

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERSHIP, APRIL 2019-MAY 2020

This has indeed been a roller coaster ride, with the Corona Virus greeting us at the end of the fiscal year. Something none of us could have anticipated. We closed the building for touring on March 20<sup>th</sup> and have yet to reopen. A member of the staff does go in to pick up the mail and check on the building, however.

We did have two very successful exhibits this past year. Our Summer Exhibit featured approximately 80 needlework samplers from Europe and the United States, dating from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and loaned from private and public collections. Our visitors included antique dealers, collectors, scholars and a number of guests from Needlework Guilds of the eastern seaboard.

Our holiday exhibit was entitled 'When the Circus Comes to Town'. It included many artifacts from private collections. Doris and Jan Warren offered the loan of an extensive collection of carved circus figures including circus wagons, acrobats, lions, elephants, and a Circus Parade. We also hosted the 'Humpty-Dumpty Circus,' an extensive collection of jointed figures created by the Schoenhut Company of Philadelphia. Sally Hilsher loaned a number of carousel music boxes and carousel horses which belonged to her late husband Jay. Those we did not accept into our permanent collection will be offered for sale in our Museum Store.

We have been successful in receiving grants for the programming we produce and for general operating expenses. We received grants in 2019 for the production of Children's Workshops (grant from the Free and Accepted Masons); our Lecture Series (the Woodcock Foundation for the Appreciation of the Arts); upgrades to the Hall of Farming, Crafts and Industry (the Lycoming County Visitors Bureau Travel & Tourism grant), and for general operating (the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission- PHMC). In 2020, we have received grants for our upcoming motorcycle exhibit (Visitors Bureau), lecture series (Woodcock) and general operating (PHMC).

Thanks to the First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania, we receive monies from two private funds on a yearly basis, as well as monies from Raise the Region, a marathon of giving for non-profits in the six-county area that FCFP serves. In 2019, we received \$4,450.17 (included two prizes, drawn at random) and this year \$2,839.88.

We hosted a memorable Garden Party as a new fundraiser in 2019, which would not have been successful without the great generosity of Neal Milligan. Everything came together with Neal's elegantly-appointed house, lovely, well-maintained gardens, stringed instrument music, and yummy hors d'oeuvres created by Le Jeune Chef. This event raised approximately \$4,000 for the museum.

Thanks to collected monies for conservation, we have had two portraits conserved by a professional conservator. The portraits of Killian Epley and Charles Low are currently on display in our Fine and Decorative Arts Gallery.

Our 2019 collector's pin, which we sell to Little League Baseball fans, was probably the most successful pin we have produced. It features a depiction of our famous ghost Nellie Tallman. Appropriately, however, she is holding a baseball in her hands.

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to the dedicated staff, the volunteers, the Board of Directors and to you, the membership, for your continued support.

Gary Parks

May 8, 2020