



MAPLEWOOD AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2170 EAST COUNTY ROAD D, MAPLEWOOD, MN 55109
(651) 748-8645 - www.maplewoodhistoricalsociety.org

2015 Annual Report By Bob Jensen, President

2015 was a year for the Society to mature and stabilize after introducing many changes in 2014. It was a time to transition to paid staff, to conduct our first summer camp, to expand use of Quickbooks accounting software, to meet new Board members and volunteers and a time to begin strategic planning.

Social Events

We hosted 12 social events, which is one less than 2014. Attendance of 1,190 was up from 1,060 in 2014. These events contribute 17 % of our annual revenues.

Site Rental

We had 8 weddings/receptions – the same as in 2014. Other site rentals such as anniversaries, picnics, church services and private events were 25 as contrasted with 21 in 2014. Site rentals contribute 45 % of our annual revenues and we hope to increase these to sustain our growth.

Interpretive Events

We hosted (2) summer camps of 4 days each and these were very successful in terms of attendance and profitability. We were recognized by the Eide Bailly Foundation for our innovativeness of the summer camp and our collaboration with the Grange. We will increase the summer camp to (3) sessions in 2016 and have hired our own educator to teach this educational and fun day camp. We were awarded the 2015 Best Historical Place in Maplewood by the Maplewood Award Program. We were also awarded the Friends of the Farmer award from the Grange. We hosted 4 educational visits by school children to the farm and held 4 Exhibit Open Houses through the summer months. But we also had a significant increase in programs that were away from the Farm. These included co-sponsoring a 2-day archaeology dig at Fish Creek with the City of Maplewood and the Ramsey County Historical Society. We co-sponsored 2 history talks with the Ramsey County Library at Maplewood Library about Maplewood firefighters and Fish Creek archaeology. And we co-hosted an Arbor Day celebration with the City of Maplewood to re-dedicate the Washington Memorial Grove plaque and we presented a historic artifact session at the Ramsey County Care Center.

Exhibits

For the past two years we have been planning for a large exhibit on the history and relationship of the 3M Company and Maplewood. We submitted our final grant request in September for funds to construct the exhibit and to open it in July 2016. Unfortunately our request was rejected in December. This is a great setback for us but we will again apply in 2016 with the hope of opening it in 2017. We made several small additions to our fire department exhibit and will continue to expand this and other exhibits in 2016.

Archives and Collections

Four volunteers work most Tuesday afternoons to catalog the artifacts, photos and documents that have been donated. We have catalogued over 4,300 objects, 3,000 photos and 6,100 documents. This has been

(continued on reverse page)

Where Maplewood History Lives

invaluable for research purposes such as a current project with the Heritage Preservation Commission to provide research to the Society members and Commissioners who are writing 60 short history articles to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Maplewood in 2017. You will start to see these articles after January 7, 2016 on Facebook, the Maplewood Review, and City of Maplewood website and at MAHS open houses.

Organizational Changes

Nicole DeGuzman is our Executive Director who works part-time at 30 hours/week and has regular office hours on Monday and Tuesday at the Farm. Our site rentals are promoted and managed by Tricia Duffney who joined us this past fall. And Debra Gardner will be the educator for our summer day camps. These three bring professional skills for which we could not find volunteers. In October, we obtained a grant to hire a facilitator to help us with a self-assessment survey from the American Association of State and Local History that will lead to certification as a professional historical society. We will also prepare a strategic plan for how the Society and Farm will grow in the next 3-5 years. And we brought our Board up to a full complement of nine members with the appointment of Jessie Watson in February and Bob Cardinal in November. We continue to enhance our accounting software by implementing a payroll module to reduce costs to an outside accounting firm and speedup writing of payroll checks.

Buildings and Grounds

Many days were spent this summer by volunteers who sanded and removed old paint that was peeling from the wood buildings and then applying a coat of red stain. We were very fortunate to have Calvin Mulumba join us this summer to help with this activity. Bill Bruentrup donated use of his woodworking shop to construct three large partitions for hanging graphic panels in the barn basement for future exhibits. This is part of a remodeling of the barn basement for better use with exhibits and meetings. The remodeling included relocating the restroom door, constructing a new wall and installing a counter and cabinets. And, two windows of the house were restored and repainted by a volunteer named Mark Johnston. Several loads of lime rock were graded over the farm drive to fill low spots, and the overflow parking lot was successfully used for all events.

Members, volunteers, donors and followers

Membership remains around 100. We have approximately 70 volunteers who actively help with events, farm maintenance and other activities. Our donors contributed over \$6,000 and we are in the midst of mailing letters to local businesses to seek donations or sponsorships and have signed at least one new business. And despite some grant requests to foundations and organizations, we were unsuccessful obtaining funds other than the Legacy grants through the MN Historical Society. But we have an increasing number of “followers” who receive our monthly email about upcoming events (over 100) and over 500 followers who “like” our two Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn pages.

Conclusion

During 2016 we will continue to transition the Board to be the governing body, we will prepare a strategic plan, we will again request funding of our 3M-Maplewood exhibit and we will rely more on paid staff than previous years. This will require more revenue which we plan to achieve through more events and partnerships with other organizations. It looks to be another busy year – come out to see what we are doing.