

Historical Committee  
Minutes of the October 9, 2013 Meeting

Attendance: D. Addario, B. Aldrich, B. Black, B. Diem, S. Feibush, B. Titus, S. Tucker and D. Beck Clemens, Liaison. Absent: E. Stomber, R. Stomber.

Presiding: B. Diem Chairperson

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 PM

The minutes of the September 4, 2013 meeting were approved as circulated.

**CHAIRPERSONS REPORT – B. Diem**

The Successful Grand Opening (Details under Old Business)

By all accounts, our grand opening was a huge success. Details will be discussed under Old Business.

Herrick Family Visit

The Herrick (Hurych) family lived in the Castle after the Moldenke's. The Herrick's had a son, George, and a daughter Helen. George's son, Dwight and Helen's daughter Jacqueline came to visit the Texier House on September 25. They were absolutely thrilled with the Castle display and promised to keep in touch and visit again. (Diddy and Betse went to high school with George and Helen.)

Veteran's Monument Update

Barbara is investigating the cost of adding the Desert Wars to the monument.

Sign Made for Driveway

The sign made for the driveway is confusing and we need to problem solve a way to make the sign less confusing. Also, the sign in the front needs refurbishing – the paint is peeling, etc.

Thank you Notes

Thank you notes were written to: Margaret Dove, Nancy Dove Leeds, Jane Abel Werner, Doyle Hunsinger, Jr. and Catherine Wilmerding Rule. D. Addario circulated the letters for members to read.

*c:m+c 11/22/13*

### Proclamation and Attendance at Council Meeting 10/10/13

The Mayor and Council will be presenting a proclamation declaring History Day in Watchung. All members are encouraged to attend.

### Refrigerator

A small under the counter refrigerator was given for use in the Texier House by the Borough.

### Mannequins

A contact we thought we had to supply us with mannequins fell through. We need to research and find some mannequins at a good price.

### Book Donation

Ron Miller donated a small supply of his book on Dr. Eaton for us to sell at the opening. We can keep the profit.

### More Artifacts from Katherine Rule

The night before our opening, we received more artifacts from Katherine Wilmerding Rule. The items included an Egyptian libation cup, a miniature mummy and some little carvings used as jewelry. She had purchased these items from Bonded Jewelry, who had purchased them at the Castle auction. She also sent a miniature tapestry, copied by her from a castle design to use in one of her miniatures. We are hoping that the Moldenke family can shed more light on these Egyptian artifacts. Apparently they were given to the Moldenke's as a thank you from the Egyptian government. Diddy will write a thank you note.

### **LIAISON'S REPORT – D. Beck – Clemens**

Dianna started her report by giving kudos to all Historic Members on the fantastic opening. By every measure, it was a huge success. The Committee will need to decide on contact information for the website.

The Committee needs to continue with the interviews for the living history and she suggested that the three living mayors be next. Paul Ost, Betse Titus and Diddy should be interviewed soon.

### Donation Plaque for Texier Room

She is still working on the Donations Plaque and wants a decision about wording and levels. After some discussion, it was decided to use Patrons for \$1000 or more, Donors, \$500 - \$1000 and Friends, \$250 - \$500.

### Donation Letter and Mailing List

A mailing list needs to be established. We have a start with Walter Pennett's list and we can use our guest sign in as another resource. Once we get it established, it will not be too difficult to keep it up to date.

### Harvest Fest October 26, Mobus Field, 3-5

The Harvest Festival is on Saturday, October 26 from 3:00-5:00 PM. There will be a ribbon cutting for the opening of the refurbished tennis courts. It was suggested that we have the Museum open during the Harvest Festival and the Committee agreed.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### Review of Grand Opening

The Committee reviewed the grand opening. All agreed that it was a big success. People loved the plates and many asked if they could have another for someone else. We will try to sell the rest. The Diorama was a huge hit! The Elsinore Room had huge crowds all day long and was the room where people stayed the longest.

It was agreed that we need to tell the stories surrounding the artifacts. Diddy and Betty Jean had prepared sheets in advance containing information needed by those not on the Committee. These should be made for all the displays.

We did not have time to put all the signs on foam board. Mary Ciccorello had done many signs for us but we needed more. Barbara's daughter, Debbie Brenn came to the rescue and made many more signs. We need to put the new ones on foam.

The Fire Department's 49 truck was a hit. Ralph Diem's 1948 restored tractor and cow were also a big hit and many people took pictures with their children. Many pictures were taken of children with Gary Greve's sheep as well.

A video "trailer" showing a few scenes from the Oral History project was developed by Bobby Adams and Chris Vanderfleet, but there were last minute snags with the CD player. Late the night before the opening, Ralph Diem and Gary Greves put up a shelf to hold the player close enough to the outlet. They had to use one of the old hand saws from the Ness Farm! For the opening, we were able to play the trailer a few times, but then something went wrong with the connection.

The banner from the Reenactment is inside – we might be able to use the reverse side again. It was agreed that the Reenactment was a huge draw and helped make the event successful.

The Boy Scout's hot dog sale was also a success – they made a profit and the Sue Tucker's homemade apple crisp was a big seller. The Girl Scout craft was also successful and helped draw people over from the Reenactment.

There was general agreement that we had wonderful support from DPW, especially Arthur Wright who helped tremendously with a variety of problems on opening day.

The outside decorations were fantastic. Many people commented on the many fall decorations. Thanks to Sue Tucker and her son Robbie and brother Bob.

Robert Mayer is a resident of Ridge Road. He introduced himself to several members of the Committee. He is a historian and has written a book, titled, "The War Man." He indicated that he will donate a copy of his book for our collection. He called Borough Hall after the event and he eventually was put in contact with Barbara Diem. He also has a spinning wheel he will donate to us. Barbara will make arrangements to get these items.

Richard Bozenbury, from North Plainfield is Curator of Images at the *Fleetwood Museum of Art And Photographics of North Plainfield*. He gave us a book on Victorian New Jersey.

We received offers of assistance from many attendees. Hengjie Cai from Wolford Court, offered assistance with photography. We received information about two books written about the Lenni Lenapi Indians. Marion Fisher Applegate, who used to live in Watchung, is one of the authors. Sue Tucker has the information. She was the niece of Stockton Fisher. We will follow up to get these books in our collection.

We also were asked questions about the time capsule placed at Valley View School in 1976. It was to be opened in fifty years, so that would put it to be opened in 2026. This same woman complained that the Art Center was never given publicity about its history as a school; she resented it being called the Art Center, without qualifying that it served as Watchung's school. There was interest expressed in the Watchung throw and information was wanted about a tunnel under 260 Valley Drive.

We have received many good photographs from various people of the event.

Sue Tucker had a discussion about a possible Gold Project for a Girl Scout – she will meet with them this weekend.

Charles Eaton, 3<sup>rd</sup> called Barbara the night before the opening. He had heard about the Grand Opening and wanted to come, but had other engagements. He has a Revolutionary War gun that belonged to his great-grandfather which he

would like to donate to our museum. He stated that it is very valuable. We will need to contact him.

We need to have an accounting of all expenses so that we can get a final cost of the event and our budget status. Everyone is to submit their receipts as soon as possible. We did sell some books and there were some donations, so all of this needs to be organized and submitted.

It was agreed that we have many thank you notes to write. Everyone is to submit a list to Diddy.

#### Printer, Scanner

It became very clear during the preparation for this event that we need a printer, scanner and copier at the Texier House. We will seek donations.

#### Evaluation and Records on the Opening of Texier

The Committee will evaluate all aspects of the Opening. It was suggested that a separate scrapbook be made of the Opening. The Committee will seek someone with scrapbooking skills.

#### Deed of Gift and Incoming Loan Form – D. Addario

Diddy is working on these forms.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### Need for Treasurer

It is clear that we need a Treasurer to keep track of our expenditures and budget. Barbara asked for a volunteer but no one wanted to do this. This will be brought up again.

#### Next Steps for Museum

The Committee discussed what is next for the Museum. There is a mountain of paper work to catch up with. The Historic files need work. We need to develop forms, some are in the works. We need to develop a spread sheet for donors, establish a mailing list and start work on cataloguing and inventory. We still have much of the museum to set up. The Living History is ongoing. We need to work on our organizational structure and evaluate the work load.

### Schedule for Museum

The next 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday is October 20. Diddy and Sue Feibush will handle that.

On October 26 the Museum will be open 3:00 – 5:00 PM. Barbara and Betty Jean will check to see if they can handle that day.

Betse Titus and Sue Tucker will do November 3 and 17.

Sue T. led a discussion about the opening hours possibly not being enough. We will need to evaluate this. She believes that the Girl Scouts community service and might be of help to us.

### Washington Valley as a Name for Watchung

We were asked by a representative from Drake House in Plainfield if Watchung was ever called "Washington Valley." No member of the Committee had ever heard or read about Watchung being called this. Washingtonville was the closest name.

### Christmas Program

Sue Tucker suggested that we have a special event for Christmas. She would like to have three decorated trees in the Museum. Perhaps we could coordinate a Santa on a tractor, or something like that. Sue, as our Chairperson of Events will think about this some more. Some members of the Committee expressed concern about the work – others thought it was good to keep the momentum

### Workshops

The Committee will meet on Tuesday, October 15, at 1:00 PM and Tuesday, October 22 at 7:00 PM for working sessions. All members who can should attend. There is much work to be done.

The meeting was adjourned at: 9:50 PM

Submitted by:

Dorothy Addario  
Secretary

*Approved at the November 13, 2013 Meeting*

**NEXT MEETING: November 13, 2013, 7:30 PM, Texier House**