

MONHEGAN HISTORICAL & CULTURAL MUSEUM ASSOCIATION, INC.
35th ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS
AUGUST 15, 2019
1:00PM to 2:00PM

MINUTES

In attendance:

- **Officers:** Edward Deci, President; Susan Bateson, Vice President; Robert Stahl, Treasurer; Susan Bateson, Secretary
- **Trustees:** Dan Broeckelmann, Elena Fusco Henry and Muffy Pendergast
- **Staff:** Jenn Pye, Chief Curator; Emily Grey, Curator of Exhibitions
- **Members:** Margot Sullivan, Steve Fuller, Carol Stahl, Carol Gold, Bob and Penny Smith, Bob and Ann Bartels, Clare Durst
- **Non-member attendees:** Judy Rosenstreich, Cheryl Anderson (substitute pastor at church in August) & her husband Scott Tilden

Absent Trustees: Laureen Gaston, Peter Nelson, James O’Gorman, Kathleen Perry, Earle Shettleworth, Sarah Webb.

President Ed Deci called the meeting to order at 1:00pm, welcomed members to the meeting, expressed thanks for the use of the Monhegan Community Church as the meeting venue, and introduced the Officers and Trustees in attendance. Minutes of the August 16, 2018 meeting of members that were made available to members at the meeting were accepted as written.

Report from the President: Edward Deci

I would like to start this year’s meeting by offering some reflections regarding the Monhegan Museum’s growth and development over the last several years. The additions of the assistant keeper’s house and of the Fitzgerald Legacy managed by Bob Stahl were huge developments. However, I would like to focus on some of the significant activities or changes that have occurred in more recent years.

1. We formed a Membership and Development Committee managed by Susan Bateson that examined all of our fundraising and membership practices, and, as a consequence, we instituted new programs – such as the “Circle of Friends” giving levels. The results include increased membership and higher average received donations.
2. We worked with a consultant to develop a “Case Statement” with our history, mission, and goals, to have a greater impact in the community.
3. We outsourced a portion of our bookkeeping work to relieve some of the burden on our Treasurer, Bob Stahl, and on the Lighthouse Hill staff, and then we moved the bookkeeping work to an external accountant who has helped us move all financial activity to QuickBooks Online so that Jenn, Tara, Susan, Bob, and I can follow the financial activity. Today’s financial reports result from years of effort by Bob, Susan, Tara, and Jenn.
4. We moved the long-term investment accounts of the museum and the Fitzgerald Legacy to Cribstone Capital Management, and investment performance has been strong.

5. We have produced exceptional catalogues in recent years, thanks primarily to Bob Stahl's oversight of each project. Of course, the 50th Anniversary book – and Volume I of the James Fitzgerald catalogue raisonné were the pinnacles of this effort, and the consistency of the excellent catalogues is a cornerstone of our being viewed as an exceptional museum.
6. Accompanying the catalogues have been outstanding exhibitions, and we are increasing the number of excellent exhibitions that travel to other museums. The exceptional exhibition this year, curated by Bob Stahl, Susan Strickler, and Susan Danly, shows the work of Maud Briggs Knowlton and Edward Knowlton, and, will travel to the Currier Museum in Manchester, NH, much as the Lamar Dodd show also curated by Bob Stahl travelled to the Pace Galleries of Art at Freyburg Academy. Next year's exhibition, to be curated by Jim O'Gorman, Emily Grey, and Jenn Pye, will display works by artists who painted at both Monhegan and Cape Ann and will travel to the Cape Ann Museum of Art.
7. Thanks to Jenn Pye's leadership, the innovative climate-control project, which was partially funded by an NEH Sustaining Cultural Heritage grant was completed. The resulting new vault is an important enhancement.
8. We garnered national attention when the Rockwell Kent/James Fitzgerald Home and Studio was accepted into the Historic Artists' Homes and Studios program (HAHS) of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.
9. The assistance of a public relations consultant has helped the museum and Fitzgerald Legacy receive considerably more media attention than in prior years.
10. Generous donors of the museum – Phyllis and Jamie Wyeth, as well as Linda Bean, have provided significant gifts and pledges that are in long-term investments to earn funds to pay for additional staff positions that have, been voluntary.
11. Hundreds of members such as you have brought us to the point of having less than \$100,000 to go to finish the Wyeth \$1 million Challenge.
12. The Wyeth promise of the of Rockwell Kent collection has been a great boost! But it is important to remember that we earned this prize gift because of the outstanding involvement of people such as yourselves, and for the museum's incredible team: – the museum's Associate Director and Fitzgerald Legacy Director, **Bob Stahl**; the Chief Curator, **Jennifer Pye**; the Curator of Exhibitions, **Emily Grey**; the Operations Manager, **Tara Hire**; the Archival Associate **Pamela Rollinger**; our Curatorial Associate, Jennifer Marr; and our fellow volunteer Officer, Susan Bateson. Without them, this extraordinary progress would not have been possible. My deepest personal thanks to each of you.

Bob, Susan and Jenn will now give you more specific individual reports, but I wanted to set the stage for you by sharing the “big picture” of our overall progress.

Report from the Treasurer: Robert Stahl

I'd like to take this opportunity to go off script from the usual annual meeting presentation. Over and over we hear: “Monhegan is changing.” As I wrote in the essay that accompanies this year's catalog, Monhegan has always been changing. We no longer build ships; oxen no longer roam Main Street; and women artists are no longer painting in full-length skirts. Change may be either positive or negative, but it is inevitable.

When Maud Briggs Knowlton, our artist for this year's show, first arrived on Monhegan as a 20-something year old in the 1890s, it was only three decades or so since Aaron Draper Shattuck had painted the first Monhegan painting.

Almost 60 years later, in 1956, when she made her last visit, it was about 3 years since Rockwell Kent had made his last visit here in October 1953. His first arrival had been in 1905. In 1956, it was also about 3 years after a young couple – Marvin Oberman and Arlene Simon – made their first visit. Mo could remember that last visit of Kent. We lost Mo Oberman, who also spent six decades of summers on Monhegan, when he died last year.

This year, we've lost several long term Monheganites. Sherman Stanley died this past winter. Sherm was Mr. Monhegan to most of us. He spent virtually his entire life here. He was the founding vice president of Monhegan Associates and was one of the three members of the Associates' museum committee (with Leo Meissner and Jackie Hudson) who first looked into founding a museum here on Light House Hill. Sherm was also a link to many Monhegan artists who were his good friends, particularly Andrew Winter and James Fitzgerald.

In the spring we lost Theodore Tihansky, for many years a year round resident and a very special part of this community. Ted was an incredibly gifted and creative artist who touched many of us with his bigger than life personality and his incredible art. An oil painting by Ted hangs on the porch of the Keeper's House this summer.

This month we have lost two founding members of WAMI, the woman artist association: Joan Rappaport and Nancy Thompson Brown.

Joan Rappaport first came to Monhegan in 1979. She worked primarily in watercolor and pen and ink. She would be seen welcoming visitors to Monhegan House, where she lived on the fourth floor, and painting on the side staircase or fire escape. "My time spent on this island greatly expanded as the need to be surrounded by the nature of the island became stronger."

Nancy Thompson Brown and her husband Bill bought Candlelight – the home built by Maud Briggs Knowlton – in 1981. She had studied with Rockwell Kent, and lived in Taos, NM. She spent over 20 summers on Monhegan. Here is what fellow WAMI artist Kate Cheney Chappell wrote:

"Nancy was a dear friend to me, and, as a young artist, I received encouragement from her. I recall many days when I visited her small studio off the main living area, and she would slow me down (I was always running then – a habit that is hard to let go). She would have me look carefully and mindfully at her work, and we would have deep and varied discussions about the nature of art."

Let us take a moment to remember those who have left us this year, and if anyone in the audience would like to make a comment I would welcome it. [At this point, Ed Deci remembered longtime year-round resident Carson Schnell, who also died this summer. Later in the meeting, Ed also talked about Phyllis Wyeth's passing at Bob Smith's prompting, and Muffy Pendergast mentioned the joy of seeing more children being born to Monheganites and the increased number of children on-island this summer.]

Fitzgerald spoke about the changeless in the ever changing. Here on Monhegan we have to embrace the constant change as we preserve the changeless. I like to think that the museum preserves what we consider changeless, while we will adapt to our changing circumstances, including the loss of members of our community.

Bob continued his reporting with the following:

This year we are celebrating the creative life of Maud Briggs Knowlton – a truly pioneering woman. Among her many firsts:

She was one of the very first two or three women to paint on Monhegan in the 1890s.

She was one of the first two or three women to become the director of a major American museum – the Currier Gallery of Art in Manchester NH.

She was the first woman to show her commitment to this community by building a studio cottage on Monhegan in 1921.

And she continued that commitment to Monhegan by exhibiting the work of Monhegan artists at the Currier, including George Bellows, A. J. Bogdanove, Constance Cochrane, Jay Connaway, Sears Gallagher, Leo Meissner, and Frederick J. Waugh. She also gave a 21-year-old Andrew Wyeth his first solo museum exhibition in 1939.

Maud Briggs Knowlton grew up in rural New Hampshire and witnessed the growth of the industrial revolution that brought the mills to Manchester. Yet on Monhegan, she was able to recharge her creative spirit by capturing the beauty she witnessed here, especially the flower gardens, trees and headlands.

As Maud Knowlton and her husband Ed traveled from their home in Manchester to spend over 50 summers on Monhegan, it is particularly appropriate that the Monhegan Museum and our community have been able to collaborate with the Currier Museum of Art and collectors from the Manchester community to bring this exhibition together. And when the show comes down here in October, it will travel to Manchester where it will open next February and run until May 2020.

This show was co-curated with Susan Strickler, former director of the Currier, Susan Danly, and myself. The fabulous teamwork in curating this show was remarkable. Our incredible curators have as always been totally amazing in helping to bring this all together – Jenn Pye and Emily Grey

Thanks are due to the lenders who have shared their work with us:

Jeff Bartlett and Maura Weston, Susan Bateson and Steve Fuller, (who have also made a wonderful contribution of two Knowlton artworks to our permanent collection), David and Sandy Brooke, Susan Hirschman, Maureen and Rick Loeffler, Francie Murray, Barbara and Larry Pitsch, Arlene and Bill Schwind, Victoria and Tim St. Hilaire, Susan Strickler (who also donated a watercolor to the

Monhegan Museum), Richard and Ann Thorner, Sally Walbridge, several anonymous lenders, the Manchester Historic Association, and the Currier Museum of Art.

This summer's Art in Bloom program has been a great success due to the many gardeners who have made floral arrangements to grace our gallery: Susan Gilbert, Marlene Arvan, Carol Stahl, Nan Nelson, Norma Kaplis, Cindy Leavesley. Upcoming: Kathie Krause and Joan Brady.

A few Fitzgerald Legacy comments:

The work shown in the Fitzgerald studio this year is "New Work" meaning work recently acquired and not shown before. Included is work from California, Monhegan, NY, Ogunquit, Trinidad, and Massachusetts. Studio hours have been docented by Dan Broeckelmann, Jennifer Marr, and myself.

In 2021, there will be two museum exhibitions of Fitzgerald work. In Monterey, Susan Danly and I will be curating a show of his California work that will fill the entire second floor of the Monterey Museum of Art. 50+ works will be shown in that space, and catalog essays will be written by Susan, myself, and hopefully invited scholars from the Monterey area.

On Monhegan, Fitzgerald will be the artist for the show in the gallery on Light House Hill. Plans are in the making for a show that will focus primarily on his Monhegan work.

Plans for the second volume of the Fitzgerald catalogue raisonné, which will focus on his watercolors, are ongoing.

Restoration of the windows at the Fitzgerald house and studio has continued thanks to the expertise of Dan Broeckelmann.

Report of the Curatorial Team: Jennifer Pye, Chief Curator

Please see the three reports submitted by the Curatorial Team: MMA Curatorial Report 2019; MMA Volunteer Docents 2018-2019; and Accessions 2018-2019. Jenn discussed the highlights of the Curatorial Report and the successes of the summer's events to date.

Report of Membership & Development Committee: Susan Bateson, Chair

Susan referred to the package of materials sent in advance of the meetings to all Board Trustees and paper copies of which were shared with all members who attended the meeting in-person – specifically drawing attention to the new financial reports being generated by our new online bookkeeping and accounting system, thanks to Tara Hire and to Kali Tomlin McCarthy, the museum's new accountant. Susan acknowledged the input of new Trustee, Elena Henry, who is the Chief Financial Officer of the Portland Museum of Art, and who carefully reviewed the reports handed out at the Trustees' meeting in July and provided constructive feedback and suggestions. Most notably, the Museum has changed how it reports the value of its collection of art and historical artifacts to be more consistent with general museum practice. While the way the Museum had been recording the value of its collection (since its earliest filings with the IRS) is an

accepted accounting method, Elena alerted us to the fact that it is not general practice. Our accountant agreed and this year's 990 filing included the following notes on Schedule D saying:

- Pt III, Line 1a: The organization chooses not to capitalize the value of their art collection by consciously choosing to protect the public collection by removing it from the financial picture of the organization's ongoing operations and upholding their fiduciary responsibility to maintain the public's interest.
- Pt V, Line 4: The use of endowments funds will only be used to ensure the continuance of the museum and preservation of its collection.
- Pt III, Line 4: The organization's collection includes works depicting Monhegan and Maine and works done by Maine artists. This collection is meant to preserve and display the history of Monhegan.

Our thanks to Elena for input! Trustees wishing to review the Museum's 990 filing may request a copy from Susan.

Susan also discussed on the membership and donation revenues to-date in the 2019 season (a report that was part of the package sent to Trustees in advance), highlighting the decline from last year's highs due to the 50th anniversary influx, but still very strong and continuing our upwards trend over the last five years.

Governance Report and Actions

The Trustees voted to elect Dan Broeckelmann to a second consecutive term as Trustee. The Trustees also voted to reelect Ed as President, and to elect Bob as Vice President and Susan Bateson as Treasurer & Secretary – to reflect the informal swapping of their roles in early spring 2019.

[The latter two officer positions were again adjusted in October 2019 when Ed retired as Director of the Museum and Bob and Jenn were appointed Co-Directors. In a subsequent Board vote, Trustees approved the following appointments:

- Ed as President
- Susan as Vice President & Secretary
- Elena Henry as Treasurer]

Ed also acknowledged the departure of Muffy Pendergast as a Trustee, following her completion of two consecutive terms and her many contributions to the museum. Thank you, Muffy!!

Notes Taken During Meetings

Action items:

- Susan to send Bob Smith copy of 7/8 Trustee meeting minutes, per his request.
- Determine ways to enable remote Board Trustees to participate in meetings via technology. Jenn mentioned island is considering shared purchase of OWL among non-profits. Will pursue that or alternatives (e.g., ZOOM, Skype)
- Susan intends to speak with Board members 1-to-1 regarding how to increase engagement and report back on ideas to improve.

- Jenn to send Susan link to Museum Assessment Program (MAP) Organizational Assessment process; Susan to send to Board & request Board approval to proceed with seeking MAP grant.
- Susan to call Rob Snyder (Island Institute) and Kristen Levesque (PR consultant) to solicit their thoughts on possible Board candidates.
- Jenn to develop a recommendation for salary increases and/or bonuses and/or increased hours. Executive Committee will discuss on 8/28, then sent on to full Board for electronic vote. [In a subsequent Board vote, Trustees approved the recommendations as submitted.]
- Next year's meeting, if it is still held in the church, suggest attendees move to front of room; acoustics are bad in back. (Penny Smith)

Ideas:

- Plan to promote the Currier's exhibit of the MBK show (Feb to May 2020) through our website and social media. (Muffy)
- Look into possibility of our hosting a fundraising event for MMA&H in Manchester for "friends of Monhegan" and do a group visit to Currier. (Check Salesforce for members with close-by zip codes. (Elena)
- Find a way, technologically, to cross-share the 2021 Fitzgerald exhibit on Monhegan and the Fitz exhibits at Monterey Museum in CA. (Bob Smith) Possibly use console in Gallery or K/F Studio? (Bob Stahl)
- Fundraiser idea: Raffle off a travel package to Monterey to see Fitz exhibit there. (Muffy)
- Possible Board candidate ideas were raised.
- Beyond the museum's recent foray into increased publicity & public relations, consider branding the museum: "*MM ... AH!*" (Bob Smith)

Adjourned at 2:15pm.