

DATE: January 4, 2021

TO: Jessica Vealitzek, Chair
Operations Committee

FROM: Nan Buckardt
Director of Education

RECOMMENDATION: Approve and Accept New Donations to the Bess Bower Dunn Museum of Lake County's Collections.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION SUPPORTED: Communication, Education, and Outreach

FINANCIAL DATA: There is no financial impact associated with accepting these donations.

BACKGROUND: The Bess Bower Dunn Museum of Lake County ("Dunn Museum") collects material representing the people, places, and events of Lake County, Illinois, (Collection Policies, Scope of collections, p. 4). The majority of the Dunn Museum's historic collection were acquired by the County of Lake from the privately run Lake County Museum of History in 1965. These collections were officially transferred to the Lake County Forest Preserve District in 1989.

The Dunn Museum is frequently offered donations by members of the general public. Each donation is considered against criteria established in the Dunn Museum's approved Collection Policies. Donations that do not meet these criteria are declined. Since November 2019, the museum has received 47 donation inquiries of which 28 were declined.

The 19 donations listed on the attached Exhibit A, meet the criteria established in the Dunn Museum's approved Collection Policy and, in accordance with the Museum's Collection Policies, have been reviewed, and are being recommended, by the Museum's Collections Committee and the Superintendent of Educational Facilities for acceptance into the Dunn Museum's historic collections. There is adequate space to properly store and care for these items. Under the Museum's Collection Policies, the Operations Committee is authorized to accept the donations, because they do not require a purchase of \$25,000 or more and, in fact, all the donations are being conveyed to the District free of charge.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: Chief Operations Officer, Director of Finance, Superintendent of Educational Facilities.

Motion to approve and accept the New Acquisitions for the Bess Bower Dunn Museum of Lake County's Collections identified on Exhibit A.

Date: _____ Roll Call Vote: Ayes:____ Nays:____
 Voice Vote Majority Ayes; Nays:____

Exhibit A
New Acquisitions Inventory
January 2021

- **Architectural Remnant from the Genesee Theater, 1927**

Plaster architectural remnant from the balcony of the Genesee Theater in Waukegan, 1927. During the theater's recent renovation, the balcony was enlarged and re-shaped. The original plaster moldings were removed and cast to make new moldings that fit the new balcony.

The Genesee Theater has been an important cultural destination since it opened in 1927. In 1939, Waukegan's very own Jack Benny premiered his movie "Man About Town" at the Genesee Theater.
Donor: City of Waukegan

- **Shirt Worn by James Hugh Bonner, circa 1881**

Shirt belonging to James Hugh Bonner (1850-1938), circa 1881. The museum has only two examples of men's clothing (with provenance) dating to the 19th century. This will be the third item.

In 1850, James and Margaret Bonner came to America with their children, including their newborn son, James Hugh. They briefly lived with James Hugh's father's brother, William Bonner (Bonner Heritage Farm). James Hugh's father purchased land near the Bonner Farm, and named it Bonnie Brae Farm.
Donor: Museum of the Grand Prairie

- **Watercolor Paintings by Debra Fitzsimmons, 1980**

Watercolor paintings by Debra Fitzsimmons depicting everyday scenes in Libertyville and Lake Forest in the 1980s. Fitzsimmons is a well-recognized Lake County artist and art teacher. Donor: Debra Fitzsimmons

- **Black Powder Log Splitter, circa 1865**

William Bonner's (1815-1881) black powder log splitter used on the Bonner Farm, circa 1865.

According to John Bonner, William Bonner's great-great grandson, the log splitter was a "labor saving device at a time when wood was vital for fences, heating, cooking and building. It was used to split logs for rails... and to blast stumps out of the ground to clear fields for farming." Donor: John Bonner

- **Six Flags Great America Poster, 1978**

Six Flags Great America poster seeking "talent" for the 1978 season. Provides insight into the activities at a well-known Lake County attraction. Donor: Carolyn Waller Gordon

- **North Chicago Women's Club Records, 1896-2020**

North Chicago Women's Club memorabilia and club records dating from 1896 to 2020. Includes photos of the club's past presidents and minute books. At its peak in the 1950s, the club had 150 members. The club is still in existence, though membership is dwindling, and it remains associated with the state and national organizations. Donor: Dorothy Clark

- **Lake County Sheriff's Deputy Items, circa 1930s-1940s**

Lake County Sheriff's deputy badges, and one billy club, circa 1930 to 1944. Belonged to donor's great-grandfather, Peter G. Proesel (1897-1944).

Respected citizens were asked to become deputies and sent to the courthouse to be deputized by the Sheriff. Peter Proesel lived in Prairie View in Vernon Township, his farm was on Aptakisic Road.
Donor: George Proesel

- **Early Lake County and Civil War Era Newspapers, 1853-1875**
Twelve newspapers related to early Lake County and the Civil war, including 10 *Waukegan Gazettes* dating from 1853 to 1875. Postwar papers include articles reflecting on the Civil War, and veterans' reunions. Donor: Lew Clarke

- **High Resolution Digital Photographs Relating to Lieutenant Colonel Isaac Clarke, circa 1860s**
Digital donation of high-resolution scanned photographs from the Lt. Col. Isaac L. Clarke Family of Waukegan. Photographs are of Clarke's family and comrades in the 96th Illinois Infantry. The photographs were digitized in-house by the museum's digitizer. Donor: Lew Clarke

- **Fort Sheridan Materials, circa 1960**
Approximately 75 postcard views of Fort Sheridan, and 80 photographs dating to circa 1959 and 1960 Fifth U.S. Army activities at Fort Sheridan. Donor: Cheryl Bossert/Donald Taylor

- **Wallace H. Whigham Framed Penmanship Sketch, circa 1880**
Wallace H. Whigham (1860-1946) framed penmanship. Whigham was the great grandson of Daniel Wright (1778-1873) and grandson of William Whigham (1804-1840). This example is likely the culmination of the techniques Whigham learned from a "master of penmanship." Good penmanship was valued and many students and adults took courses in handwriting from writing masters.

Whigham was born on Daniel Wright's farm and grew up in Lake County. He served in the Spanish American War as a captain with the 1st Illinois Infantry, and eventually became the commanding officer at Camp Logan in Zion. He was a lawyer and a professor in the Chicago Law School and taught economics at Carl Schurz High School in Chicago. Donor: Julie Hastings

- **Milk Can Used by Leslie S. Bonner for Hawthorn Farms Dairy, circa 1930s-1940s**
Milk can from 1930s-1940s used by Leslie S. Bonner (1887-1968), son of James H. Bonner. Les Bonner farmed Bonnie Brae Farm located on the east side of Route 45 and ½ mile south of Sand Lake Road. The milk can's lid is for "Bowman Chicago" and the base for "Hawthorn Farms." Dairy names on lids and base did not always match. This is a rare example of early 20th century dairy industry milk cans. Donor: Julie Vollbrecht

- **Color Slide Images of Lake County in 1980s and Ivanhoe Congregational Church books, mid to late 19th Century**
Dozens of color slides of buildings and highways from around Lake County taken in the 1980s by Clausen & Co., who produced promotional booklets and pamphlets for Waukegan, Lake County and other cities and towns.

Ivanhoe Congregational Church handwritten subscription book from 1853 to build a new church, and Manual of the First Congregational Church and Society of Fremont from 1885. Donor: Waukegan Historical Society

- **Fort Sheridan Newsletters, 1980s**
Save Fort Sheridan! (1981) and Fort Sheridan Defender (1984) newsletters of the not-for-profit organization to educate people on the value of Fort Sheridan to the region and to promote its continued use as an active Army post. Donor: Anonymous

- **Fort Sheridan Drawings, 1975**

Four drawings of Fort Sheridan by Jean Carol Ensign in 1975 featuring: Main Gate, Tower, Post Commander's residence (Bldg. 9), and Bachelor Officer's Residence and Mess (Bldg. 31).

Jean Carol Ensign (1935-2016) was an artist and teacher. She and her husband, Lt. Col. Allyn B. Ensign were stationed at Fort Sheridan. She is buried at Fort Sheridan Cemetery.

Donor: Rebecca Melson

- **Photograph of Chase Webb and Jannet Minto Webb on Farm, circa 1870s**

Photo of Chase Webb and Jannet Minto Webb and their farmhouse, circa 1870s. The Webb's lived here from 1867 to mid-1880s. Today, the property is part of Rollins Savanna Forest Preserve. Donor:

Chandra Sefton

- **Photograph of John Hertel homestead, circa 1902**

Photo of John Hertel homestead, circa 1902. Hertel was one of the earliest settlers to Fremont Center. Pictured are Hertel's daughter-in-law, Walburta Baer Hertel (1869-1946) and grandchildren Clarence (1899-1976) and Irene (1900-1998).

The homestead was located at the southwest corner of Fremont Center and Erhart Road. Today the site is part of Ray Lake Forest Preserve. Donor: Darlene Diebold Dorfler

- **Remnants from the Archives Building at Lakewood, mid to late 1800s**

Architectural remnants—cobblestones and metal "L" insignias—salvaged during Archives demolition at Lakewood Forest Preserve. In the mid-1800s, the cobblestones/fieldstones were collected from the surrounding land for use in the building's foundation then the site of the Michael Murray homestead and later the home of Malcolm Boyle. The cobblestones are a geologic record of the site and illustrate historic house construction techniques. The two metal "L" insignias are from the outside of the house. The "L" stood for Lakewood Farm, the name Malcolm Boyle gave to his gentleman's farm. Transferred from: LCFPD to Museum

- **Latinx Community Engagement Project – Video Oral Histories**

Digital video oral histories (14) and digital photographs (14) documenting Lake County's Latinx community taken by students in the College of Lake County's Latino Alliance Club.

The Latinx Community Engagement Project was a collaborative partnership between the Dunn Museum and the College of Lake County's student Latino Alliance Club. The project's goals were to build relationships in the Latinx community and gather stories of community members that will be preserved in the museum's Lake County History Archives.