

Emily L Knapp Museum Board Meeting

Wednesday, October 22nd, 2014, 6 pm

MISSION STATEMENT: The mission of the Emily L. Knapp Museum, an educational institution, is to collect, preserve, and provide access to the heritage and history of the greater Brockport community.

In attendance: Margay Blackman, Dan Burns, Jackie Morris, Bill Andrews, Pam Ketchum, Sarah Cedeño, Mark Rice, Pat O'Brien, Norm Knapp, Sue Savard, Rayleen Bucklin, Christine Maxfield, Neal Keating, Abbey Rice, Raymond

Mayor, Margaret Blackman, update on grants:

The "Get Ready" grant to assess collection and receive feedback on how to move forward with the museum has been approved, but not yet funded by the state.

The "Preservation League" grant for technical assistance for climate control and request to add 2nd floor storage for records was not approved because we were requesting two projects in one. Margay will try again during round two of the grant in the spring, and will take out the portion requesting an addition to the building. Dan asks if the fact that we have not been awarded these grants should put our plans for the museum on hold. Margay says we should move forward with maintenance and operations projects in the museum.

The website grant that was underway has fallen through.

Sarah will create an Emily L Knapp blog for the village site to link to. (Update: Sarah has created the site, which is not yet viewable to the public, and has emailed board members a link to the site and would like feedback on the site in terms of what could be added, if something is unnecessary, etc. If someone hasn't received the link, please email Sarah so she can send it again.)

Sue Savard suggests the village create a PowerPoint presentation viewable at the village offices to advertise Brockport events.

Report from Dr. Neal Keating, Professor of Anthropology at the College at Brockport, and his students Abbey Rice and Ray (last name?), who have been volunteering at the museum.

Dr. Keating expresses that he is "very interested in developing a partnership with the Knapp Museum," which he describes as an "at-risk gem of a collection." He offers a general proposal that the Museum and students of the Anthropology Department work together professionally to preserve the museum's collection and establish best practices going forward. The college thinks of Knapp Museum as a laboratory for developing skills. He would like to have a graduate of the museum studies be a paid director of the

Emily L Knapp Museum and has a 5-yr-plan to circulate at some point in the future. Dr. Keating submits his Position of Interest form to the board.

Abbey reports that she is at work on an article about the collaboration between the College at Brockport and the Knapp Museum, which explains how the students are benefiting as well as the museum. Abbey would like to continue to volunteer at the Knapp Museum.

Ray reports that he has transcribed a scroll that was presented to an area veteran of the Civil War, Roland Houghton, Jr. He's found an unmarked picture of a man in the Knapp Museum that he believes could be this soldier. He will provide a hard copy of the transcription of this scroll to appear alongside the original. Ray suggests we have the Theatre Department pair with the Brockport community and Emily Knapp Museum to host local events, such as a cemetery tour with theatre students role-playing as ghosts of the deceased.

Students have begun cataloging their work in Past Perfect. This will allow for an easier searchable online database.

Mark asks for examples of good websites from local museums. Dr. Keating offers that the bigger museums have better sites, and cites the Iroquois Museum (www.iroquoismuseum.org). Also mentioned are the Buffalo Museum, the Erie Canal Museum, and we are all charged with poking around museum websites.

Dan expresses he would like to see more hands-on time from faculty with developing projects for students. Faculty might see opportunities for projects that we don't see.

Dr. Keating offers a projection for the next couple of semesters that the Art History department, Art Department, and English Department become more involved at the museum. (Sarah has discussed with English Department Faculty, the opportunity for students of English to visit the museum early this semester). Dr. Keating estimates there will be a few students each semester who will be interested in volunteering.

Mayor Blackman is working the Knapp Museum into an exhibit at the Tower Fine Arts building on a rotating schedule, but there are other possibilities.

The conversation leads to Dr. Keating's suggestion that the museum seek out avenues to "better tell the stories of Brockport's past."

Bill Andrews, Liaison to the Village Board, reports:

He has received our project list.

He has two Position of Interest Forms, one from Sue Savard, which we already unanimously approved, and another from Kimberly Taylor, part of Dr. Keating's Museology class.

Roof discussion

Harry Donahue has put a call out to the contractor for an estimate, but has not heard back. Pam Ketchum will contact the Landmark Society for suggestions of contractors. Bill will follow up with Harry. (Update: Since this report, Bill has heard from Harry that the contractor's supplier of necessary materials for the roof repair has gone out of business and will need to find another supplier before he can obtain an estimate, since materials are an important part of the estimate.)

Sarah reports on museum technology: We now have a copy of Microsoft Office on the museum computer, and that some work as occurred on the computer in terms of user name, but will follow-up with Steve Tanner to see if the museum PC can support Past Perfect software in terms of storage/speed/etc and ask when the guest username/email will be set up.

Museum Projects (not maintenance-related, inserted from previous month's minutes, all reiterated as projects in need of completion, updated as appropriate)

Sue provides a copy of the Docents' Manual and requests edits, and also offers to write up a Deed Gift Form.

Sue suggests we get rid of the large desk in the museum office, to make more room for viewing materials. She recommends the DPW build a desk and a shelf for the printer, and insert rolling cars for supplies. Dan proposes we ask for one of our back rooms from the Village to provide more workspace for visitors and volunteers.

Pat circulates the changes she's made to the brochure and requests edits. We discuss the "branding" of the museum to coordinate website, brochures, etc.

Sarah is searching for the previous Seymour Library's logo (when it was housed at 49 State Street, which was a drawing of the Seymour home, as a potential logo for the museum).

Sue Savard mentions updating museum pamphlets in the foyer, which Pat has done. We do still need to revamp the Harvester/Reaper pamphlet.

Sue Savard suggests inquiring about extraneous inventory in the museum, noting an excess of spinning wheels, bibles, etc. The board discusses compiling a list of excessive inventory for Bill to approach the Village Board with in terms of donating/selling/etc.

Mark comments that we should hold off on getting rid of museum inventory until someone comes to assess the collection. (This will happen once the grant is funded.)

Sue mentions the genealogy of the Seymour Family as a project she would like to see mounted in the front stairway/hall.

There is a discussing of a benchmarking committee, which would visit museums to discuss best practices. Mark indicates he would like to be a part of this committee, asks if Dr. Keating might be included on this committee, and will ask the Monroe County Historian if she would like to be a part of the committee as well.

On November 1st, the Seymour Library is hosting “After Hours” from 7-10 pm. Jackie and late husband Raymond Morris’ WWII romance will be highlighted at the event. The Knapp Museum is donating a lunch to the silent raffle, to take place at Red Bird, accompanied by Jackie and Sarah, followed by a tour of the museum.

Pam suggests we partner with Different Path Gallery for fundraising. But the board discusses that we aren’t allowed to solicit money because we’re part of the village. We discuss the potential of becoming a 501c3. Pam suggests that the Greater Brockport Development Corporation can assist in raising funds for specific projects.

The museum closes November 1st for the season, but will honor requests for appointments.

Dan mentions the need for a paid administrative assistant at 20 hours per week.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 19th in the ELK Museum at 6 pm.

(prepared/circulated by Sarah Cedeño)