

# MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Regular Meeting

**Wednesday, May 12, 2021 – 6.30 pm**

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

**In-Person Open Air Meeting  
Territorial Park Barn  
3815 North Custer Road  
Monroe, Michigan 48162**

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## AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes from Regular Meeting of April 14, 2021
5. Public Comment
6. Millage Discussion
7. Committee Updates
  - 7.1. Executive Committee
  - 7.2. Awards Committee
  - 7.3. Markers Committee
  - 7.4. Projects Committee
    - 7.4.1. 2021 Historical Projects Fund Recommendations
8. New Business
  - 8.1. Museum Staff Reports
9. Old Business
10. Public Comment
11. Board Comments
12. Adjournment

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, June 9th – Format and Time TBA

<b>2021 MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES</b>	<b>2021 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: Nick 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  
April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom

Present: Brian Egen, Chairman (at Monroe)      Jeremy Potter, Vice-Chairman (Ida)  
Tom Heywood, Secretary (Dundee)              William Conner, Member (Monroe)  
Michael Humphries, Member (Canton)          Richard Micka, Member (Monroe)  
Hobby Nels, Past Chairman (Monroe)            Mary Strevel, Member (Florida)  
Tony Trujillo, Member (LaSalle)

Excused: Nick Guthrie, Member                      Richard Sieb, Emeritus

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

This meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. and audible roll was taken. There was a quorum.

Motion was made by T. Heywood to accept the meeting agenda, seconded by H. Nels. Audible roll vote was called and the motion passed.

Motion was made by H. Nels to approve the March, 2021 meeting minutes, seconded by W. Conner. Audible roll was called and the motion was passed.

Public Comment #1: none via internet nor phone.

Executive: Chairman Egen gave an Eby Cabin update in which he stated there was a Memo of Understanding created with the Monroe County Historical Society, and it has been given to the County CEO M. Bosanac for approval or input.

Awards Committee: Chairwoman M. Strevel said the COVID situation is still problematic in scheduling the event; Director Clark hoped for possibly a virtual event in the Fall. Chairman Egen suggested using the Territorial Park and a time to view the buildings for the event.

Markers Committee: Matt Switlik will be exploring the logo possibilities; the new St. Antoine marker has been taken down for him to access. There has been no new marker work.

Projects Committee: Chairman Humphries said April 17 was the deadline. There are two applications submitted, with 2 pending.

New Business: Museum Report: Motion was made by W. Conner, seconded by R. Micka to approve as presented; passed by audible roll.

Old Business: Millage Update was presented by Chairman M. Humphries. Social media has been greatly used to get the news out via videos, email, utube, lawn signs large and small, fliers, posters, newspaper advertising and published Letters of Support. There have been some donations that will meet the need of the SOS committee. Thanks went to T. Trujillo for the use of his café as the hub for literature. The Director and Deputy Director spoke to the Exchange Club.

Public Comment #2: none via the internet nor phone.

Commissioner comments:

The Board commented on the impressiveness of the videos produced for the Museum. H. Nels commented that this millage has more optimism than the first millage occurring in hard times. There was an unanimous thank you to everyone for their support and suggestions.

Since the County of Monroe has extended the remot meetings approval for three months, the May meeting will be via Zoom or possibly in person at the Territorial Park, TBA.

With no other business, motion was made by W. Conner to adjourn, seconded by M. Strelvel and with unanimous roll the meeting was ended at 6:59 p.m.

Lynn W. Reaume  
Acting recording secretary  
26 April 2021

## **MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM**

### **Director's Report**

Submitted by Andrew Clark, Director

Wednesday, May 12, 2021

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

Public access to the galleries at the County Museum are restricted to Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 am to 5 pm, and Sundays, 12 pm to 5 pm. Public access to the County Archives is currently prohibited though research assistance is still being conducted by mail, email, and phone. The grounds of Territorial Park and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Museum are open but the buildings remain closed. St Antoine's is not impacted by any COVID-19 restrictions.

We are still on track to expand our hours of operation in June. Beginning June 1<sup>st</sup>, the County Museum will be open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 am to 5 pm and Sundays, 12 pm to 5 pm and closed Mondays. Provided the COVID-19 situation remains stable, I anticipate this will be our normal operating schedule for the remainder of 2021. The current plan is to reopen the buildings of Territorial Park (except Papermill School) on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Planned hours of operation are Thursdays through Sundays, 10 am to 4 pm, June through September.

If everything continues to improve, the plan is to reopen the County Archives after Labor Day, by appointment only beginning with the resumption of drop-in hours. (I've investigated a little bit and to my knowledge there are no archives open to the public in Michigan. It appears remote research requests like Lynn and her staff have been doing is the norm across the state at present.)

Still awaiting word from the Vietnam Veterans on their operational plans for the museum and memorial in 2021.

All plans are, of course, contingent on state operating guidelines.

### **Digital Michigan Newspaper Grant Program**

First batch of newspapers were delivered to Central Michigan's Clarke Historical Library. If I did a miscount of pages, more volumes may be included. Waiting to hear back from the library staff for guidance.

### **Maintenance and Operations**

#### *Museum and Archives*

Leaks in ceiling and basement connected to our April showers. Fortunately it did not bring May flowers. Ceiling leaks have been addressed.

#### *Territorial Park*

Building Arts and Conservation's restoration project of Papermill School – delayed last year due to COVID-19 – has resumed in full. Work to date has focused on stabilizing the masonry, uncovering of the blackboard, repairing windows, and initial

stages of the duplication of the tin. To date, the project has been quite interesting. Please read Gerry Wykes's report for more details.

Last fall, Mike Nelligan removed the fencing for redeployment elsewhere on the site. He has repositioned it to be a barrier around our adolescent apple orchard. He is also redoing the caps to make them appear more in-line with the original concept derived from the Redfield Residence found on the 1859 County Map.

Provided everything works out, we will have the Papermill School parking lot redesign completed in May. This will include some additional natural seating options along the edge of the river, limestone boulders flanking the entrance of the pedestrian path, and limestone barriers to serve as a demarcation between the parking lot and pedestrian areas. Luckily, the lack of fencing didn't result in too many vehicle incursions in to the grounds. However, I don't want to tempt fate with what we will assume will be a busy spring and summer season out at the park.

#### *Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Museum*

There are no significant maintenance projects to report.

#### *St Antoine's Historic Site*

There are no significant maintenance projects to report.

#### **Historical Projects Fund**

We received four applications to this year's Historical Projects Fund. The amount requested comes to a total of \$32,700 (Dundee - \$10,000 for exhibit cases; Estral Beach - \$10,000 for WWII park display; Milan - \$2,700 for furnace at Fire Barn; and City of Monroe - \$10,000 to assist with the facilitation of the Custer Monument.)

Please see the attached applications.

#### **Markers Program**

Nothing new to report at present.

#### **Personnel Updates**

Guest Services Coordinator Megan Mullins submitted her letter of notice to take a position elsewhere. We wish her well in her future endeavors. I anticipate the vacancy will be filled before next month's meeting.

#### **Upcoming Closures**

Aside from our limited hours due to COVID-19, the MCMS will be closed Monday, May 31<sup>st</sup> for the observance of Memorial Day, a County of Monroe holiday.

#### **Millage Update**

We won.

**Hodge Podge**

I paced around the courthouse a lot on Tuesday night. Brian, Jeremy, Tom, Mike, and I waited outside the County Clerk's Office awaiting the official results. When we received word that we had carried Bedford Township, I think we breathed a collective sigh of relief and felt pretty confident we had won. Notifying my staff a quarter after eleven with a text of the results was a personally satisfying moment.

Though we lost in some districts, the losses were incredibly close.

Considering the formidable obstacles that were faced, I believe the millage campaign committee pulled off an extraordinary victory to reaffirm our role in being the stewards of Monroe County's history.

Making the victory possible was a community effort and I deeply appreciate the time and treasure that all the volunteers and donors contributed. We can rest on our laurels for but a moment because there is more work to be done. And 2031 isn't that far down the road ...

MONROE COUNTY MUSEUM SYSTEM  
Deputy Director's Report for April 2021  
Submitted by Jeffrey J. (JJ) Przewozniak  
Friday, May 7, 2021

**R RTP:** In early April, the programs Division staff performed extensive cleaning throughout the entire park in preparation for opening, and the following unique event described below. In addition, a soil sample was sent the MSU for evaluation in preparation for planting a field of heirloom corn east of the barn.

**Filming:** The MCMS was invited to participate in a special project with CNN for an upcoming episode of *This Is Life with Lisa Ling*. On April 13, Lisa and the CNN production crew used Territorial Park as their office, and spent the day recording interviews and demonstrations involving flintlock weapons. The episode will air in October or November of this year, and will likely feature scenes from the recent *2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of the River Raisin* movie.

**"Lantern Tours" Planning:** Post COVID-19 event planning continues. Though we're optimistic that we can return fully to in-person programming by this fall, we continue to monitor guidelines. We aim for a safe and successful event that delivers effective, memorable visitor experiences, and signature historical integrity.

**Stgry:** Following a lengthy period of updates and tweaks, the museum app is currently undergoing review by Apple and Google Play in preparation for full release. It is expected to be ready for download within the month. Following release, it will be closely monitored and updated for any bugs. A major content addition is scheduled for the fall.

**Period clothing:** This month, a program of liquidation was begun for our stores of costumes and period clothing. Keeping with the overall plan to re-vitalize MCMS living history programs, key elements of this substantial down-sizing include: 1) Exclusivity regarding established focus eras for MCMS living history; 2) Substantially less need to clothe any volunteers in costumes; and 3) Establishment of a very high authenticity standard for any MCMS employee or affiliate in period clothing. Re-homing the un-needed clothing is currently under discussion, but will likely involve donations and/or sales.

**Miscellany:**

- Video processing from the remaining Speaker Series events continues. The remaining videos, plus additional content is expected to be uploaded this month.



LOCAL HISTORY DIVISION Report  
For April, 2021

The research room was not open to the public but we continued to handle research inquiries.

Rachel processed obituary requests for 17 individuals, with 118 (!) obits. She handled 5 phone calls and 20 emails. She has been doing research requests concerning Kopka, Ball, Hayes, Russell, Waller and Weier. Robert handled 17 outside calls and 62 emails. He continues to monitor our storage spaces.

April Accessions:

- 2021.30 Jeremy Potter: Tied quilt for Mary Campbell of Ida
- 2021.31 Andy Clark: Lysol COVID container & two face coverings from the pandemic
- 2021.32 Laurie Ziegler Schultz: Tony 'The Kite Man' Ziegler button
- 2021.33 Brian Plummer: Monroe High School buttons
- 2021.34 Joel Ashby: 1960s-1970s Christiancy School class photographs
- 2021.35 FIC books for 2<sup>nd</sup> floor book storage (large group)
- 2021.36 Amanda Winters: WWII Navy uniform, photographs of Herbert Weilnau; Ida map
- 2021.37 FIC used red transferware dinner ware
- 2021.38 Anonymous: 'Bronco' McKart trading card
- 2021.39 Kendra Anspaugh: 1990s programs and fliers from Monroe High School, RRCA, MCCC, etc. (pending)
- 2021.40 Martha Churchill: Digital photographs, newspaper clippings, essays relating to Milan area
- 2021.41 Scott Martin: Monroe County slides, early 1950s

Some processed Found in Collection items include: 2021.0.140 Monroe Marsh Club photos; .145 landscape painting; .146-.148 catalogs & programs; negatives of the Albain family; Methodist Church/Eureka Lodge of Monroe; images taken by Dennis Au of the Navarre-Anderson Trading Post decades ago.

My April projects: I continue to process boxes and boxes left in the attic. Robert and I are clearing space in the basement for the giant influx of County Deed books coming soon. But no matter what I do in consolidation, the space for Archival and Collections storage is *full*. We greatly need a suitable storage facility.

Work included Historical Society boxes, house & properties research, Fuhrmann, Peterson, World War I, REO auto dealership and more. I continue to scan old photo albums into PastPerfect; work on programs, booklets, etc. of the Toll/Sawyer families; go through Verhoeven boxes and move them to the attic storage. This is in preparation of finding, numbering and entering into the Collection. I have started to go through some of the Archival book storage boxes to designate other storage- Mike Nelligan has built three secure book storage units on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor which will free some space in the Capaul Room.

Director Clark took the newspaper volumes to the Clarke Historical Library after we ½ won the contest for digitization. Unfortunately, we and the public didn't quite recognize how little this would be (in my view.) On April 19 we loaned out 3 maps (2 road maps, one Industrial map) to Intellinetics for test digitization.

County Google Stats: the Obituary search was #3 (after COVID and health) with 11,246 page views; the Museum was #38 with 603 page views; Archives #118 with 111.

April Facebook postings: For Collections 7,234 (had a big response on my question of coal chutes and milk doors!)

Lynn W. Reaume, County Historian  
4 May 2021

# Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees

## April 2021 Museum Exhibits Report

Although there was significant graphic work by Emily (signage and ad material), and hand-selecting quarried stones for the school parking lot, April turned out to be largely a “background month” in which exhibit research and planning dominated. Part of this process involved peeking into some dusty and dark places.

I invited a Dumochelle’s Art Gallery representative down to begin the investigative process on two of the museum’s dusty old landscape paintings. Mid-1800s in origin, and executed by an expert hand, these two works are un-signed and un-documented. Because there was an outside chance that these might be by well-known landscape painter, and Monroe native, Robert S. Duncanson, I felt it was worth the effort to either “rule-in” or “rule-out” these works. What did Mr. Dumochelle say about them, you ask? Well, he felt they fit the period and laid out a verification plan which will involve comparison with known works and materials. So, the jury is out and we’ll have to wait and see.

Restoration at the Papermill School continues to reveal many dark mysterious places. Analysis of photo evidence and records narrowed the time-period gap when the interior tin was installed to 1916-1935. Re-examination of an 1866 -1916 school assessment book provided further glimpses into daily matters such as painting the outhouse in 1910! Items found within the walls include a broken “Lone Rider” cap gun from the early-mid 1950’s, fragments of a three-footed glass bowl, chicken bones (bricklayer’s lunch?), and a construction paper cut-out of an umbrella. Shoved between the tin siding and the interior wall, a crumpled sheet of lined writing paper showed the spelling word of the day – whatever day that was - to be “drinks” written at least four times.

Perhaps the biggest mystery yet is why the school attic (a substantial area) had no access point and appeared to never of had one. Restoration workers had to cut through ceiling plaster and lath to gain entry. Apart from being a haven for generations of mud-dauber wasps and walnut-storing squirrels, the attic was “pristine” and apparently without significant human presence since the 1860s. It appears that a cedar shingled roof is intact under the current tin roof. Although fascinating, this otherwise vacant space crushed our fantasies of a loft filled with old school desks, books, pencils, and a dunce cap or two. Having personally been up in the attic I can now state that at least one dunce has been in the space.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gerald P. Wykes  
Exhibits Coordinator

May 3rd, 2021

**Monroe County Museum System Board of Trustees**

Guest Services Division Report ◇ April 2021

After our Easter closures at the beginning of the month, the routine Staples order was placed and my week was otherwise taken up by nothing unusual or of note. The following week, I was unfortunately out for the majority of my days due to a minor procedure.

Upon returning, there were plenty of invoices to process, as well as vendors to be added into our FASBE system. I sent over several on behalf of the Programs Division, who will be using these vendors to purchase materials etcetera for reproduction clothing to be worn at the Territorial Park this season.

The following week, I held our Monthly Guest Services Division Meeting, prepared and made our April Deposit and requested various supplies from the Central Office to be sent over. Additionally, I put in my two weeks notice at that time. My final day in my current position will be Tuesday, May 11th. This was not an easy decision for me to reach as I care greatly for this institution and the people I've had the pleasure of meeting/working with.

Until that time, however, I continue to wind down my usual duties of placing requisitions, invoice processing and generating engagement reports. I have also begun transferring several Guest Services adjacent files onto the Museum Group Drive so they are not lost should my County email be repurposed upon my leaving. I hope to accomplish this with all of my files, so whoever our next GSC has files to reference.

I would like to close by thanking each of you for ultimately supporting the decision to hire me (my 3 year anniversary was on April 27th!) I loved coming into work each time I was scheduled, and I feel genuinely blessed to have had the experiences I have had here and to have participated in the work being done for our local history community.

Submitted respectfully by Megan Mullins, Guest Services

Coordinator