

Groton Historical Society
Meeting Minutes
11.14.2023

Present:

Mike Gaiss, Phyllis Burke, Susan Pelkey Smith, Brent Smith, Allen Goodine, David Pierce, Deborah Jurist, Sarah Spira, Louise Reynolds (via Zoom)

Meeting opened at 3:15pm

Treasurer's Report

Susan shared a report of the year's financials. Attention was drawn to the year's expenses, as well as the sales of the merchandise.

Mike Gaiss suggested looking at the CD regarding the interest rate.

Deborah made a motion to accept the report.

I am not sure who seconded the motion-

Motion passed.

Membership fees

Deborah brought to the table a proposal for raising the rate for memberships, with information from the Peacham Historical Society for another perspective.

The group discussed raising our membership rates- and one of the benefits of membership - the newsletter, which is an expense to send.

Allen suggested raising the rate to \$20.

Susan commented that a communications company now has a fee for not using e-billing.

We began to discuss how to make the newsletter easier to print.

Deb was thinking in 2024 trying to plan for purchase of new printer (maybe live in library)

Mike- Community Connect Grant update

This discussion led to a new proposed annual rate of \$25 per household with the option of having a printed newsletter.

Deb makes a motion to approve this increase.

Phyllis seconds the motion.

The motion was voted on and passed.

Next up for discussion was the Lifetime Memberships.

Following the increase to \$25, it was asked if this should follow- and at what rate. The discussion started with looking at Peacham's rate of \$250. After some debate, and with input from Allen and Louise, Allen proposed a lifetime rate of \$175 per household

Mike suggested perhaps it is \$175 this year, and maybe \$195 next year (seeing how it goes).

We then discussed family or individual- and landed on "per household basis".

Deborah made a motion to pass the new rates.
Dave seconded it, and the motion passed.

Fundraising letter

Deb has drafted the membership renewal and annual appeal letter,

Some of the highlights include the events of the year (Sleeping Sentinel presentation, Bristol Bill presentation, Wedding Exhibit, Saturday Open Houses).

She plans to include a request for planned giving and donations to help fund:

- Equipment purchases (printer/dehumidifier for newsletter)
- Collection storage, long term preservation and management.

The membership renewal and annual appeal will go out around Thanksgiving, and will include the new rates.

Allen suggested sending to both Members and Prospects- Deb thought that might need more work. Mike suggested reaching out to the local Facebook groups to help spread the word. Deborah requested assistance with assembling the mailing.

Donations

Deborah shared the three collections that were recently offered to the GHS and asked us to consider accepting the donations. The collections include:

Donations:

*Donna Wollschlager donated flower girl dress, plus photo of wedding and newspaper announcements from Caledonian Record

*Meroa Benjamin donated photos, diaries, Groton High School yearbooks

*Carlene Nunn Boomhower donated photos, autograph book, letters, ephemera

Lois Boemeg: Cannonball bed; handmade mid to late 1800s by Andrew Jackson (AJ) Carpenter (b.1832) for daughter Minnie Carpenter White. The bed was homed in Groton's "White Brothers" (Arthur & Hale) house across from the old schoolhouse and then later at Philip & Nellie White's home in Groton, VT. AJ Carpenter also built the "Goodine" house in Groton. Lois White Boemig would like to donate this bed to the Groton Historical Society, in her mother's name... Nellie Mae Roberts White, who was the granddaughter of Minnie Carpenter White, along with a Mattress and boxspring for the $\frac{3}{4}$ bed.

Allen suggested old paper items be "photographed".

Deb made a motion to accept the donations.

Phyllis seconded the motion.

The group voted, and the motion passed.

Allen asked what the next step was for storage, and also how we keep the collection accessible in case someone wants to come and research.

Deborah shared that she has been researching archival boxes and storage solutions.

Allen suggested that some of the items could be photographed, and the facsimile displayed.

Deb says we need a curator/ cataloger.

Phyllis said she could tackle clothing, but would need help.

Sarah offered help, as well as sharing textbooks from school on Archival storage, access, and retrieval. Sarah also mentioned that before things get started, there are some considerations to be made- like: where is the info stored and how, and that having input from VSARA might be helpful as things move forward.

The expense of archival storage solutions was also discussed.

Deb is going to buy a box for the wedding dress and donate it while options for additional materials are explored and funding potential discussed.

Grant opportunities

A discussion was had about the potential for seeking funding from Grants. Sarah offered to look at some of the options shared on the Library listserv and Mike offered to be a sounding board.

December 8th

The library will be hosting the SD Ireland Light Up Cement Mixer, and wanted to know if the GHS would want to be open, host a light up trick, or possibly host Santa. It was determined that there wasn't enough volunteer support for Santa, and most likely GHS will not be open.

Equipment Purchases

Deborah suggested looking into enhanced security and storage solutions, including potential upgrades. She has done some preliminary research but received input from the group on additional questions to ask as more information is gathered.

Auction

Deborah proposed asking Joshua Steenburg to look at what we have that might be worth auctioning off to make more money for collection maintenance. Discussion of potentially hosting an "Antique Roadshow" type of program.

There was support for this idea.

Newsletter

Allen commented that the newsletter has been great

Louise is working on the next issue- 4 more of the homecoming stories, and requested that if anyone had any reminiscences of sledding or other winter activities to reach out.

Louise is checking in on stories featuring people - or more research? Members shared how much they enjoy reading stories about people. Special mention was made of capturing the history of the 40s, 50s, 60s.

Louise is looking for ways to index newsletter topics, and also work on Oral Histories as she conducts interviews with community members. YouTube and Vimeo were discussed as ways to store and share the video content. Mike Gaiss volunteered to assist with filming.

Louise shared that the March Issue

- Scalina Bonamo (wildlife photographer and naturalist)

- Writing about the abandoned fish hatchery
- Jim volunteered to write about trout fishing at Seyon Pond
- Brent was going to talk with Herb Hatch for an oral history and/or article
- Martha Monague and Richard were also as well mentioned as being good candidates for oral histories

Final Business

Support given for submitting the Wedding Exhibit that Phyllis developed to the Vermont Historical Society's local history exhibit program.

Meeting Adjournment

Deborah entertained a motion to adjourn.

The motion was seconded by Louise.

The meeting adjourned at 4:35

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Spira