



THE JAMES MONROE MUSEUM

908 Charles Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401 540-654-1043 www.jamesmonroemuseum.org
An historic property administered by the University of Mary Washington

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Regents, James Monroe Museum
FROM: Scott Harris, Director, James Monroe Museum *SHH*
DATE: October 30, 2017
RE: Director's Report

I am pleased to present the following report on the activities of the James Monroe Museum since the last meeting of the Regents.

Public Programs and Outreach

The traveling exhibit, *In the Spirit of the People: James Monroe's 1817 Presidential Tour of the Northern States*, proved very popular at more than 17 venues in six states from May to October. The exhibit, designed in large part by UMW museum studies students, is a collaboration between the Museum and the Papers of James Monroe.



Clockwise from Top Left: "In the Spirit of the People" at Fort Mifflin (PA); Sackett Harbor Battlefield State Historic Site (NY); Historic Richmond Town (NY); Monroe Historical Society (OH); New Haven Museum (CT); Monroe County Museum (MI).



In the Spirit of the People Travel Schedule, 2017:

Fort Mifflin, Philadelphia, PA	June 1-18
Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia	June 19-July 14
New Haven Museum, New Haven, CT	June 1-25
Middlesex County Historical Society, Middletown, CT	June 1-25
Monroe County Museum, Monroe, MI	Purchased own set.
St. Lawrence County Historical Association, Canton, NY	July 22-August 5
Adams National Historical Park, Quincy, MA	July 3-23
Historic Richmond Town, Staten Island, NY	July 3-23
Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center, Fremont, OH	August 1-20
Sackets Harbor Battlefield State Historic Park	August 1-20
Washington County Historical Society, PA	September 1-24
Monroe Historical Society, Monroe, Ohio	September 1-15
Midpoint Library, Monroe Branch, Monroe, Ohio	September 15-30
Columbus Metropolitan Library, Columbus, OH	September 11-October 14
Old Petersburg-Addison Historical Society, Addison, PA	October 14
Fayette County Historical Society, Smock, PA	October 15-31

The exhibit was complemented by online resources such as daily Twitter updates and Facebook quizzes.

Public programs in the Museum garden touched on Elizabeth Monroe's birthday, historic clothing, ceramics, history trivia, wine tasting, and sea chanteys. The 28th Annual Fredericksburg Welsh Festival enjoyed clear weather and moderate temperatures, generating a large crowd.



*Above: First Friday History Trivia with Highland's Sara Bon-Harper.
Right: Heidi Stello discusses Elizabeth Monroe during the First Lady's birthday weekend, and greets vacationing U.S. Senator Mark Warner.
Below: Textile conservator Colleen Callahan spoke on the Monroe dresses.*





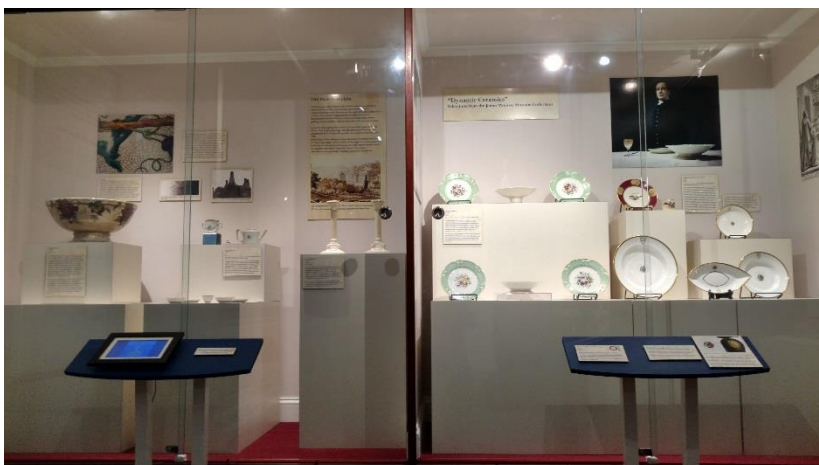
Counterclockwise from Left: Gabriele Rausse, Director of Gardens and Grounds at Monticello and "Father of the Modern Virginia Wine Industry," leads a tasting during "Jefferson, Monroe, and Wine," in September; the 28th Annual Fredericksburg Welsh Festival enjoyed one of its best years ever; the Ship's Company Chanteymen serenade passersby before the start of Tavern Night.

Below: Curator Jarod Kearney shows off his potter's skills during Tavern Night, which coincided with the opening of the latest changing exhibit, "Dynamic Ceramics" (see below).



Exhibits

Dynamic Ceramics: Selections from The James Monroe Museum Collection opened on October 6. The exhibit, which includes porcelain, stoneware, and other ceramics from the Monroe family, will run until the spring of 2018. Sample pieces crafted by Jarod Kearney are provided for hands-on examination.



Marketing and Media Presence



James Monroe gets around! The Museum took part in several community events throughout the spring, summer, and fall. A display at the registration area for the Marine Corps Historic Half-Marathon in May provided free admission for runners, including Monroe character interpreter Jay Harrison. Jay, in appropriate period dress, joined Fredericksburg Mayor Mary Katharine Greenlaw for the Fox 5 Zip Trip event in the city's Hurkamp Park in August. Scarecrow James Monroe is one of more than 60 scarecrows entered in a contest sponsored by the Fredericksburg Main Street organization. Vote for our Scary President at <http://www.fredericksburgparent.net/the-scarecrows-are-coming>.

The Museum Store introduced several new products recently, including a James Monroe face fan, a large canvas tote bag, and a 2018 desk calendar. The Store is also carrying this year's official White House Historical Association Christmas Ornament, dedicated to Franklin D. Roosevelt.

And, coming soon . . . the James Monroe Bobblehead!



Financial Information

NOTE: The following figures reflect comparative fiscal year activity as of June 30, 2017:

- Combined revenue from admissions (including “Fredericksburg Timeless” block tickets), store sales, and donations is \$48,076, as compared to \$44,477 for FY16, an increase of 8%. Museum Store sales rose 31.5% from the previous year. Visitation declined slightly—7,725 versus 7,875 last year. However, the traveling exhibit about James Monroe’s northern states tour, *In the Spirit of the People*, was viewed by an estimated 8,000 people at 17 venues in seven states.
- Friends of the James Monroe Museum income from memberships, program fees, and rentals was \$27,122, an increase of 13.8% over FY16 (\$23,827).
- **Thus, earned Museum income from all sources in FY17 was \$75,198, an increase of roughly 10% from the FY16 total of \$68,304.**

Update on Museum FY 2018 Work Plan

1. Grow Museum revenue from admissions, store sales, facility rentals, program fees, and donations to \$90,000 during the fiscal year. Estimated FY 2017 total revenue is \$75,000.

Success Measure: Financial data reported by UMW and UMW Foundation.

Earned revenue as of the end of September totaled \$24,431, up 9% from FY 17.

2. Administer traveling exhibit, *In the Spirit of the People: James Monroe’s 1817 Presidential Tour of the Northern States*. This exhibit, which will travel to its first venues in June, will continue into the fall of 2017. Thirteen venues in six states have been confirmed to date, with others to be added.

Success Measures: Fulfillment of schedule to current and future venues; results of final reports from venues detailing number of persons reached, associated programs at venues, and activity at tour page on JMM website featuring supplemental educational resources.

As reported above, the traveling exhibit has been a huge success in terms of visitation and awareness-building for the Museum, the Papers of James Monroe, and UMW. Many venues offered associated programs and exhibits, and the educational resources on the Museum’s website were utilized repeatedly.

3. Prepare second traveling exhibit on Monroe’s tours of Chesapeake region (1818) and southern states (1819). The exhibit will be similar in format to the northern states version. Museum studies students at UMW will again provide services for research, writing, and graphic design. James Monroe’s Highland will be approached about making this exhibit a collaborative efforts between our respective institutions.

Success Measures: Establish rough outline of content by December, 2017. Determination of Highland participation, if any, by same date. Museum studies class work during spring, 2018 semester. Secure financial sponsorship of exhibit by June 30, 2018.

Museum staff met with staff of the Papers and the UMW department of Historic Preservation on the 2019 exhibit on October 9. A preliminary list of topics and sites was discussed, as well as logistical lessons learned from the first exhibit. Collaboration with Highland will be less likely to occur than cooperation, meaning the respective sites will plan their commemorations of the 1819 tour separately but cross-promote each other’s activities.

4. Develop series of short educational/promotional videos featuring selected artifacts from JMM collection for online distribution. Initial goal is five videos, each approximately three minutes in length, utilizing UMW production facilities and students. Distribution will be via JMM website and YouTube channel, and other online venues. Success Measure: Completion of project by end of the fiscal year.

The Museum is exploring accomplishment of this goal in conjunction with UMW Professor Jeffrey McClurken’s “Adventures in Digital History” course, which would provide a learning opportunity for students while producing the desired videos.