

## Strategic Planning Report

The year 2016 was a planning year for the board of the Fort Atkinson Historical Society and staff of the Museum. For most of the year, the board and staff of the Museum were engaged in strategic planning with the assistance of Steve Grabow from the UW-Extension office. After many thought-provoking conversations and discussions regarding the future vision for the museum, the board and staff agreed to a strategic plan for the Museum that focuses on four areas: Education, Marketing, Facility Management, and Fundraising. The planning process also included revisions to our mission statement to better align with our current practices and future goals. The desired result of the strategic plan: the Museum will continue to be both a strong local history museum as well as a regional destination, and the good work started here generations ago will continue for generations to come.

Below is the executive summary of the strategic plan. As always, if you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me.

-Merrilee Lee, Director

### The Past is our Future:

#### *The Fort Atkinson Historical Society's Vision for the Hoard Historical Museum*

**Who Are We:** *The Hoard Historical Museum is a local history museum with a national story.*

Founded in 1933 by community organizations and local community leaders, the Museum continues to be a focal point that fosters pride within our community. The Museum is a learning, meeting and public-friendly space, that also serves as the archives for the entire community which protects OUR history.

The Museum began in the Dwight Foster Library and moved to the Frank and Luella Hoard House in 1957. The Museum has built additions, including the National Dairy Shrine museum (constructed 1980-1981), and most recently, a major addition of more than 13,000 square feet in 2007-2008. The Museum building now consists of more than 36,000 square feet. The Museum is also home to the Dwight and Almira Foster House, built in 1841 and moved to the Museum's grounds in 1969. The Museum continues to be free of charge for all visitors.

The Hoard Historical Museum is a partnership between the Fort Atkinson Historical Society, the City of Fort Atkinson, and the National Dairy Shrine. The Fort Atkinson Historical Society, founded in 1939, has over

400 members and business patrons who annually support the Museum.

**Our mission:** The mission of the Hoard Historical Museum is to preserve, protect and promote the history and culture of Fort Atkinson and the surrounding area from its earliest inhabitants to the present day.

To achieve this mission, the Hoard Historical Museum will:

- Collect and preserve artifacts and documents relating to our history,
- Interpret and share the history and culture of the area via programs, exhibits and publications,
- Promote the importance of protecting and telling our history,
- Honor the area's dairy heritage by serving as a venue for the National Dairy Shrine's museum,
- Work with other municipal departments, historical agencies, and community organizations, and
- Operate in accordance with the most current and professional museum standards practicable for the education and enjoyment of its visitors and the community.

*Continued on page 4*

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Fort Atkinson, WI 53538  
920-563-7769  
fax 920-568-3203  
www.hoardmuseum.org  
www.facebook.com/hoardmuseum  
Hours: Tuesday – Saturday  
9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
Closed Sundays & Mondays

#### 2017 FAHS Board of Directors

Deilee Calvert, President  
Bob Cheek, Vice President  
Loren Gray, Treasurer  
Bonnie Geyer, Secretary

#### Elected Board Members

Deilee Calvert  
Bob Cheek  
Bonnie Geyer  
Karen Gómez  
Loren Gray  
Sue Johnson  
Denice Jones  
Ron Langellier  
Gerald McGowan  
John Molinaro  
Joel Winn

#### Standing Members

Jude Hartwick, City Council Rep.  
Steve Larson, Nat'l Dairy Shrine Rep.  
Merrilee Lee, Museum Director  
Matt Trebatoski, City Manager

#### Emeritus Member

Milo Jones

#### Museum Staff Members

Merrilee Lee, Museum Director  
Dana Bertelsen, Assistant Director  
Tammy Doellstedt, Volunteer Coordinator  
Linda Ager, Beverly Dahl & Dorothy  
Harwell-James, Operations Assistants  
Greg Misfeldt, Maintenance



## Merrilee's Musings

By Merrilee Lee, Museum Director



Winter is a chance to slow things down a bit but we've been in a *flurry* of activity here! (Sorry, but you know my love of all things "punny!") After our final public program of 2016, our Holiday Open House, we began planning for our January maintenance programs. Thank you to those who voted on paint colors in December! Now the first floor of the Hoard House has been patched and repainted, as well as the second floor hallway, thanks to the generous efforts of our volunteers! Also during January staff spent a day being trained in First Aid and CPR/AED usage, holiday decorations came down, collections work proceeded, and we started planning for 2017 events.

Speaking of 2017, this year is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States' involvement in World War I, so remembering this momentous occasion is our programming theme for this year. Look for programs, book talks, exhibits, and more, all dedicated to World War I, the "War to End All Wars."

Due to your ongoing support of the Historical Society and the Hoard Historical Museum, we are able to host Collectors Shows, book talks, public events, and exhibits for free so others may learn about and appreciate *our* history. Thank you and please stop by soon to see what your contributions provide!

*Merrilee*

## Hoard House Project Update

The original heart of our museum, the Hoard House was a home before it became a museum. The house was built by Ruben White in 1864 and lived in by the White, Hagemann, Chambers, and Dexheimer families before it became the Hoard House in 1909 when Frank and Luella Hoard moved in along with their two children, Bill Jr. and Shirley. Frank was the youngest son of William Dempster Hoard, Wisconsin's 16<sup>th</sup> Governor and the founder of Hoard's Dairyman Magazine and the Jefferson County Union. After Frank passed away in 1939, Luella remained in her home alongside a few schoolteachers who lived there as boarders. After Luella passed away in 1956, Shirley and Bill gave their family home to the city of Fort Atkinson. They intended the building be used as a museum, which at the time was housed in the basement of the Dwight Foster library. After 1957, the Museum, now renamed the Hoard Historical Museum in honor of the Hoard family, continued to develop and grow. In 1980, the National Dairy Shrine's Visitor Center construction began and was dedicated in 1981. In 2007, the Museum added new exhibit spaces, a secure archive, collection storage rooms, and gallery space.



Hagemann family outside their home (now the Hoard House) looking at Whitewater Avenue.



Luella & Frank sitting in the library of their home. The bookcase in the background is still in the room!



Volunteer Russ Nord working in the first-floor hallway.

Our museum has always been driven to maintain a high standard in exhibits and programs. To this end, the walls of the Hoard House recently underwent a makeover with plasterwork and paint. Volunteer Guy Horton worked to patch and plaster the holes and weak spots in plaster that is more than 100 years old. During the two weeks that the Museum was closed for maintenance, our maintenance man, Greg, organized our wonderful volunteers to paint. Volunteers Bob Heussner, Carolyn & Russ Nord, Harriet Scherer, Joe Slaney, and John Syens worked in 4-hour shifts to paint the parlor, library, first and second floor hallways, and stairwell. Thank you to all of our volunteers who worked to make the Hoard House feel like a home again!



Volunteer Joe Slaney carefully painting the library.

All of the paint colors selected were chosen by visitors. In December, visitors were given the opportunity to vote for their favorite paint color from several staff-approved colors for the hallway, library, and parlor. For those of you who voted, you may notice that the parlor is now blue rather than the pinks you voted on. During the voting, we had several write-in votes for a blue and one visitor voted and then returned with a paint swatch of the color he suggested on his ballot. Well, to be fair, we took the blue votes into consideration. Staff and volunteers then voted in a runoff election and decided that the blue was perfect for the room (and still historically appropriate). Thank you to all who voted, painted, and helped make the Hoard House feel like a home again!



The parlor after plasterwork was completed but before new paint was applied. Even though the room was a mess, we couldn't help but decorate!

**Where Are We Now: Our Museum's stories draw visitors from near and far to experience Fort Atkinson and the surrounding area.**

Each year, roughly 20,000 people visit the Museum and National Dairy Shrine. Our exhibits, programs and events attract local citizens, schoolchildren from the greater regional area, **as well as by visitors from other Wisconsin towns, states, and foreign countries.** Each year the Museum hosts programs designed to educate local, regional, national and international visitors regarding the history and culture of the area. Our strength is in the diversity of stories we have to tell regarding the history of our local area.

The facility also serves as a community meeting space and hosts local organizations, businesses, and civic groups in our meeting rooms. In addition, the museum provides a venue for art shows that showcase the artists of the region.

Two museum professionals work full time as City employees in conjunction with five part-time Fort Atkinson Historical Society employees. The Museum benefits from having more than 200 volunteers to help fulfill our annual programming.

The Museum's finances are a combination of funding from the City of Fort Atkinson and Fort Atkinson Historical Society. The National Dairy Shrine makes an annual contribution.

**Where Do We Want To Be: The Museum, with its strong foundations in the community, is poised for greatness.**

The Museum intends to be a regional destination with robust local roots, greeting more visitors from around the world and around the corner. To grow, the Museum needs to strengthen its sustainable financial support, add more members to its membership roll, ensure that exhibits are updated in a timely manner, and add more outreach programs to be certain that all segments of the community are aware of the Museum and its mission.

To reach these goals and help the Museum move forward, the Fort Atkinson Historical Society, the representatives from the City of Fort Atkinson, and National Dairy Shrine and Museum staff have agreed

upon four areas on which to focus efforts to see these goals come to fruition.

The areas are: Education, Marketing, Facility Management, and Fundraising.

**1. Education: Programming, Exhibits, and Outreach**

The Museum prides itself in its strong programming but intends to strengthen its offerings to ensure that the Museum is reaching out to all segments of the community. To improve programming, the Museum will:



- Evaluate and assess current programs,
- Develop the themes on which to focus our programs,
- Develop new, specific program ideas,
- Ensure up-to-date technology to support our programs and exhibits,
- Ensure our exhibits are reflective of our mission and stories while utilizing the collection, and
- Work with schools, community organizations and businesses to expand our outreach programming.

**2. Marketing:**

The Museum, while looking to become a regional or statewide destination, will also remember the ongoing support of the local community. To improve upon the effectiveness of the Museum's current marketing approach, the Museum will:



- Hire a marketing/programming employee to assist with marketing, the creation of a marketing plan, and social media for the Museum.
- Devise a marketing plan complete with objectives and evaluation techniques, and establish a clear message of what we are marketing and to whom.

### 3. Facility Management:

With the 1841 Foster frame house, the 1864 Hoard brick home, and several major additions including the 1981 National Dairy Shrine and the 2008 expansion, the Museum building and grounds pose unique challenges and responsibilities. Maintenance costs are currently split between the City of Fort Atkinson and the Fort Atkinson Historical Society. The Museum will:



- Develop a detailed maintenance plan, a schedule and a capital program document to guide implementation,
- Provide assurance that specific project needs, with priority considerations by both the Board and staff, are included in facility upgrade plans, and
- Continue to explore new developments for the Museum and grounds.

### 4. Fundraising:

The Museum looks to add to our revenue base in new and effective ways while maintaining strong support from key stakeholders. The Museum will:



- Assess the best ways to add revenue,
- Develop a program around planned giving,
- Focus on new ways to obtain more memberships as the most promising approach for adding to our revenue base,
- Explore the effectiveness of the gift shop as a revenue source, and
- Host fundraising events.

## From the Archive

Last year, Archive Assistant Barbara Orlando was working with the Caswell family file and discovered this note from Valentine's Day, 1852, to Lucian B. Caswell from "Maybee." We believe "Maybee" was his first wife Elizabeth Hannah May, daughter of Chester May. The couple was married in 1855.

*Dearest Lucien,*

*My eyes how I love you  
You sweet little dove you  
There's no one above you  
Most beautiful L.B.*

*Quite Grecian your nose is  
And your cheeks are like roses  
So delicious – O Moses!  
Surpassingly sweet.*

*Not the beauty of tulips  
Nor the taste of mint juleps  
Can even compare with your two lips  
You beautiful dear.*

*Not the black eye of Juno  
Nor Minerva's of bleu [sic], no  
Nor Venus's you know  
Can equal your own.*

*Oh! How my heart prances  
And frolics and dances  
When its radiant glances  
Upon me are thrown.*

*Maybee*



## Garden Education Program

Saturday, March 4, 2 p.m. *Native Plants Part I*

The Jefferson County Master Gardener Volunteers at the Hoard Historical Museum are planning five new Garden Education Programs for 2017. **Garden Education Programs start at 2 p.m. on scheduled days and are free to attend.**

Three of our programs this year will be about Native Plants. We will present Native Plants, Part 1 on Saturday, March 4, at 2 p.m. This program will review how native plants are classified based on their preferred amount of light, water, and soil type. We will look at various natural habitats and how plants from those habitats can be incorporated into a home garden. This program will also discuss why gardeners might want to include native plants in their landscape.



Wild Bergamot

Native Plants, Part 2 will be presented Saturday, May 13. This program will introduce specific herbaceous native plants and their characteristics. We will also answer the question, "What is a nativar?"

Our third Native Plants program, scheduled on October 21, is on woody native plants – trees, shrubs, and vines. We will discuss the benefits of incorporating native plants into your landscape, including the benefits in using them rather than imported species.

Our final one-hour program will incorporate the Museum's programming theme of World War I. The November 18 program will be WWI Victory Gardens. Even though Victory Gardens are generally linked more to WWII, they were also utilized in WWI. This program will enlighten modern gardeners about Victory Gardens in general, and will include some information about programs from that time period.

This year's half-day Seminar will be all about Perennial Gardens. It will be presented on September 23 from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Seminar attendees will learn about Perennial Garden design, best practices for care throughout the growing season, and our favorite plants. *Admission is free, but we ask you to register prior to the event to ensure we have sufficient materials for all attendees.*

Please consider putting these programs on your calendar!

### Mornings @ the Museum

The first year of Mornings @ the Museum was a success! This year, the Museum will continue to open early at **8:30 a.m.** on the first Friday of the month during the school year for preschoolers (and their parents, grandparents, younger siblings, and teachers) to come and explore the museum at their own pace. While here they can see all of the exhibits, engage with a small activity or craft, and listen to a story. We provide snacks for children and coffee for their adults.

*New in 2017.* Each month will feature a different book that relates to a different Museum exhibit or display.

On **March 3<sup>rd</sup>**, we will sit in the Dairy Shrine and learn more about *cows*.

On **April 7<sup>th</sup>**, come learn more about *art* while sitting in the Mary Hoard Art Show.

On **May 5<sup>th</sup>**, we will visit the Bird Room of the Hoard House to read about *birds*.



**Mornings @ the Museum is a preschool program is held during the school year from September – May.**

## Upcoming Events at the Hoard Museum

### Collector's Show

Saturday, February 18, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. *Free to attend!*

The Museum is hosting a military-themed Collector's Show in honor of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S. involvement in World War I. Collectors are showing items from all wars. Uniforms, print items (letters, advertisements, posters), pack items, items from the home front, and memorial blankets will be on display. Unique military items from the Hoard Museum's collection will also be exhibited. Our hope is that all who attend will appreciate the service and sacrifices of all of military personnel and their families who have served our country for more than 200 years.



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### Saturday Morning Scholars

Saturday, March 4, 10:30 a.m. *The Rock River*

How has the Rock River changed Fort Atkinson? How have we changed the Rock River? Andy Selle, Fort Atkinson City Engineer, will describe the relationship between the Rock River and our community from our town's very beginning to the present day.



Saturday, May 13, 10:30 a.m. *Military Genealogy 101*

Russell Horton, Reference Archivist from the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, will be at the Hoard Museum to retrace Wisconsin's involvement in WWI and will discuss ways to research your family's military involvement!



Saturday Morning Scholars programs are family friendly and all ages are welcome to attend. Saturday Morning Scholars is a FREE program.

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### 2017 Annual Dinner at the Hoard Museum

Wednesday, February 22, 5:30-8 p.m. \$25 per attendee

Join us for our Annual Dinner to discover what the Fort Atkinson Historical Society has been up to in 2016! The evening begins with a wine reception and social time when the doors open at 5:30 p.m. and dinner, catered by Mangiami Italiano (downtown Fort Atkinson), will start at 6 p.m.



At 6:45 p.m., the Annual Business Meeting will occur, and at 7 p.m., Director Merrilee Lee and Assistant Director Dana Bertelsen will present the program, "Curiosities of the Collection." In this program, Merrilee and Dana will reveal unique artifacts from the Hoard Museum collection and reveal what makes each object significant. The Museum preserves, protects, and promotes our history and culture. Come discover what curiosities exist in the collection!

**It's not too late to RSVP! Call the Museum at 920-563-7769.**



401 Whitewater Avenue  
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538

Return Service Requested

**Upcoming Events at the Hoard Museum:**

- February 18: ♦ Collector's Show, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- February 22: ♦ Annual Members Dinner of the Hoard Historical Museum/Fort Atkinson Historical Society, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. *It's not too late to RSVP!*
- March 3: ♦ Morning @ the Museum Preschool program, 8:30 - 10 a.m.
- March 4: ♦ *The Rock River Saturday Morning Scholars*, 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.  
♦ Garden Education Program: Native Plants, Part 1, 2 p.m.
- March 22: ♦ Mary Hoard Art Show Opening Reception: Part 1 (*K-8<sup>th</sup> Grade*), 6:30 - 8 p.m.
- April 7: ♦ Morning @ the Museum Preschool program, 8:30 - 10 a.m.
- April 23: ♦ Mary Hoard Art Show Opening Reception: Part 2 (*HS-Adult*), 1 - 4 p.m.
- May 13: ♦ *WWI Genealogy Saturday Morning Scholars*, 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.  
♦ Garden Education Program: Native Plants, Part 2, 2 p.m.

Questions? Contact the Hoard Historical Museum by calling (920) 563-7769 or emailing [info@hoardmuseum.org](mailto:info@hoardmuseum.org)