

The Tuesday, October 6, 2009 meeting of the Washington Island Historical Archives Committee was called to order by Chairman Charlotte Hansen at 3:30 PM in the Rutledge Room of the Community Center.

Present were Kirby Foss, Arbutus Greenfeldt, Eric Greenfeldt, Charlotte Hansen, Merrill Lundberg, Richard Purinton and David Raup. Absent was Jeanete Young. Also present were Phil Ellerbrock, John Moore and Archivist Barbara Ellefson.

Reading of Minutes

Merrill Lundberg read the minutes of the meetings of May 19, 2009 and June 17, 2009. The minutes were approved as read.

Arbutus' Slides and Script

Phil Ellerbrock presented a sample of some computer work he has been doing with Arbutus' slides and the script that she has recorded. The data project, to place these materials in a digitized format, has been finished and the materials are in good shape.

Phil noted that there are 946 slides, with accompanying script. A professional work product placing all of this material in the format he demonstrated would represent a substantial project since each slide takes about half an hour of his time. It might go somewhat faster as he got further into the project and some of the work possibly could be done by volunteers.

Phil said that his immediate purpose was to make the Committee aware of some possibilities and to get a sense of what our objectives might be. He explained that the work product is versatile as he could add background music, paste in additional

archival material and produce segments of various lengths and on selected subjects. The work product would be searchable.

The members of the Committee discussed various possibilities for this project. A presentation of Arbutus' materials in their entirety would take about three hours and the consensus was that this is too long a program. The

material could be placed in two or more shorter segments, and the project would not necessarily have to be completed all at once. DVD's could be offered for sale or as premiums for donations.

The members of the Committee agreed that we need some time to think about this before we make any decisions or commitments. Charlotte thanked Phil for his presentation, and he thanked the members of the Committee for their attention.

Veblen Cabin

John Moore reported on the project to restore the cabin in which Thorstein Veblen worked during his time on the Island early in the twentieth century. The cabin has now been separated from the larger structure to which it was attached some years ago, and moved to its new site near the Jacobsen Museum. John referred to Ward Hansen's presentation about this project earlier this year and he passed around some pictures from Dick Purinton's recent trip to Northfield Minnesota where Dick and Mary Jo visited Veblen's home.

The Veblen cabin presently is in shabby condition. John has been working with a commercial roofer. They want to take a close look at the roof before winter and they are looking for a sharp picture of the cabin from the 1920's so they can be sure about the construction of the original roof. A tight roof is the first priority, and then they will get the sides of the structure tight. After that the goal is to make the exterior look authentic, and then they will work on the inside. Ultimately the plan is to make a display that will record the significance of Veblen's work and the part that the Island played in his experience.

John noted that Veblen's father was a carpenter, and Veblen himself made some rough furniture, some of which still exists. The group working on this project will seek to assemble some books and artifacts, but John suggested that the Archives are the appropriate repository for any documents that relate to this project.

John said that the Veblen cabin is presently owned by the foundation which he and Ward Hansen and Jerry Maiers have established. The intent is to transfer title to the structure to some other entity, perhaps the Town, for permanent ownership at some point in the future. The restoration project is supported entirely by private funding.

Barbara noted that the Bartleys from Milwaukee have worked with members of the Veblen family in California, where they have established a museum. She also observed that both Esther Gunnerson and Sylvia Nelson studied and wrote about Veblen's time on the Island.

Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands

Eric reported that the Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands (FOPPI) are progressing in their plans to stabilize the structures on the two islands. Next spring they plan to strip and paint the boathouse on Plum Island.

FOPPI is presently exploring the possibility of a grant from the Wisconsin Humanities Council. One of the Council's requirements is coordination with other community organizations. Eric asked whether the Archives would serve as a partner with FOPPI for this purpose. No financial commitment is expected but FOPPI is collecting information about the history of the two islands, including a DVD with Sylvia Landin and her daughter Joan Zorn. FOPPI has established a website and Matt Foss will serve as their historian.

Eric suggested that the Archives would make their materials available for access on the FOPPI website. The Archives would be credited as the source for these materials. The form of a letter to FOPPI confirming this arrangement remains to be worked out, but FOPPI has a December 1 deadline for the grant application. The members of the Committee indicated their support for this proposal and, upon motion by Dave Raup and seconded by Kirby Foss, the proposed partnership was approved.

New Committee Member and Volunteers

Charlotte noted that Bill Olson is not able to participate in Archives activities at this time. We need at least one more volunteer and we also need a new Committee member to fill the vacancy created by Bill's resignation.

Jeanie Young has expressed an interest in serving as an Archives volunteer following her retirement from the bank. A possible new Committee member, who might also consider working as a volunteer, was identified in discussion. Charlotte will follow up.

Program Committee Report

Eric reported that the program with Martena Koken was well received. Jane Farmer Kane was in attendance and Martena got some leads for new stories about Dr. Farmer. She sold some copies of her book and made a donation to the Archives.

Trygvie Jensen's new book is close to publication, and another program when the book becomes available would be appropriate. Kirby will talk to his brother, Dave Foss, about a program on Great Lakes sailors from the Island. Dick noted that Ward Hansen's presentation about the Veblen project had drawn about 75 and was an excellent program. This would be another possibility.

Dave said we have about 25 copies of the cemetery walk DVD left to sell. We should sell these out before we order another 100 copies.

Eric would like to step back from his position as the program chairman. Charlotte will take on this responsibility and Dick volunteered to assist.

Annual Fund Raising Letter

Dick volunteered to work on the next edition of the annual fund raising letter again.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's report and proposed budget for 2010 were presented and are attached to the minutes. It was noted that the proposed budget is identical to that for the preceding year, except that \$200 has been moved from Office Supplies to Advertising/Promotion. Upon motion made by Kirby Foss and seconded by Eric Greenfeldt the proposed 2010 budget was approved.

Archivist's Report

The Archivist presented her report, which is attached to the minutes. The report was approved.

Committee Appointment

The Chairman appointed Arbutus Greenfeldt, Eric Greenfeldt, Dick Purinton and David Raup to serve on a committee which will consider and make recommendations about the presentation made by Phil Ellerbrock earlier in the meeting.

May Meeting

The date of the next meeting of the Archives Committee is May 4, 2010. We will meet in the Rutledge Room at 3:30 PM.

Adjournment

Upon motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 4:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Merrill C. Lundberg, Secretary