



Town of Collierville

A regular meeting of the Collierville Heritage Commission was held October 13, 2021 at 5:00pm at the Morton Museum of Collierville History, located at 196 N. Main Street, Collierville, Tennessee.

The following members of the Heritage Commission were present: Betty Edmunds, Taylor Stamps, Skeeter Rutledge, Ginny Nanney, Jennifer Cordell, Mary Alice Brock, and Elizabeth Kilmurray. Absent were John Moore, Charles Hall, and Alderman Billy Patton.

Staff member present was Collections and Special Projects Coordinator Maureen Smith. Sitting in was Director of Tourism Ashley Carver.

Mrs. Betty Edmunds called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM July 14, 2021

Mrs. Edmunds asked if there were any corrections or additions to the July 14, 2021 meeting minutes. As there were no corrections or additions, Mrs. Edmunds called for approval of the Heritage Commission meeting minutes.

Mr. Stamps made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Mr. Rutledge seconded. All were in favor, none were opposed. Motion was approved.

MUSEUM REPORT

Ms. Smith stated that Lydia Warren has left her role as Director of the Morton Museum.

Ms. Carver stated that she, Greg Clark (Director of Parks and Recreations), and Lisa Plath (Director of the Burch Library) have conducted interviews for a new Director and will be extending a job offer shortly. Ms. Carver added that the Visitor Services Coordinator position is still vacant, and that the new Director will make that hiring decision. Ms. Carver emphasized that the new Director's focus will be on increasing Museum programming and developing exhibits related to Collierville's history.

Ms. Smith explained that the Museum had two volunteers over the summer—Alina Dorion and Sam Kuykendall. The research conducted by these volunteers was used to develop social media posts and blog posts as well as add to the Museum's existing collections research.

Ms. Smith stated that Train Day was August 6, 2021. The day-long event was a Parks and Recreations Department team effort as activities were held at the Collierville Depot, Town Square, and Morton Museum. The Depot featured a model train display and facilitated the live music performance at the Gazebo. The Morton Museum featured several more model train displays, free MemPops popsicles, and

a new temporary exhibit, *When We Rode Mike: The Somerville Accommodation Train*. Ms. Smith stated that the Museum had 337 visitors that day. Ms. Carver estimated that about 350 people attended Train Day between the three locations.

Ms. Smith stated that Dairy Day was October 2, 2021. Programming was limited due to staffing constraints. The programming included goody bags, educational kits, the redisplay of old exhibit panels, and a photo booth. Ms. Smith speculated that attendance was subdued, in part, because of the poor weather and road closures resulting from the Tough Mudder Race. Ms. Smith stated that Dairy Day 2022 will feature more robust programming and marketing.

Upcoming Events

Ms. Smith stated that the first of two Iris Orchestra story time and instrument petting zoos will take place on October 29 at 10:30am. Reservations are currently being accepted via email and phone.

Ms. Smith further stated that that first of two Iris Orchestra evening chamber concerts will take place on November 17 at 6:30pm. Advertising for the event will begin later in October.

Ms. Smith stated that Santa will be returning to the Museum for Santa Story Time on December 3 at 10:30am. On December 11, the Contemporary Club Gift Gazebo will be held in the Museum Sanctuary from 10:00am to 4:00pm as part of the Contemporary Club Home Tour.

Ms. Smith explained that 2022 will be the Museum's 10th Anniversary, so staff are looking into exhibits and programming to celebrate the occasion.

Ms. Smith stated that the next temporary exhibit will be *Beebe & Clegg: Their Enduring Photographic Legacy*, a train photography exhibit on loan from the Center for Railroad Photography & Art. The exhibit will run from February to June 2022.

Mr. Stamps expressed his amazement that the Museum will be 10 years old next year.

Mrs. Edmunds asked what would come after *Beebe & Clegg*. Ms. Smith stated that the East Shelby Garden Club may be hosting the Flower Show at the Museum again in summer 2022, but that needed to be confirmed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mrs. Edmunds asked if there was any unfinished business before the Commission. Mr. Rutledge recalled some discussion at the previous meeting regarding an exhibit on Collierville's equestrian history. Mrs. Edmunds reminded the Commission members to look for any pictures or artifacts that might be useful for such an exhibit.

Mr. Rutledge stated that the Optimists Club used to hold a horse show in Collierville. He further stated that he spoke to Ms. Carol Wilson about the Collierville Round-Up in the 1960s and 70s. Mr. Rutledge stated the Round-Up used to be held where Chili's restaurant stands today (237 Market Blvd). Ms. Wilson told Mr. Rutledge she would see if she could get the Commission some pictures or trophies from the Round-Up.

Ms. Smith stated that once the Museum has more equestrian materials, staff can begin to research and develop an exhibit.

Mrs. Edmunds stated she will reach out to Mrs. Melinda Hall to see if she has any pictures of the barn that used to be at Schilling Farm. Mr. Rutledge added that it would be good to find some materials pertaining to Carbon Copy as well.

Mrs. Edmunds asked if the intention would be to have an equestrian history exhibit open in 2022. Ms. Smith stated that the Museum plans to display an exhibit about the life and art of woodturner Keith Burns in fall 2022. Ms. Smith promised to share the Museum's exhibit schedule with the Commission once details were confirmed.

NEW BUSINESS

Potential Items for Accession

Ms. Smith presented *Southern Steam Specials* (1975), a book published by Southern Railway and donated by Phil Boyden.

Ms. Smith presented a Western Union clock (mid-century) donated by Woody Pierce, Jr. Mr. Stamps suggested the clock would best be displayed at the Collierville Depot. Ms. Carver confirmed that the clock, if accessioned, will be displayed in the Depot.

Ms. Smith presented two oil paintings donated by Deborah Alvarez from the estate of the late Mrs. Nelson. Ms. Smith stated that, without further context and information about Mrs. Nelson, she is not inclined to accession the paintings. Ms. Smith asked if the name "Nelson" was familiar to any of the Commission members. Mr. Rutledge stated there was a dry goods store next to the dentist office called Nelson Dry Goods, and that the family lived on Washington Street. Mr. Rutledge was unsure if this was the same Nelson family. Ms. Smith stated she is waiting for Ms. Alvarez to provide more information about Mrs. Nelson. Mrs. Edmunds agreed that more information is needed before the paintings can be considered for acquisition.

Ms. Smith presented a corn shuck chair (1960s) donated by Suzanne Dunn. Ms. Dunn stated that the chair frame was purchased from a store in Memphis, but she and a relative recovered the corn husks from the silo that used to be across from Collierville Depot. Ms. Dunn further stated that a Ms. Humphreys on Byhalia Road hand-wove the shuck seat. Ms. Smith hopes this chair will be an inroad to programming related to traditional crafts in Collierville.

Ms. Smith presented a handmade brick from Old Salem Presbyterian Church mounted on a plaque (c. 1844) donated by the Collierville Presbyterian Church. Ms. Smith stated that Collierville Presbyterian Church is interested in officially presenting the brick to the Museum in a ceremony. Mrs. Edmunds asked where Old Salem Presbyterian was located. Ms. Smith stated it was across from the Duke-Fleming House. Mr. Rutledge clarified that it was located at the junction of Byhalia and Holmes.

Ms. Smith asked if the Commission had any questions regarding the proposed items.

Mr. Stamps stated that the two paintings do not appear to have anything connecting them to Collierville history and should not be accessioned. Mrs. Edmunds and Ms. Smith concurred. Mrs. Edmunds stated that if the gentlemen pictured in the paintings have nothing to do with Collierville, they do not make sense to have in the Museum.

Mrs. Edmunds asked if there was a motion to accept all but the two paintings into the collection. Mrs. Nanney made a motion to accept. Mrs. Brock seconded. All were in favor, none were opposed. Motion was approved.

Mrs. Edmunds stated she is very excited to see what exhibits and programming can be done centering around the shuck chair and traditional crafts. She further stated that Fair on the Square was started as a craft fair with demonstrations and may have featured corn husk crafts.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Edmunds ask if there was any additional business to be discussed.

Mr. Stamps stated that Mrs. Clarene Russell wrote a book about the history of Collierville and had tons of notes in her house. Mr. Stamps further stated that the Commission should remain in contact with Mrs. Russell and her daughter to make sure Mrs. Russell's collection is not destroyed or misplaced. Mr. Stamps recommended the Museum hold space to house some of Mrs. Russell's collection in the future. Mr. Stamps added that he has visited Mrs. Russell's home, and she has an entire room dedicated to Collierville history and the storage of artifacts.

Mrs. Brock stated she believed someone was going through Mrs. Russell's home and organizing her belongings. Mrs. Brock asked if Diane Dubois, Town Planner, had done anything with Mrs. Russell's collection. Mr. Stamps stated that the Commission had thought something should be done but had not yet acted.

Ms. Smith stated she has met Mrs. Russell's daughter, Kathi Reisz, but suggested that anyone who has a personal relationship with Mrs. Russell and Mrs. Reisz should stay in touch regarding their collection. Mrs. Brock stated she would contact Mrs. Reisz personally, but will also send a letter to make the request official.

Ms. Carver stated that many of the existing Commission members have been involved with the Museum since before its opening. Ms. Carver stated the Museum staff would like to hear the Commission members' ideas regarding a 10th Anniversary celebration or exhibit at the Museum.

Mrs. Edmunds asked on what day in 2012 the Museum opened. Ms. Carver stated she believes the Museum opened in early June of that year. Ms. Carver further stated she could envision celebrating the anniversary throughout the year.

Mrs. Edmunds asked the Commission members to bring Anniversary celebration, programming, and exhibit ideas to the next meeting.

Mr. Stamps stated that Clarene Russell should also be honored as part of the Museum's 10th Anniversary celebration.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business or discussion, at approximately 5:35pm, Mrs. Edmunds adjourned the meeting.

Mrs. Betty Edmunds
Chairman, Heritage Commission

Maureen AJ Smith
Collections & Special Projects Coordinator