



2021-2022

ANNUAL REPORT



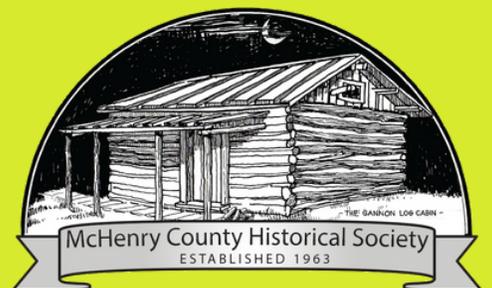
McHenry County's First Woman with Murder

Located between Quincy and Seneca, Illinois near MSB
Baltimore Road

McHenry County Historical Society



**McHENRY COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
UNION, ILLINOIS**



Board of Directors 2021 - 2022

Karen Parks, President
Bob Frenz, Vice-President
Molly Walsh, Treasurer
Nancy Baker, Secretary
Kathy Bergan-Schmidt
Geri Alten
Arlyn Booth
Mary McCann
Lonni Oldham
Paula Rieghns
Dan Ring
Don Rose
Deb Silker
Caroline Sobolak

Staff

Kurt Begalka, Administrator
Kira Stell, Curator
Lela Olson, Office Manager
Janet Barron, Volunteer &
Outreach Coordinator
Cindy Simmons,
Bookkeeper

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT 2021-22

Going into 2022, we began to see the first vestiges of a return to normalcy. People gathered in person at the museum for much of the annual Sampler Lecture Series and for the museum opening in June. The beer tasting, complete with music and food, returned for the general public – albeit outside and a month later than usual – and folks loved it! Finally, Heritage Fair returned to its more boisterous, per-COVID self with more cars, more hands-on activities, and a return of the vintage clothing and book sales. Thank goodness. We deserve this!

PRESERVATION

Following the sudden death of former curator and Historic Sites Committee Chair Grace Moline last year, the board voted to create an ongoing summer internship in her honor – funded, in part, by memorials and donations. That project, which we dedicated this season to photographing downtowns across the county, launched in June. Intern Grant Dreves is teaming with photographer Joe Petykowski (who shot pictures of historic buildings for Grace) to create a permanent, digital photographic record we hope to one day make available to the public.

Exhibits Curator Kira Stell is applying for a Collections Assessment Preservation Program grant to fund a review of the collection and its storage space.

The Solon Mills Depot (Depot Restaurant building) in Richmond – despite our efforts and those of the W.A. McConnell Foundation and Friends of the Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge – could be demolished by the time you read this. Still, we were able to get inside and out to shoot pictures ... and save a few interior items.

There also are success stories. The W.A. McConnell Foundation did save Richmond's oldest building, "Olde No. 90," at 10328 N. Main St. The McHenry County Historical Society plaqued it in 1984.

The Johnson farmstead with its Greek Revival farmhouse, located at Route 20 and Johnson Road west of Marengo, is being saved by Kansas solar energy company Enel Green Power North America, Inc. in conjunction with the Society's Historic Sites Committee. Work is continuing on the restoration of the Old Courthouse in Woodstock. True North Properties Inc. is salvaging the exteriors of Huntley's Catty factory Building and a former Cary Village Hall and converting them into multi-family residences. Finally, our Historic Sites Committee continues to carry the banner of local preservation – be it at Memorial Hall in Richmond, the Coventry farm in Harvard, or at restoration successes such as the Pink Harrison Resort cottage in Johnsburg ... which the board just plaqued. It underscores the point that perseverance and preservation are more alike than we might think.

PROGRAMMING

While the pandemic's shadow still lingers, we are increasing our visibility with the addition of Saturday hours and the gradual return of a more typical schedule that includes "crowd favorites" such as "Historic Halloween: Return of the Dead" and (so long as COVID cooperates) the Holiday Open House and Appraisal Event. Like many nonprofits, much of what we can do depends on volunteers. That remains an ongoing challenge and underscores the need to continually replenish our ranks.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT 2021-22

FINANCES

Our members' have continued to step it up, mindful of the financial pressures the pandemic and the world economy have placed upon the organization. The 2022 Annual Fund raised about to \$28,700! We also redoubled our efforts to secure grant funding, as well as collaborating with several other organizations to pursue a three-year "transformational grant" that includes Latino and Latina oral histories and the historical impact of migrant workers. Adopt-An-Artifact initiatives also have been successful, enabling us to restore art and objects that otherwise would have sustained added deterioration.

ADMINISTRATION

Work continues on the Washington Street property, which the Society acquired in June 2020. Armed with a comprehensive space study, we now are pursuing a grant for a study of our collection and how it is stored. The results could be pivotal when we begin designing a two-story library/collection storage addition on the lot immediately east of Eckert Hall.

In the interim, we've cleaned up the property and are working to restore water service in the coach house. Lines were not shut off properly in the past, resulting in split pipes and leaks. We also repaired and "gussied up" the portico above the office entrance, channeling water onto the limestone walls. We also hope to begin repairs and tuckpointing on those same 1870 walls later this summer – pending the outcome of a state grant.

With the assistance of board members Karen Parks and Deb Silker, Lela Olson reimagined the Museum Store. They created a slicker, more polished look with new items for sale.

I am particularly happy to report that we are fully staff and poised to tackle whatever the future throws at us. Office Manager Lela Olson and Janet Barron, our new Volunteer & Outreach Coordinator, have stepped in and have been acclimating themselves to our processes ... and, I might add ... creating a few of their own. Both are extremely organized, something I admire and envy, and are well-versed in databases – including our new Neon membership system. (Made possible, in part, to memorials made following the death of former board president Bob Wagner.)

Neon One will allow us to manage memberships, fundraising, communication, volunteers, events, and more using one central hub. Once staff familiarizes itself completely with all of the tools, this significant upgrade over the antiquated system we were using should streamline renewals, donations, registrations and the like.

I also would like to make a special point of thanking retiring board members Kathy Bergan-Schmidt and Henry Kenyon for all their years of loyal service. As they say, it takes many hands. My gratitude to all of you who extended yours during this past year to help us achieve our mission and move the ball forward.

– Kurt Begalka

EXECUTIVE

Over the past fiscal year, the McHenry County Historical Society's staff and committees have been hard at work at some organization activities and planning for our opening.

When you enter the museum, you will see a new, more modern look with a beautifully redesigned museum store thanks to Office Manager Lela Olson. Thanks also go to Exhibits Curator Kira Stell, who created four new exhibits and organized a local art contest where the winners have their artwork displayed and are for sale. Lastly a big thank you to Kurt Begalka, our administrator, who has been sending out our Museum Musings to keep you all up to date on all the happenings of the Society.

I would like to thank the Strategic Planning Committee for the many hours it spent reviewing, revising and updating the strategic plan. Our old plan expires this summer. Many of our overarching goals remain the same, but since the last plan was adopted there has been much progress on those goals and some objectives have changed. The next step is devising a blueprint for accomplishing our goals – i.e. action plans from our various committees – to guarantee continued progress. I invite you to take a copy of the new plan and learn more about what we envision for this organization in the future.

Thanks to the Education Committee and our former Volunteer & Outreach Coordinator Kira Shea, all the education materials were consolidated in one spot. MCHS archival materials also were moved into a single room upstairs in the Washington Street house.

Another big thanks goes out to the Membership Committee who, along with board member Don Rose, spent numerous hours working with our new software company (Neon) to update the way we record membership information. We should be able to more easily and accurately contact all of our members and supporters with this new tool.

Many of the changes at the museum have all been the result of suggestions that came from the museum space analysis report created by Studio GWA of Rockford. The biggest change still is in progress: taking the “public” portion of our research library and moving it to the old accession room next door. The accession room, in which new objects are processed for inclusion into the museum’s collection, has moved upstairs – as has Kira Stell’s desk.

Thanks to Arlyn Booth and her Research Library Committee, we have a plan for adding new shelves and drawers to the existing library to accommodate the overflowing amount of materials we have. Hopefully, we will receive a grant to cover at least a portion of the cost.

In addition to the aforementioned projects, the Society also expanded Saturday hours this year – 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. every Saturday except during festival weekends. It’s been a wonder to see the work undertaken by the staff, board and volunteers this past fiscal year. All deserve a strong round of applause and I am deeply in their debt.

We are looking forward to a productive year of getting membership and attendance back up – even exceeding previous years.

Karen Parks - President

FINANCIAL

Even with the uncertainty of our current economy, the Society's finances are in good standing. Financial support from our members continues to grow. Members give in a number of ways: annual fund, adopt an artifact, the Grace Moline Memorial Internship and the Nancy Fike Scholarship. The Board has approved a 2022-23 budget of approximately \$469,000. The budget reflects a purchase of new shelving system for our library and masonry work to be done on the 1870 main building in Union. In addition recognizing the impact of inflation, substantial raises were given to our full time returning staff. The accompany pie charts will give you an overview of the Society's revenue and expenses for the fiscal year ending June 30th, 2021.

Investments

With the volatility of the market this past year all three of our investments have experience losses in value. The investments are being managed by The Northern Trust with an investment strategy of growth with moderate income.

McEachren Charitable Trust market value

June 2021 \$4,449,022.98

June 2022 \$3,813,402.53

MCHS Endowment market value

June 2021 \$2,225,360.97

June 2022 \$1,871,207.20

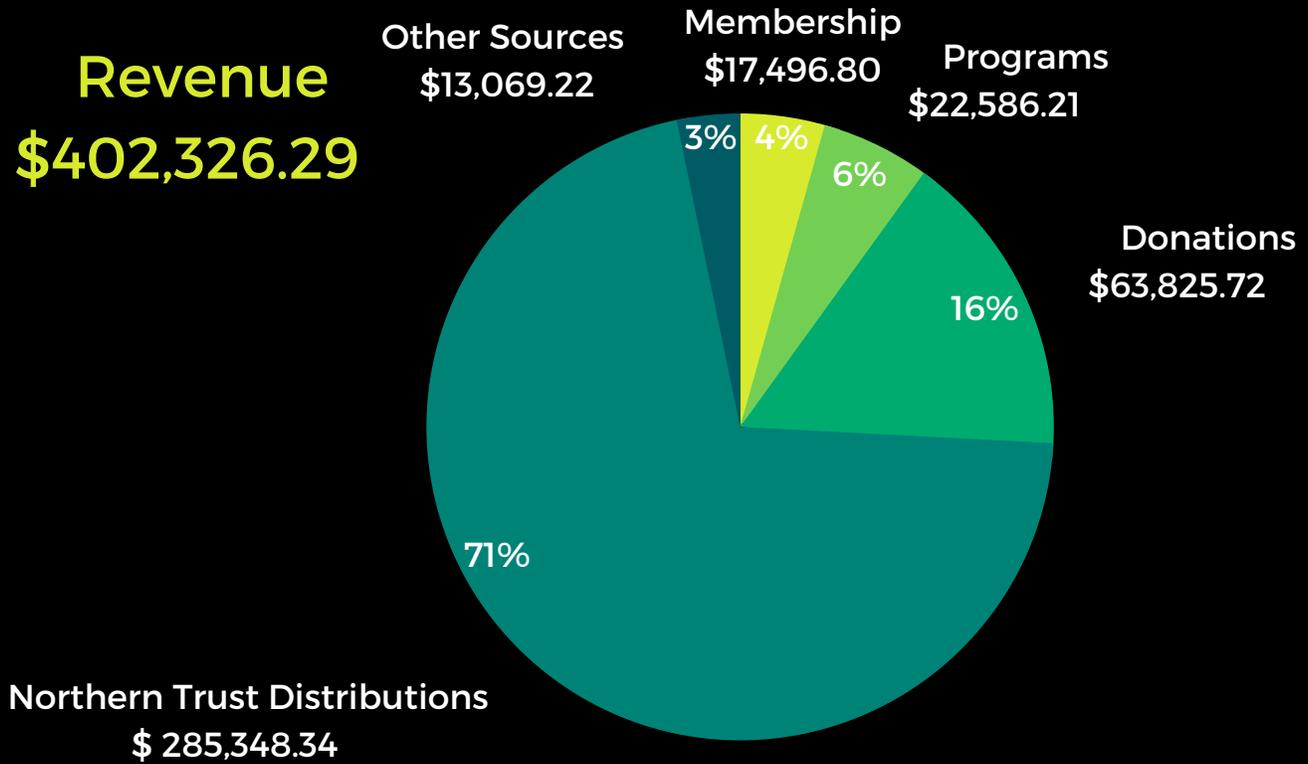
Anderson Fund market value

June 2021 \$1,000,178.22

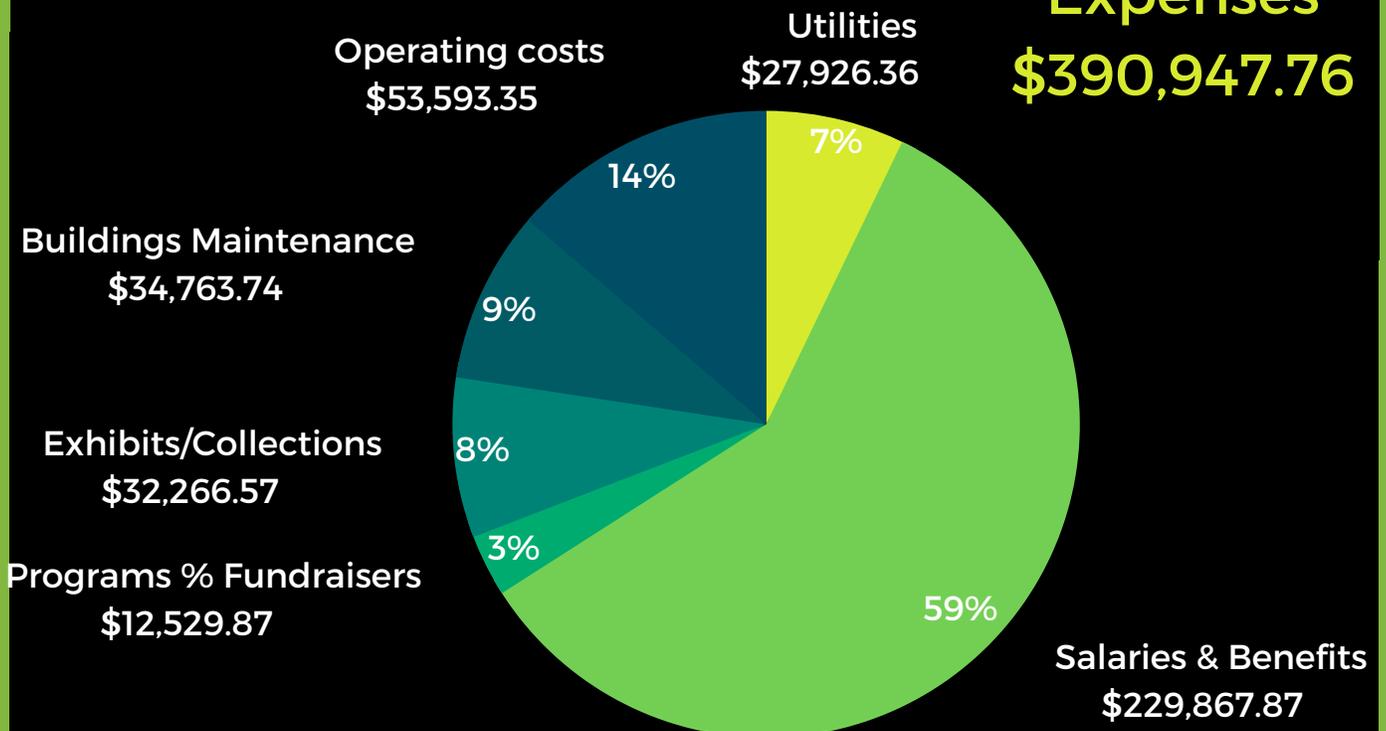
June 2022 \$884,729.31

FINANCIAL

Revenue \$402,326.29



Expenses \$390,947.76



EDUCATION

This has been very strange year for the Education Committee. We started in the fall with a new Volunteer & Outreach Coordinator (Kira Shae Meehan) and we ended this year with another new coordinator, Janet Barron. Ironically, they know each other!

Along with still being in lockdown for a large portion of the year, it was difficult to continue with our “normal” activities. We had only two tour groups all year. One was a homemakers’ group which started us thinking about promoting our tours to others – such as homeschoolers, as well as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

The school groups have not yet returned to the museum. We did participate in our resurrected 2021 Heritage Fair, where we set up and managed an obstacle course and a cakewalk.

In accordance with our Society’s StEPs (Standards and Excellence Program) goals, and McHenry County Historical Society’s strategic outreach initiative, the committee is focused on engaging people of all ages, ethnicities and backgrounds in the rich history of McHenry County. We are pursuing that by enhancing program offerings to widen our appeal.

MCCHS staff and volunteers completed a survey of several hundred people this past fiscal year, which helped provide direction on programming and exhibits. To fill a need of hands-on programming for children, the committee worked for several months in developing and creating a fun environment in the Deicke Hall barn exhibit space.

There are many hands-on activities for children, which will help them learn about farming and agriculture in the county. We are hoping this exhibit will help bring young families to our museum.

The next time you stop by, please take the time to come view it and our other new exhibits.

Karen Parks - Chair



GOVERNANCE

The Governance Committee has the pleasure of nominating the following persons for three-year terms as a Director on the Society's Board:

- Mary McCann, Seneca Township
- Caroline Pharr Sobolak, Algonquin Township

Mary McCann: Mary has had ties to McHenry County for forty years. She and husband Bob are owners of McCann Berry Farm in Woodstock. She is a longtime MCHS member. Mary brings multiple skills to the Society Board as she formerly was a professional project manager. She plans to contribute her experience managing a variety of programs and projects and her experience communicating with a variety of potential stakeholders.

Mary has been very active in County leadership as a member of the McHenry County Board, the McHenry County Board of Health, the Mental Health Board and the McHenry County Conservation District Board. She has participated in numerous local commissions and advisory councils related to the environment and social issues.

Caroline Sobolak: Originally from Pittsburgh, Caroline relocated to Cary from Lisle in 1986 when her husband accepted a position at Kemper Insurance in Long Grove. Her two children and six grandchildren live in the Chicago area. Caroline brings a varied educational background to the McHenry County Historical Society. She holds a bachelor's degree in Home Economics Education from Pennsylvania State University, a master's degree from Wheaton College in Communication Strategy and Marketing, and a master's degree in special education from Northern Illinois University. After teaching school for 18 years, Caroline embarked on a career in fundraising/development. She retired from McHenry County College in 2014 after working for both the Friends of MCC Foundation and the Development Department. Besides researching grant opportunities and writing grants, Caroline enjoys finding and using data to guide advancement planning and approaches. Caroline has belonged to the Kishwaukee Trail National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) in Woodstock for 30 years and currently serves as its regent. On the first Saturday of every month, you will find Caroline at the Woodstock Public library helping others with "finding their roots" and genealogical research. Sewing and quilting remain a passion and Caroline donates to Quilts of Valor. Additionally, she and her husband belong to a writing group at MCC. "I love McHenry County and think the McHenry County Historical Society is a gem of which we should be proud. After volunteering at the museum for several years, it seemed like a good time to join the board as the museum moves forward to the next phase of growth and expansion."

GOVERNANCE

Thank you to current Board Directors Arlyn Booth, Lonni Oldham and Karen Parks, who have volunteered for new three-year terms.

The Society appreciates the dedicated service of retiring directors Kathy Bergan-Schmidt, Rob Cisneros and Henry Kenyon. Each has had a long history of leadership on the Board. Kathy has been a board member for 20 years and was its president in 2005. She served many years as membership secretary and as membership chair moved membership into the electronic age. Rob joined the Board in 2012 serving for 10 years and championed facilities and professionalism. Henry served for nine years beginning in 2013. He was a leader in educational programming and helping out in the library, where he volunteered to answer research inquiries.

All intend to remain active in the organization.

-Lonni Oldham, chair

HISTORIC SITES

This past year, the committee has been finding its new normal in the absence of its longstanding chairwoman Grace Moline. We now have a committee of 6 people.

Six "Hello" letters and/or applications have been sent out. We received 2 applications. We have had 2 site evaluations, the Abbott House in Cary, which did not pass the Committee, and the Pink Harrison's Cabin #8 which passed the Committee and the Board. A date for the plaquing has been scheduled for July 16, 2022.

The 1933 Pink Harrison's Cabin #8 in Johnsburg may be a modest fishing cabin but has played an important role in the growth of the Chain-O-Lakes.

It has the original amenities, along with the original linoleum flooring, door, and windows. Pink Harrison's Resort was in business for 70 years and was often referred to as "The Playground of Pistakee Bay." This cabin has stood strong through the years, while others throughout the Chain-O-Lakes area have fallen to the wayside. Even though Pink Harrison's Resort has closed its' doors, Cabin No. 8 stands ready to share many historic memories behind its' door.

The Prescott-Whittemore House, Huntley was built in 1841 and received plaque number 14. In February 2022, the committee was informed of future plans to remodel and add-on to the home. The owners were concerned about losing their plaque. On March 2nd, members of the committee visited the home to review ideas with the owners on how to maintain the original home's historical value and obtain cohesiveness with the proposed addition.

The committee is planning a field trip for August 2022 to the Pabst Mansion and Ambassador Hotel in Milwaukee.

While the committee faced several challenges and new adventures this past year, we are still actively seeking new plaque opportunities, including revisiting some past applications that have not previously passed under the old scoring system.

In the coming year, we look forward to educating the general public and raising its consciousness of historic preservation while continuing to plaque new sites.



Respectfully submitted,

Mimi Bierman, Historic Sites secretary

MEMBERSHIP

The Membership Committee continues to focus on ways to increase communication with members, update and streamline our membership data base and look at new outreach opportunities to share information about the McHenry County Historical Society and to encourage new memberships.

Last November, the outreach coordinator launched a Museum Musings. The email is sent to members on the first of each month. Musings highlights upcoming events, what's new at the museum, volunteer opportunities and it also asks for input from members on various topics.

After considerable research, we are excited to announce that the McHenry County Historical Society has purchased Neon One using money from the Bob Wagner fund. Neon is a databased software program that will better organize and manage our current data on members and future museum supporters. Neon will assist with renewals, contacts and clear reporting. It provides automated email marketing, as well as volunteer, grant and event management. We are in the final stages of implementing Neon and will begin utilizing it this month.

Our outreach plan has focused on providing information at different events in McHenry County to increase awareness of what the Historical Society has to offer and encourages individuals to become a part of MCHS by becoming a member. The museum has hosted some member only activities to keep members informed on new developments at the museum.

Volunteers have also provided information to the public at Farmer's Markets and other special events in the county.

Thanks to YOU our membership numbers have remained consistent through the last two challenging years. The membership committee continues to look at ways to engage our existing members as well as encouraging new members. If you have any thoughts or suggestions, please let us know.

We want to extend a very special thanks to Kathy Bergan Schmidt for her many years of service as Membership Secretary and chair of the Membership Committee. Thanks Kathy, for making a difference!

Deb Silker
Membership Chair

MEMBERSHIP

DECEASED MEMBERS

Don Bellm

Frank Boxleitner

Wilson "Bill" Dysart

Robert Hughes

Hazel Kniebusch

Alan Levitt

Doris Marsh

Victor Meuch

Dorothy Otis

J Josephine "Jo" Smith

Janice Webb, Jean Wilson

Pearl Willhammer

Judy Wojtynek

Jim Wyman

If you know of any other member who passed this past fiscal year omitted from the list, please phone or email the office

MEMBERSHIP

LIFE MEMBERS

**Libbie Aavang
Helen Anderson
Melodie Archer
Barabara Weter Bennett
Kathleen Bergan-Schmidt
Ann Bormett
Rick Bormett
Edwin Colton
Aastri Cunat
Trudie Dreyer
Michael Easley
John Eickstadt
Nancy Fike
Stephen Fike
Sean Foley
David Gervais
Lori Geske
Carol Halma
Peggy Hart
Chehalis Hegner
Judy Beth Hervert**

**Nancy Hudson
Nancy Irwin
Dennis Johnson
Willis Johnson
Shirley Johnson
Janice Knight
Stanley Korwin
Charles Liebman
Judith Lovaas
Robert Lueders
Mary Maurer
Arden Miller
John Moline
Sherry Mueller
Mr. & Mrs.
L.R.O'Connor
Lonnie Olham
Marlene Olson
Peggy Palmquist
James Peard
Ethel Pearson
Kenneth Pearson
Janice Perkins**

**Peter Perkins
Judy Porter
Dan Powers
Donald V. Purn
Norma Purn
Laura Rice
Donald Rose
Tracie Rose
Chuck Ruth
Brian Sager
Merton Sarvay
Jude Schmidt
Larry Schmidt
Tom Schultz
Wayne Schwartzman
Linda Stengele
Carl Stengele
Susan Tauck
Theodore Thayer
Cindy Thompson
Ilene Wiedemann**

COLLECTIONS

2021-2022 Projects

In the summer of 2021 Heather Jensen was hired for a 10-week Collections Assistant position to inventory and catalog 210 oversized shelves in our 3-dimensional storage. Heather assigned locations to 2,716 oversized objects in our collections database. She also updated catalog records for a total of 1,604 objects.

- **Adopt-A-Book Program Update:** A Civil War diary written by Marengo dentist John Quincy Adams was recently donated to MCHS. It was decided to stabilize the diary and organize a public fundraiser via Facebook and the Society's Page. There were 18 donors and \$1200 was raised. The diary was stabilized by a book conservator in Chicago and has returned to the historical society. The binding was repaired and re sewn and the diary cover was reinforced. The pages of the diary were mended as needed. The pages were deacidified to prevent the ink from further fading. Finally, a custom box to house the diary was also produced.
- The Collections Committee approved a deaccessioning plan for Textile 1 & Textile 2 to examine downsizing more robust collections like the hats and shoes. These robust categories contain "common" objects that MCHS has an abundance of, especially within the same decades. This ensured the textile collection is properly stored and has room for future growth.
- Kathie Porth, a NIU anthropology student, was accepted as a spring Collections Intern. One of her main projects was to inventory the one-room schoolbook collection. The books are now being cataloged on our collections database by Collections Volunteer Marcia Poedke.
- A Research Library Collections Assistant is anticipated to be hired for a 10-week period later this summer to begin inventorying, cataloging on PastPerfect, and digitizing the accessioned Biographical Collection that is frequently used for genealogy research.

2021-2022 Accessioned Artifacts: 605

Sample of accessioned artifacts: Six diaries from Dr. John Quincy Adams, Marengo, 1860s-1870s; Woodstock picture postcards, 1900s; Grammar school diploma from McHenry Grammar School, 1903; Collection of photographs from the Colby-Peterson family; Memorabilia from the American Legion Peter Umatham Post 412, Woodstock; Fox River Grove Theater memorabilia, 1920s-1940s; Collection of 4-H ribbons from Marengo Farm Produce Show, 1930s; Marengo High School Class of 1939 reunion memorabilia; Illinois 4-H record books for dairy projects from Marengo, 1950s; Curtiss Candy Company Farms newsletters, 1950s; Photographs from Woodstock's Centennial Parade, 1952; Crystal Lake High School yearbooks, 1960s; Scrapbooks from Stew Cohen's radio career 1976-2001; Collection of Woodstock Opera House theater posters, 2010s; Acrylic painting of the new Rt. 120 bridge in McHenry, 2021.

2021-2022 Deaccessioned Artifacts: 1,112

Sample of deaccessioned artifacts: Vet instruments (duplicate); Washers, hardware (poor condition); Ostrich plume (poor condition); Meat thermometer (duplicate); 4 glass baby bottles (duplicate); child's gloves (poor condition); Knitting needles (duplicate); Nylon stockings (poor condition); crochet doily (duplicate); Marcasite belt buckle (poor condition); String of glass beads (poor condition); Mismatched cufflinks (Irrelevant to collection); McHenry County Scrapbook (digitized); JCPenney's catalogs (irrelevant to the collection); Woodstock Sentinel 1970 newspaper (digitized).

BUILDINGS

The McHenry County Historical Society owns nine buildings, including the main museum, Gannon log cabin, West Harmony School and the Washington Street house, coach house and garage, all on the museum campus, as well as Perkins Hall, Pringle School and Riley Methodist Church.

During the past fiscal year, the Building Committee (more specifically volunteer Tim Whitman) documented maintenance needs and undertook numerous repairs for the Washington Street acquisition. Other members updated previously completed inspections for Riley Methodist Church and Perkins Hall. Not surprisingly, new issues were identified, and they will be addressed along with all other previously identified issues - based on urgency and funding.

A 2020 inspection of the main museum building by committee member John Lewis revealed a significant issue with the portico roof over the museum office entrance which results in water being directed back at the building and thereby damaging the limestone wall and concrete stoop. Replacement of this roof was included in the FY 21/22 budget and just completed.

The Building Committee assisted Administrator Kurt Begalka in preparing a scope of work for repairs to the limestone masonry walls of the 1870 portion of the museum. Work will occur in FY 22/23 and when completed it will extend the life of limestone and prevent water from getting into the walls and damaging the interior.

Following the completion of the Space Needs Study, the Building Committee worked with the administrator to begin laying out a process to move forward with expansion. The Committee recommended that additional information be obtained regarding site issues and engineering requirements before going ahead with building design. The Space Needs Study recommended a short-term solution to library expansion which required a structural analysis and construction of additional support walls under the library to allow for installation of new cabinets in the library.

The Committee participated in the Board's Strategic Planning process and committed to developing a detailed 5-year capital improvement plan which will include projects at all of the Historical Society's buildings. This will be a dynamic document that will help guide budget and project implementation decisions.

The preservation, future use, and ownership of Riley Church remains unresolved. When McHenry County rescinded the special-use permit for the church, it left the Society with a building with no permitted use that is situated on a lot that is too small for a well, septic, or parking. The church relied on the generosity of its neighbors - Riley Township and the Riley School District - and that relationship does not satisfy county requirements. In the meantime, like any old building, it has many maintenance needs. Suggestions and ideas are welcome!

The Building Committee also always has a need for volunteers who are knowledgeable in some aspect of building and site design and construction (historic and otherwise) at whatever level is comfortable - whether it is to perform a single project, advise on engineering or architectural issues, or participate on the committee. If you are willing to share time, talent or expertise, contact Kurt Begalka or Nancy Baker.

-Nancy Baker
Building Committee Chair

LIBRARY

Accomplishments:

Digital Projects -

1. Volunteer Trudie Dreher continues yeoman's work digitizing our obituary card collection. She keeps up with current obituary additions and, working backwards chronologically, she has digitized back to 2016. The digital obit collection numbers 8,395 now with 3,496 current and past obituaries added in calendar 2021. During the first six months of 2022, there have been 2,611 current and previous obituaries digitized. It also has reduced the library space devoted to obituaries with 3,845 cards deleted so far during the first six months of 2022.
2. Volunteer Gail Hayes continues scanning our scrapbook collection. The digitized scrapbook collection now numbers 178. The last step of the process had been a problem for at least a year. However, we were fortunate to find John Stanley of Wauconda, who had experience with ResCarta software at Wauconda Township Historical Society. He now gets the scrapbooks loaded into our database as soon as Gail finishes with them! This database soon be made available to the public, similar to historic newspapers.
3. Our newspaper database, also based on ResCarta so we were looking for someone to load the last hard drive of data from our former vendor, Northern Micrographics, before we could proceed with finding a new vendor for future contracts. We are now in the first contract with Roy Havlik's Northern Digital Preservation Specialists in Wisconsin, working on the last of the Woodstock Sentinel project. We estimate we are about halfway through our quest to digitize all our newspapers.
4. We had a few volunteers working on digitizing oral history cassette tapes over the last several years before COVID. The project, it turns out, was only dealing with "the tip of the iceberg." Volunteer Ed Bormett, under the direction of library volunteer Maggie Crane, is now tackling the entire glacier. The transfer from analog cassettes to digital wave-format files is proceeding with systematic control.
5. All of our vertical files now have their headings lists on the website or ready to be posted on the website. Volunteer Dave Sippel was instrumental in typing up the last two lists.

LIBRARY

Accomplishments Continued:

Library Expansion -

The Studio GWA study suggested that one short-term solution to the library storage problem was to move accessioning to the second floor and take over the former accessions room as the library work and public space. The former library space would become a “stacks,” devoted solely to collection storage. To that end, a plan was devised for filling the reconfigured space with flat file cabinets, vertical file cabinets, and book and atlas shelving. A quote for those specs was obtained and amounts to \$41,000. The last vestiges of the accessions room are moving out and library supplies and projects are moving into the accessions room.

Preservation -

Items preserved this year thanks to Adopt-a-Book donors and two other generous donations of \$8,000 and \$700 to our preservation and digitization efforts:

1. Adopt-a-Book

- a. Thrift Press' 1927 McHenry County atlas
- b. Buffalo House Ledger
- c. Surveyor's Plat Book
- d. John Quincy Adams' Civil War diary
- e. 4 of John Brink's surveyor notebooks including one with Civil War connections

2. Others

- a. 2 copies of the 1903 McHenry County plat map, two of the three known
- b. 1951 Sidwell McHenry County atlas, the earliest we have
- c. William Hepburn's medical diploma
- d. the 1885, 1898, and 1932 Woodstock Sanborn atlases

Research Requests -

Forty requests were received in the last six months, most requiring several hours of work. Volunteer researchers do their best to answer these in a timely manner – as does the office manager, who must relay the questions to the various researchers and then convey their answers and photocopies back to the requestor. However, the organization lacks the capacity to turn these requests around quickly. The committee believes a research service, as well as other library activities, would be enhanced by the addition of a dedicated staff librarian position.

Accessions -

Kira counted 605 pieces accessioned and estimates at least half of those are housed in the library, sizes ranging from a postcard to a multi-volume atlas.

LIBRARY

Accomplishments Continued:

Peasley Projects -

Two long-term projects were completed.

1. Housing the Peasley negative/print collection in sleeves with labels, interrupted by COVID, has finally been finished.
2. The Peasley office files have been organized by Maggie Crane and a subject heading list is on the library computer as a finding aid. Maggie, however, wants to fine tune the collection yet.

Newest Volunteers -

Dianne Brooks is also working with the obit collection, learning the collection to prepare for answering research requests, and typing the handwritten court documents table of contents and will index the names.

Nancy Reczek has typed Nancy Fike's history notes and is working on the surname index card project with Volunteer Ginny Boss.

Ann Bormett has organized duplicate Peasley photos for sale and is typing the 7 volume Edinger diary before accessioning.

Ed Bormett, as mentioned above, is our new cassette tape expert.

Other veteran volunteers continue their service to the library: Pat Merrit clips and files in our vertical files, Barb Pfannkuche catalogs our incoming books, and Craig Pfannkuche shares research request duties.

LIBRARY

Accomplishments Continued:

Miscellaneous -

- 1.** A silent auction was organized and hosted for Heritage Fair and Cider Fest.
- 2.** The Schuette postcard collection was sold to a dealer.
- 3.** A presentation on the library was given to the board of directors.
- 4.** A decision has been made that the institutional archives should be separated and separately housed from the library and will be properly taken care of in the future with someone designated to take care of it.

Goals for Next Year:

- 1.** To plan and host a party marking the 40th anniversary of the library from 3-6 p.m. Sept. 8.
- 2.** To move into the new public workspace.
- 3.** To order and install the new storage and shelving for the library collection and then to shift the collection onto it.
- 4.** To draft a digital collection policy to begin to deal with the digital deluge in an intelligent, consistent manner.
- 5.** To create a long-term preservation list, with an estimate of the funding needed.
- 6.** To create an adopt-a-book, adopt-a-cabinet, adopt-a-computer, adopt-a-newspaper, adopt-a film, etc. suggestion lists for potential donors.
- 7.** To continue the preservation and newspaper digitization progress.

Committee members:

Maggie Crane, Don Rose, Henry Kenyon, Marcia Poedtke, Kathy Bergan Schmidt, Geri Alten, Kira Stell

**Arlyn Booth
Research Library Committee Chair**