficiency and encouraging staff educational development, following market research, it has been decided to implement *Libib*, online library cataloging software, to our non-acquisitioned staff library collection. Libib will allow: 1) the creation of a comprehensive and detailed inventory that is remotely accessible to staff; 2) the ability to manage circulation; 3) security features; 4) better curation, development, management, additions; and overall enhanced staff engagement of our books and articles.

**Holiday Programming:** In consideration of tradition, and overall community well-being, a decision was made to re-imagine *Christmas Tree Festival* as *Christmas at the Monroe County Museum*, a safer iteration of traditional Holiday programming. Much planning has happened, and organizational movements have taken place to execute a premier celebration, coordinated betwixt all museum divisions, and determinedly detailed. A press release is attached. Public details will be announced on or before November 1.

**Museum Presenter Training:** A presenter training manual has been created and is currently under careful review. It presents a comprehensive philosophy toward public history education, largely based on the principles of Freeman Tilden. It includes a set of foundational principles that will shape the MCMS' overall program of public education. It represents a fundamental perspective rooted in our mission statement, applicable to all educational messaging.

**Fall/Winter Speaker Series:** Development has been done to re-invent our existing speaker series into a digital format. A broad list of potential speakers has been created, and inquiries have been sent. Behind the scenes, we continue to envision and curate a meaningful and relevant season-long program, consistent with MCMS messaging and pertinent to popular topics in history.

### **Miscellany:**

- Recognition is due to Bob Bashaw for his assistance in extracting/moving the cutter with skilled use of utility machinery.
- Population and development of our digital tour platform, OnCell (Stqry) continues slightly behind schedule due to unforeseen impedance. The new estimated release date is late October.
- I'd like to recognize James Liedel and his agent Laurie Schultz for the donation of a collection of original and reproduction 20<sup>th</sup>-c. military reenacting clothing and accoutrements, gifted in memory of his son, Captain Joesepeh Liedel.



**Contact:** Andrew Clark, Director  
**Phone:** 734.240.7780  
**Email:** andy\_clark@monroemi.org

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
October 7, 2020

## Monroe County Museum System Welcomes All To *Christmas at the Monroe County Museum*

When the leaves begin to fall each year, our thoughts always turn to our holiday activities and beloved Christmas traditions here at the Monroe County Museum System (MCMS). Before we know it, the hustle and bustle of that special time will be upon us.

This year has been challenging. The COVID-19 crisis has forced everyone to adapt to new ways of life in order to ensure each other's safety. We are proud to safeguard the wellness of our community, guests, and staff, while constantly innovating to realize our mission during this uncertain situation. While we all dearly miss the fun gatherings of pre-pandemic times, we're happy to know that we and our guests, have played a meaningful role in slowing the spread of the virus.

*Christmas Tree Festival* cannot occur in its usual fashion for 2020. Instead, we are happy to announce a new format of holiday programming that is consistent with current county, state, and CDC policies and guidelines for COVID-19. With that, we welcome our extended community to partake in *Christmas at the Monroe County Museum*.

*Christmas at the Monroe County Museum* is a month-long holiday celebration during which our visitors will be able to safely experience our longstanding museum tradition. This year's celebration will feature new signature decorations and activities, as well as the familiar beloved sights and sounds of celebrations from years past, such as our Christmas village, and vintage Santas exhibit.

Unlike in years past, we invite community organizations to display decorated wreaths throughout the museum instead of the traditional trees, which will allow us to maintain social distancing and limit gatherings. Voting for your favorites can be done via the forthcoming MCMS app on your smartphone, so all creative contestants are encouraged to showcase their festive talents! Community organizations can also exhibit holiday spirit by displaying an ornament on our new floor-to-ceiling Christmas tree in the museum's Sieb Hall. And, since Santa still remembers when our museum was Monroe's post office over a hundred years ago, children are welcome to mail their letters to him in our recently-restored 1911 P.O. box. Make sure to send it early enough to ensure a response before Christmas Day!

In the near future, all the details of *Christmas at the Monroe County Museum* will be posted on our Facebook page as well as our website. In the meantime, we encourage everyone to stay safe, and to look forward to a joyous celebration this December.

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LOCAL HISTORY DIVISION Report  
For September, 2020

The research room was not open to the public in September.

Rachel processed obituary requests for 15 individuals, with 60 obits. She handled 3 phone calls and 20 emails. She has been doing the data entry for obituaries and making database corrections.

Robert handled 13 outside calls and 36 emails. He processed accessions and FIC items 2020.0.176-214. He (and new hire Mike) moved stored attic light globes to new racks at Third Street, helped move a cutter from the barn and whenever multiple staff were needed. He continues to monitor the humidity levels, temperatures, etc. for storage rooms.

September Accessions:

2020.28	Thelma Moyers: Advertising sign, hair drier, book
2020.29	Vicki Bernitt: Richard and Donna Bernitt marriage related items and photos
2020.30	Robert Kiskan: photographs of Columbian School in Exeter
2020.31	Roger Kinne: Monroe County Abstract, Monroe Township
2020.31	Ralph Naveaux: Custer statue souvenir demitasse porcelain cup
2020.32	Ralph Naveaux: Newspaper clippings etc. scrapbook owned by his mother
2020.33	Mike Kidwell: Red Hat Society items, photographs
2020.34	Eugene Poupard: 1895 German Gardening newspaper

My big September project was processing the Eby cabin conglomerate in the gallery (almost completed); decades' worth of assorted Garden Club files and booklets; boxes and boxes of Found in Collection Monroe County Abstracts and finishing the data entry of Archival Donor cards (name and assigned number only) into PastPerfect. The items donated through these cards have yet to be entered.

I continue to work from home 2 days a week and Facebook post. September Facebook reach for Collections was 3800. Research involved were the French Claims, Myrtle Foster, 1790 map, LaSalle photographs, Custer, Norman Hall and John Calder, residences, monuments, the Architecture tour. I was contacted by a California policeman on some stolen artifacts they found with a meth head, but the labeling was traced to Livingston county, other areas of Michigan and Connecticut, not Monroe county. That was different.

County website Obituary search #1 with 11,126 page views of 2,304 unique page views; the Museum was #39 with 528 page views.

With so much to do,

Lynn W. Reaume, County Historian  
01 October 2020

# Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees

## September 2020 Museum Exhibits Report

You may recall that the canoe exhibit stand was erected last month in the Sieb Gallery and that it awaited proper labelling. Such a thing couldn't be accomplished until the provenance of the two canoes could be proved. That work resulted in a diagnosis that one is "relatively new" and the other is "newer than it might first appear." The birch bark canoe dates to the late 1960s and the dugout dates to the early to mid-1800s. Oddly enough this makes our dugout far more interesting since it spent little, if any, time on the muddy bottom of a river and only suffered damage due to early storage conditions.

Background work continues on the Post Office exhibit. Talking about the details of casting the individual number brackets for the lower boxes may not sound as exciting on paper as we think it was. But, box number 588 looks superb and is only rivalled by box number 627... o.k. you see what I mean. Let's say we completed the job and have begun to mount the brackets into their original positions. We'll keep everyone posted.

Although there were preparations for upcoming historic Halloween décor and the Eby House Flash Exhibit taking up the center of the upper floor, the biggest project of the month involved a certain one-horse open sleigh. It was a staff-wide effort to bring down an old Albany-style sleigh that had been stored in the loft of the French Barn at the Territorial Park. The piece was thoroughly cleaned -revealing some wonderfully preserved pin striping - and then placed on exhibit over the interior housing of the front doors. It will serve nicely both as an historic item and a substrate for Christmas décor during the upcoming season. But first...it needs a label.

Without getting into the weeds, the label thing has presented a whole new series of issues. The primary one is that we only have one sleigh accession number on file but there are two sleighs in the collection. Neither piece seems to have a number on it. One of them might have an association with the Reed family, and therefore to the Custer family, so specific identification becomes more important. This has led to an effort, spearheaded by Andy and myself, to dig through all the records and interview as many former museum staffers as possible to determine the exact identity of the so-called French Barn sleigh. As of this writing it seems that the sleigh in question found its way into the barn loft via a jolly old elf and a team of flying reindeer. No one remembers this fancy sleigh or when it arrived in the barn.

This particular sleigh story is not done but this report is.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gerald P. Wykes  
Exhibits Coordinator

October 4th, 2020

**Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees**  
Guest Services Division Report ❖ September 2020

On the financial end of things, I successfully completed my first deposit on behalf of the Museum. Despite a few clerical snafus, the monies/paperwork were submitted in enough time to suffice as our August account contribution. I also went through FASBE training with JJ- learning how to submit requisitions, check balances, view invoice records and much more. With this knowledge, I was able to complete two supply orders using the FASBE system. It took time, but I feel much more confident using the software than I did prior to this exercise.

In terms of future planning, a meeting was held to discuss the potentialities for this year's Christmas offerings. It was extremely productive, and by the close I was designated to look into new decorations and to price potential services for light displays etc. I have since gotten quotes from a few professional companies and looked into the pros/cons of investing in that versus decorating and purchasing in-house. For the sake of simplicity as well, I have tried to stick with the aesthetic of the building that is already present in my search for prospective decorations/services: blacks, golds, whites, and other metallic shades. Our building truly provides a beautiful backdrop for any event, and the hope is that the decorations will further compliment the design elements and feel of the building as opposed to clashing with it. A second meeting was held at the end of the month to gauge the progress that had been made and what to look to next.

The front desk project was finally completed this month, and myself and Anne were finally able to put things back in order and receive visitors at it. It serves as a safety & comfort factor for these times, but is innocuous enough to blend in with our space. So far we have not experienced any issues with the transition, but it does provide more of a sound barrier for office chatter to the vestibule than originally thought. It also has lots of potential for use in our more Special Events such as First Fridays/Christmas Tree Festival.

Submitted by Megan Mullins, Guest Services Coordinator