

Historical Commission – Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, December 7th, 2017

The Historical Commission met on Thursday, December 7, 2017 at 103 Main Road, Portapple/Gallo house. Present were Alice Hale (Chair), Ann Gallo, Mark Curtin, Nini Gilder, Maggie Howard, Sarah Hudson, Peter Charpentier.

1. November 2nd minutes were approved.

2. Updates

- a. MHC and steps toward National Register consideration of the Schoolhouse – Nini submitted the application. The MHC responded requesting more interior pictures of the schoolhouse, and a map/floor plan of the interior. They also requested a description of what the front entryway looks like. Nini has sent them 15 additional photo's. She has since received a note stating everything looks great and they'll be in touch.
- b. Oral history developments - Ann has begun digitizing the interview tapes with 11 of 50+ tapes. The dates range from 1976 to the 2009. She has a coding system for each tape with a corresponding spreadsheet. The spreadsheet contains the date of the interview, individuals present and notes on content. It will take 4-5 months to complete the digitization with the current inventory of tapes. Sarah Hudson will be looking for two tapes she has which will be added to the collection to be digitized.

Discussion ensued about whether or not to transcribe the tapes after the digitization. It was concluded that that would be a long process and perhaps only transcribe a tape on an as needed basis, or the individual requesting a transcript do so themselves. In addition, the idea was floated to set up a space in the town library with headphones and the digitized material, with accompanying notebooks and/or photo's & maps that relate to the recordings. This 'listening area' would be open to the public. The commission was happy with steps forward. Sarah wants to have the cassette tapes saved after they are digitized.

- c. Samplers - Peter was hoping to have them at tonight's meeting. Peter spoke with Ruth Baumann in PA who is currently finishing up their restoration. One is completed. She is awaiting a frame for the second which is backordered. She plans on having them sent to us early in the New Year. They look fine, and she is happy with them.

3. Any new business that comes before the Commission

- The schoolhouse is now heated, however there are no heat ducts directly into the Historical Commission room. Mark mentioned the town is looking into installing a wall-mounted heater on the HC side. One idea was to keep both doors open into each of the rooms to keep help heat the HC side. Nini asked about whether or not the HC room should be locked for security reasons. Mark said the town was most likely going to install the wall-mounted heater fairly soon. The town has expressed interest in doing more for the HC than in the past.
- Historical artifacts - Mark reported that many of the artifacts are valuable including the Indian artifacts and Kitson pieces (these were appraised when donated to the HC society). Mark believes there is \$50,000 worth of insurance on pieces cataloged. This does not

include everything in the HC's possession, however. Maggie asked if there was other coverage from the town. It was determined that to insure everything it would need to be cataloged and assessed, in order to be insured. This cataloging process will take place over the winter, starting after the 1st of the year. Sarah volunteered to help. The cataloging group now includes Mark, Sarah and Carol Hardy-Fanta.

Mark mentioned that he spoke with Jen Salinetti regarding the Montessori school being interested in helping with this project. They would consider bringing students to Tyringham and help catalog items in the schoolhouse, a semi-internship arrangement. Diego and Noelia Salinetti are especially interested in Tyringham and would like to help on this project. Mark would like to see if he can make this partnership happen. Nini spoke about having a plan in place with specific duties for the students. Duties could include taking measurements, doing research, photographing, etc. Mark to follow up with Jen Salinetti.

- Alice Hale – Brought in a copy of a letter dated Nov. 20th, 2017 regarding the nomination of the Tyringham Library to the National Register and accompanying research. The letter was from the Commonwealth National Register Director to the National Register of Historic Places in DC. Nini stated that the Federal Government rubber stamps what the state has approved. The letter was accompanied by a very thorough report on the schoolhouse, part of the more detailed library application.

Discussion ensued about how this process relates to the Schoolhouse's nomination. Nini stated that we have only done the first small step in the schoolhouse nomination process. Eventually we will be submitting a far more detailed report, similar to the library's, to the National Register of Historic Places in MA. We are only at the first phase of the Schoolhouse's application process.

- Nini mentioned how she and Alice 'attacked' and sorted another Hale box, an 1/8th of the contents. Nini was excited to describe the initial contents - a series of get-well cards from 1951 (65 years ago), sent to Alice when she had her appendectomy. Well-wishers included the Loring's, Logan and parents, Henning Carlson as a young lad. Cards are quaint and entertaining. Nini mentioned perhaps having a small exhibit of these cards at some point. There was also a loose-leaf binder of the 1950's with the title, "Valley Club Minutes." We'll be waiting for Pat Read's return to catalog the items in this magical box.
- Peter recently spoke with Rebecca Honig regarding the HC visiting their Shaker house on Thursday, December 14th at 10 am. Four to five of the Commission members will attend.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will take place on Thursday, January 4, 2018, the venue to be determined.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Gallo, Co-Clerk