



MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Regents
FROM: Scott Harris, Director, JMMML
DATE: 26 June 2012
RE: Director's Report for July, 2012 Meeting

I am pleased to present the following report on the activities of the James Monroe Museum and Memorial Library over the past year, which is also a summary of my first year as director.

In addition to the information in this memo, you will find attached:

- An **Institutional Effectiveness Report** for the Museum, part of UMW's process for organizing and evaluating departmental activities.
- A **Summary of Artifact Acquisitions and Loans** reflecting additions to the collection of the James Monroe Museum and loans to and from other institutions.

Staff Transitions

John Pearce, instructor in historic preservation at UMW and director of the James Monroe Museum for 27 years, retired in July, 2010. Curator Meghan Budinger served as acting director until May, 2011, when she became curator of the George Washington Foundation. All associated with the Museum are grateful for the years of dedicated service given by John and Meghan.

Scott Harris became director of the James Monroe Museum in July, 2011, coming from the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park, where he had been director since 2001. From 1988 to 2000 he was curator and director of The Manassas Museum System, and later director of Historic Resources for the City of Manassas. Among his other former employers are Preservation Virginia and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Scott received a BA in history and historic preservation from UMW in 1983, and an MA in history and museum administration from the College of William and Mary in 1988. He has been active in museum professional organizations at the state and national level, including a term as president of the Virginia Association of Museums.

Jarod Kearney was hired as curator of the James Monroe Museum in November, 2011. Previously, he was curator of the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library and Museum in Staunton, Virginia, and prior to that curator of the Rye Historical Society in New York. He has been director of the Hallockville Museum Farm and Folklife Center on Long Island, and worked at the Greensboro Historical Museum in North Carolina. Jarod received his BA in history and MA in museum studies from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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Staff Activity

Scott Harris served as part of a task force convened by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences to work on implementation of the UMW strategic plan goals for the arts, which encompasses the James Monroe Museum, UMW Galleries, Philharmonic orchestra, and the departments of Theatre & Dance and Art & Art History.

Beginning in July, 2012, the JMMML staff will begin an internal assessment process called STEPS (Standards and Excellence Program for History Organizations). This program was developed specifically for small and mid-sized museums by the American Association for State and Local History. Six categories of operations will be addressed: Mission, Vision, and Governance; Audience; Interpretation; Stewardship of Collections; Stewardship of Historic Structures and Landscapes; and Management.

Harris spoke to several Fredericksburg-area organizations during the year about the Museum, as well as UMW students in historic preservation and museums studies classes. Curator Kearney was a guest lecturer in an exhibit design class, and coordinated activities of the Museum's Bowley Scholar interns during the regular and summer sessions.

Public Programs

The Museum began use of the redesigned Memorial Garden for public programs and rentals in 2011. Among the Museum-sponsored garden events in 2011 and 2012 are birthday observances for James and Elizabeth Monroe; a lecture and wine tasting centered on the Founding Fathers; a chamber music concert; and a Revolutionary War summer day camp for children. The garden has been rented for private parties, dinners, and weddings, providing a significant and growing source of operating revenue.

Other annual public programs undertaken by the Museum include the "Deck the Halls" Christmas decorating workshop, the Fredericksburg Welsh Festival, and the James Monroe Lecture. The 2012 Welsh Festival takes place on Saturday, September 22 from Noon to 5:00 PM. This year's Monroe Lecture, the 25th in the series, will feature Dr. Don Hickey, professor of history at Wayne State College and one of the nation's foremost historians on the War of 1812. The Monroe Lecture takes place on Monday, September 24 at 7:00 PM in the UMW Woodard Campus Center.

Looking ahead, the Museum is collaborating with the Papers of James Monroe project to present a James Monroe Conference in October, 2013. The two-day program will dovetail with the Monroe Lecture and will feature speakers on a variety of topics relevant to Monroe and his era.

Marketing and Promotion

Raising awareness of the Museum, and thereby the legacy of James Monroe, is a major goal. With stability in staffing and a gradually improving economy, it is hoped that the Museum's marketing efforts will be better able to capitalize on current and milestone events, such as the bicentennials of the War of 1812, the Virginia Executive Mansion, and Monroe's presidency. We already have benefitted from media surrounding the current War of 1812 exhibit at the National Portrait Gallery, to which we loaned our small Peale portrait of Monroe, and the bicentennial of the Executive Mansion, which borrowed the large Peale portrait. The Museum is in discussion with the Fredericksburg Area Museum about collaboration on both public programs and exhibits, and similar partnerships with the George Washington Foundation and Preservation Virginia are in the works.

Within the last year, the James Monroe Museum has been the subject of news and travel feature stories in the Fredericksburg *Free-Lance Star*; *Recreation News*; The University of Mary Washington magazine; National Public

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Radio; and the Voice of America. Acquisition of a furlough signed by Monroe at Valley Forge generated considerable media coverage via the Associated Press.

The Museum also participated in two activities designed to raise awareness of the institution. On June 9, staff manned a booth at the Cabot Creamery Community Tour in Fredericksburg's Old Mill Park, an event visited by several thousand people. On that same day, Jarod Kearney took part in the National Park Service workshop, "Teaching with Historic Places," promoting the James Monroe Museum's educational programs to approximately 100 public school teachers from across Virginia.

Artifact Acquisitions

The most notable addition to the collection in the past year was a furlough signed by James Monroe while the Continental Army was encamped at Valley Forge (see attached flyer). Besides being one of the earliest known documents signed by Monroe, acquiring the furlough also proved a useful promotional opportunity.

Other artifact acquisitions and loans are discussed in the attached report from Curator Jarod Kearney.

Budget

The Museum's operating budget for FY 2011-2012 was \$241,431, consisting of a state appropriation of \$205,341 and anticipated revenue from non-state sources (admissions, shop sales, donations, rentals, etc.) of \$36,000. This budget scenario is expected to remain the same for FY 2012-1013.

In January, 2012, eight individual donors, as well as the Friends of the James Monroe Museum, gave \$5,850 for the purchase of the Valley Forge furlough described above. In April, the museum received \$3,000 in grant funds from the City of Fredericksburg's Department of Economic Development and Tourism, to help fund summer and fall programs.

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