

President's Report for the 2018 Annual Meeting

Summary of the Year's Activities:

Board meetings took place six times in 2018 and we had a couple of special meetings to plan the operations of the museum as the museum operates with volunteers only. Our next meeting will be in February 2019.

A Board assessment was done and a strategic plan is in place for the next 5 years. As a result of the assessment, we need to revise the strategic plan to include specific dates and individuals responsible for each action.

Donors that donate \$500.00 or more to the Association will have their names displayed on the Donor's plaque on the deck. The amount that you give determines the classification on the plaque.

Changes were made to the rack cards. And, we've expanded the places to put our rack cards.

The flag now has a light on it. The Town of Chesterfield paid for the installation of the light.

The Association had two fund raisers this year, the Street Drive which raised over \$702.00 and the 5k Freedom Race which raised \$350.00. We only had enough volunteers to man 2 street corners this year, so the fund raiser for the Street Drive was about \$400.00 less than previous years. Please consider volunteering next year, if you have the time for an hour or two. The 5k Freedom Race was managed by Kinetic Running owner Shannon Drowne.

We published our first book entitled, The Story of Harriet Tubman. It was written by 4th graders at the Flint Hills School in Virginia. We received a pdf of the book in February from a student, who found our website online. Donations were received to get the book published.

A Building Committee is exploring options for enhancing the building to include more bathrooms, a multi-purpose room, and more area to display exhibits. Don Haight is chairing this committee. We are seeking to have the Estes House declared a historic site. Pfizer donated 2 lateral files to the Association.

It was our pleasure to host an Intern this year from SUNY Plattsburgh. Summer McAdam Gorham did a video on the Underground Railroad today. It tells the story of the immigrants fleeing the U.S. to seek asylum in Canada through our area. She is our

speaker and you will learn more during her presentation. Summer's mentor was Dr. Amy Mountcastle.

Carol Hetfield, a docent, has taken on the job of overseeing the Intern Program. She will be working with Dr. Richard Schaefer, Professor & Chair of the History Department & Coordinator of Religious Studies at SUNY Plattsburgh, to mentor two students this spring. **See Carol's report.**

We continued our Bus tours this year. I want to thank Don Papson, Helen Nerske and Peter Slocum for being tour guides again this year. Don has expanded on the information we provide to visitors. We need to thank the Town of Chesterfield for loaning us a bus and a driver. We lost Gil, our driver from 2011 to 2017, due to his retirement, but we've picked up a driver that is eager to learn more about the history of Keeseville.

The museum had 5,369 visitors this year. (4427 adults & 937 children, 106 on the bus tour)

The children's area has a built in table in preparation for a new electronic game. The game will debut November 16 next Friday at 11:00 am at the museum. Julie Taylor and Christine Facticeau, teachers at Keeseville Elementary School, have been working with 5th and 6th grade students to design an Underground Railroad game for the museum. Don Papson is representing the Board and has been working with Julie and Christine.

Committee Reports: to be included on the web as part of the Annual Report

New Board Members Approved at the Annual Meeting: Anja Bouchard, Jim Kloiber, Dr. Kathleen Lavoie, Jacqueline Madison, Don Papson and Bobbi Perez.

Annual Meeting Presentation: Given by Summer MacAdam Gorham, who completed an internship at the North Country Underground Railroad Historical Association. Summer's project focused on immigrants today, who have been crossing into Canada via non-traditional sites, and how their exodus relate to the fugitive slaves in the nineteenth century.

Docent Recognition:

While we have many volunteers to help our cause, for individuals that volunteer as Docents they are the foundation of our museum. That's because they are here to guide the visitors through our museum, answer questions about activities in the surrounding area and ensure that everyone has a pleasant experience even if it is only a bathroom stop. While they make sure that the facility is presentable and that the visitors are enjoying our museum, their most important role is to listen to the stories and experiences that our visitors bring and relay, many times after viewing the exhibits. Last year, docents' names were engraved on a plaque and they are displayed on the wall in this room. We've added

3 new names, Paul Raino, Collin Farrington, and Chris Velsey. Collin is a 12 years old student from Seton. He was a Junior Docent and has been an excellent addition to our team. Their names will be added to the Docent's plaque.