

Historical Committee
Minutes of the April 15, 2014 Meeting

Attendance: D. Addario, B. Aldrich, B. Diem, L. Franklin, L. Stahl, B. Titus, and S. Tucker. R. Stomber, B. Black, and D. B-Clemens, Liaison

Presiding: S. Tucker, Chairperson

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM

The minutes of the March 12, 2014 meeting were approved as circulated.

CHAIRPERSONS REPORT – S. Tucker

Welcome to new Historical Committee Member Lynn Stahl

Sue welcomed Lynn Stahl as a new member of the Committee. Lynn has been sent past minutes and documents to help her get oriented to the Committee.

Report on Tea Party on March 20

The Tea Party was very appreciated by the Coldwell-Banker staff members who attended the Tea. It was deemed totally successful. This first tea allowed us to evaluate what worked smoothly and what could be improved. It was agreed that we need to figure out a little more preparation room!

Museum Attendance since the Last Meeting.

March 16 – two people

April 2 - two people

March 22, Town Cleanup – was successful, very busy with steady numbers during the whole time we were open (From 9-1:00). We need a ribbon or rope to put across the stairs to prevent people from going upstairs. Diddy suggested a sign for the cellar door as well.

It is clear that attendance is much better when the opening of the Museum piggy-backs with a Borough event.

Coldwell Banker Cares Day:

Coldwell Banker has selected the Texier House as a community project. They will work on the landscaping on Friday, April 25 with a rain date of Saturday April 26, from 10-2. Sue is working on some plans on what to do. DPW will bring a load of mulch and Coldwell Banker will donate funds for some plants. They are open to any and all ideas. Lynn F. brought a plant guide for use as a resource. Sue will

get some guidance from various people who have some landscaping skills. (Sue serves as Coldwell Banker's ambassador for community service.)

FINANCIAL MANAGER'S REPORT – L. Franklin

The current balance is \$13,522.64. Expenses include the archival supplies that have been ordered and the cost of the plaque. There have been no new donations since the last report. Income from the sales of books and throws are noted. She will question one expense.

SCCHC REPORT - L. Franklin

This is the second meeting she has attended of the Somerset County Cultural and Heritage Commission as our representative. She brought back a variety of different pamphlets and brochures about activities of the Commission and the County. She announced the Grand Opening of the Griggstown Bridgetender's House Saturday, April 19, 2014, 2:00-4:00 PM. One of the SCCHC's projects is the art work on electric boxes in various parts of the County and they plan to do more. The Commission is involved with the arts as well as historical. They will host a teen arts festival on May 14. It was announced that the King George Inn in Warren has a buyer who plans to use the Inn for business. Warren has adopted "The Warren Historic Neighborhood District Ordinance". This ordinance is to keep historic aspects of buildings, but still allow an appropriate business. This might be something for Watchung to explore.

After a brief discussion the Committee decided to not participate in the Somerset County tour this year, but do it next year. The date of the County tour is only a week after our History Day.

LIAISON'S REPORT – D. Beck – Clemens

Absent No report

OLD BUSINESS

Girl Scout Projects - S. Tucker

Sue reported that M. Quinn got her project approved and she has met with Sue to plan. She will be trying to find out more about the old school house and talking to those who went there. Julie Harvanak, Scout Leader will meet with Sue next week – she also wants to get her Scouts involved in the Museum.

Eagle Scout Project – S. Tucker

Justin's next step is setting up work groups to scan and start writing and get ready for the photos. Some of his photographs are currently exhibited at the Art Center.

Video Project- S. Tucker

Chris has identified some "holes" in his script and the Committee will probably find a few others. We need more information about growing up at the Eaton House and the Castle and Betse Titus can fill that gap. She will schedule a time to be videotaped. Lynn F. has the video of the WW II veteran and Chris can take from that what he needs. We also need more about the Fire Department. Barbara will see if she can convince Paul Ost to be interviewed. We need to know if Chris has found any pictures he can use from the CD and the slides. That would save us from finding them and scanning them. Once we know exactly what he needs, we will schedule more work sessions.

Approval of Strategic Plan – D. Addario

Diddy presented the revised Strategic Plan. After some discussion a few changes, the Committee approved the 2014 Strategic Plan.

Approval of Annual Report – D. Addario

After a brief discussion, the Committee approved the 2013 Annual Report

Deed of Gift Form Progress – D. Addario

Diddy revised the form as recommended and submitted it to Dianna for review by the Borough attorney.

Names for the Monument. B. Diem

Diddy submitted a notice to go in the Echoes for names to go on the Gulf Wars Monument. Barbara requested that it be repeated in the Echoes with a deadline and Diddy will follow up. There is still having some concern about what to call the veterans of the Gulf, Afghanistan, and Iraq wars. Every veteran group and government section seems to call them something different.

Names suggested: are being collected. Aaron Raymar. Lynn will determine if he is eligible. George Summers is another possible candidate. B. Diem has been in contact with Greg from Greenbrook Memorial and he has come up with names for wars: Operation Iraqi Freedom, Desert Storm, On our monument we have "Gulf War" – Deadline to add names in ready for Memorial day before the end of April

Memorial Day Ceremony and – B. Diem

Several names were suggested. Lynn F. will follow up on George Summers and let Barbara know if he would be interested. We actually should have selected someone by this meeting and the information has to get to Borough Hall as soon as possible.

Needed Signs for Texier House – B. Diem

The sign in the front of the Texier House was doctored up for the grand opening, but now it really looks shabby. There was agreement that we need a new sign. We need to budget for a sign and think about a good design. Barbara will contact former member Ginny Cooper for creative ideas.

Plaques – B. Diem

The plaque for our major donors is complete and will be hung tonight. We also need some kind of marker for the Indian Mortar. Barbara and Betty Jean will explore options for an outdoor sign. It should say something like: *Lenni Lenapi Milling Stone used for grinding grain. Donated from the collection of Joseph DuPont.*

Thank you Note – S. Tucker

Sue read a thank you note from Walter Pennett thanking the Historical Committee for attending his Eagle Scout ceremony and gift.

Rugs for Hallway

Barbara and Betty Jean selected a style of runner for the back entry way and it is supposed to be received through Bob Burns.

NEW BUSINESS

Photograph of the Hooked Rug in Ladies Room - S. Tucker

The photo of the hooked rug depicting scenes of Watchung has been one of our mysteries. It is currently hanging in the Ladies Room of the Texier House. We did not know who made the original rug and where it is. Sue contacted several people and discovered that the rug was made by Ellen Beeson, who used to live on the corner of Valley Road and Price Drive. They had moved to Westfield and lived there for many years. Ellen passed away two years ago and her husband, Dick, retired to Vero Beach. Sue contacted him and discovered that he took the pictures and his wife made the rug and he still has it. Dick stated that he wanted

to donate it to the town when they moved, but his wife said it was so much work she did not want to part with it.

Sue told him that we would very much like to have it and his response was that he thought he would leave it to one of his three children. She told him that of course she understood that it is a family treasure, but also made it clear that if they changed their minds, we would love to display it. He was also invited to visit the Museum if they ever get back to New Jersey. He was very cordial and delighted to hear that we now have a Watchung museum. The Committee agreed that it would be a good idea to stay in touch with him – perhaps send a picture of the picture to him!

New Cabinets – B. Diem

We have received some very nice kitchen cabinets from someone who was remodeling. We need to get them installed. Barbara will follow up with who could put them up.

Synopsis of Tibby Wotherspoon – D. Addario

Diddy has been working on a synopsis of the story of the General Slocum, Tibby Wotherspoon and why she is in the Watchung Museum. She read a draft and the Committee agreed that she is on the right track. The goal is to have a short story framed by the display in a big font so that people can read it quickly and if they want more information they can read the longer articles in the display. She will tweak it for the next meeting.

WHRHS All Class Reunion – S. Tucker

The WHRHS All Class Reunion will be held on May 31. Sue would like to have the Museum open the next day, Sunday, June 1. That is a regular open day for the Museum and the hours will be extended from noon to 4:00 PM. We will get publicity out to the reunion participants.

Material from Optimists Club – S. Tucker

The Optimists Club in Watchung has folded and Joe Higgins and Chris Kogler, who were involved with the Club, want us to look as some materials we might want. There is a fabulous Indian headdress which Roger Seidel has – it is currently in the attic of the Arts Center. Sue will set up a date with Joe.

Future Tea Parties – S. Tucker

Sue would like us to have another tea party soon. It was agreed that the next group should be members of the Council and staff. We will ask Dianna to work

on timing. Ideas for other teas include Warren Historical and former members of the Historical Committee.

Coverage for Museum Openings

May 4 – B. Aldrich, B. Diem

May 18 – D. Addario, L. Franklin

June 1 – B. Diem, B. Titus, B. Aldrich

June 15 – B. Diem, L. Stahl, B. Aldrich (This is Father's Day)

Workshop

It was decided to wait to schedule a workshop until Sue speaks to Chris about the video and gets some direction.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The meeting was adjourned at: 10:00 PM

Submitted by:

Dorothy Addario
Secretary

PLEASE NOTE OUR NEXT MEETING IS NOT ON OUR USUAL DAY:

NEXT MEETING: Monday, May 12, 2014 7: 00 PM, Texier House