

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

The Otsego community is in the unique position of soon having in its possession a museum dedicated to preserving the history and heritage of this area. The City of Otsego and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) have presented an opportunity that is simply too exciting to neglect. The waterworks building, for many years underutilized because of flooding problems and serious structural troubles, has been sold to the DDA. The DDA, whose mission is to maintain, improve, and beautify the downtown area, will expend a significant portion of its revenues to renovate and rehabilitate the waterworks building into a functioning and beautiful museum, at a lease charge of \$1 per year to the Otsego Area Historical Society. Let me restate that: *A building with historical integrity will be renovated and redesigned for use solely as a museum for this community and its school-age children, at no extra cost to taxpayers.*

Historical societies normally form as the result of a group of people gathering frequently to discuss items of local history and to display their historical artifacts and archives. Over time, the group will find it necessary to rent a space to house its collections and meet once a month for programs. Twenty years later the group, after much growth, is organized to raise funds for the construction of their very own historical museum. The Otsego Area Historical Society has not been formed in this traditional manner. We are a direct result of the museum building. We have a strong and growing membership base, however, we have no collections and have yet to meet for a program. Our board does, however, meet on a monthly basis to conduct business necessary for the museum project.

In order to have exhibits and displays, our museum will need collections, artifacts, photographs, and local memorabilia. If you know of families who may have such items for loan or gift, please contact me at the library. We are particularly interested in family photographs or images of local events, downtown buildings, schools, farms and houses. These would be photos in family scrapbooks and albums that may not seem interesting to anyone else, but to the contrary, it is exactly these types of materials that could possibly lead to documenting the history of this area. The historical society can scan and print these items, eliminating the need to loan or gift. Please spread the word to others concerning our call for historical artifacts and images.

Ryan Wieber
694-6455

MUSEUM NEWS

The board of trustees for the Historical Society recently decided to allow Capital Consultants to provide architectural services as well as engineering services for the museum project. As a result, DesignWorks will no longer be providing architectural services. This change will help make the process of communication more efficient for the board.

In order to obtain a more accurate cost estimate for filling the 30-foot exterior primary well (located behind the garage section of the Waterworks building), Capital Consultants brought in experts in early January to investigate the well. They determined through the use of an underwater video camera and human inspection, that the well contained eight capped perimeter wells, and four uncapped central wells. The water from the uncapped wells is able to flow from the outside well through a 12-inch pipe into the pump house basement, causing it to always be flooded. Capital has recommended capping the four wells and also sealing the pipe that leads into the basement. A five-foot layer of concrete will cover the base of the exterior well, and then sand will be used to fill the remainder of the well. As a result of Capital's findings, the budget has been significantly lowered by nearly \$47,000, and a cure has been discovered for the excessive moisture problem in the pump house.

The Design Development Phase of the museum project is now underway and should be completed by mid-March. It is during this portion of the project when building systems and materials will be defined, elevations and floor plans will be refined and a site plan can be submitted for approval to the City Planning Commission.

OTSEGO AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD MEMBERS

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Meetings are held the 1st Thursday at 6pm at the library