

THIRTY-FIVE YEARS

**A HISTORY OF
THE MICHIGAN MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION**

1952-1987

BY

Winfield H. Arneson

Published by

The Michigan Museums Association

as a contribution to the

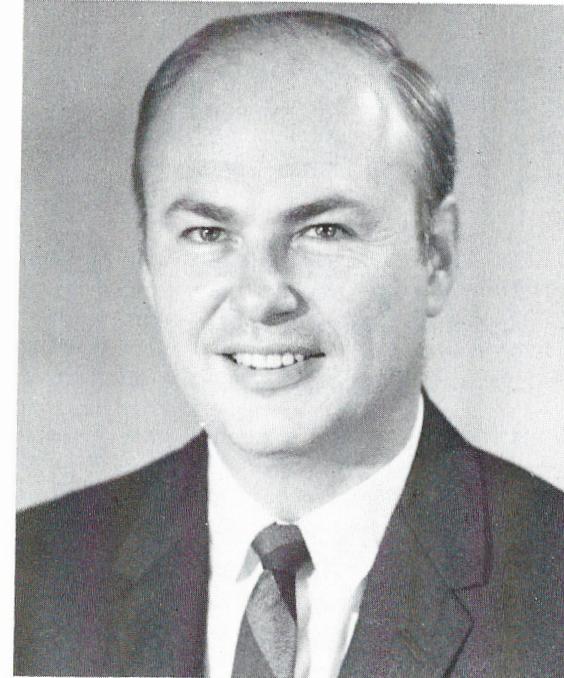
State of Michigan's Sesquicentennial

1987

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication
 President's Introduction
 Introduction
 Chapter 1 - How It All Began
 Chapter 2 - The Michigan Museums Conference and the Historical Society of Michigan
 Chapter 3 - Crisis Brings Change
 Chapter 4 - A New Beginning
 Chapter 5 - Members' Reflections
 Chapter 6 - Since 1971: Meeting the Needs of Michigan's Museum Profession
 Chapter 7 - MMA Publications
 Chapter 8 - Annual Meetings in Review
 Conclusion
 Appendix 1: Annual Meeting Locations
 Appendix 2: Michigan Museums Conference, Kalamazoo, 1952
 Appendix 3: Officers and Board Members Elected in Jackson, 1971
 Appendix 4: Presidents of the MMA

DEDICATION



Solan W. Weeks

February 2, 1930 - October 14, 1984

It is customary and fitting to dedicate a history, a report or a book to someone special. What could be more appropriate than to dedicate this history to a dear friend of 24 years who perhaps did more than anyone else to work diligently and frequently for the success of the Michigan Museums Conference/Michigan Museums Association? The museum profession in Michigan is strong, successful and vital, in part, because of the tireless efforts of Solan W. Weeks. This work is dedicated to his memory.

Winfield H. Arneson
 Dearborn, Michigan
 Spring, 1987

PRESIDENT'S INTRODUCTION

Thirty-five years ago, a farsighted group of museum employees joined together rather informally to aid the growth of the museum profession in Michigan. This small group realized the value of getting together to share common problems and search for solutions.

In 1987, Michigan's Sesquicentennial year, the Michigan Museums Association is an organization over 300 members strong. It consists of colleagues, and more importantly, friends, who work together for the betterment of all museums in Michigan.

As one of the nation's most respected state museum organizations, the MMA educates individual members and promotes the profession as a whole. Whether it is by attending a workshop, contributing to the newsletter, serving on a panel at the annual conference, or joining a committee, members have the opportunity to grow professionally through their association with the organization. Thanks to this education, the quality of Michigan museums continues to improve and more and more people are becoming aware of the vast cultural, natural, and scientific treasures housed in our state.

My thanks are extended to Win Arneson for compiling this history, to Maria Quinlan Leiby and Sandra Houston for editing it, to Jean Stevens for the cover design, and to Steven Leiby and Ann Concannon for computer assistance.

It is a pleasure to present this report to my friends, the current members of the MMA, and to provide a historical record for future members.

Phillip C. Kwiatkowski, President

INTRODUCTION

When asked to write a history of an organization, one has to accept it as a challenge - especially if it represents 35 years and the documentation is fragmentary. That is how this writer looked at the situation when Michigan Museums Association President Phillip C. Kwiatkowski asked me to accept the project at the 1986 Annual Meeting in Alpena.

Ever since I came to Dearborn and started to attend the annual meetings of the old Michigan Museums Conference, the development, the success and the fellowship associated with it have been stimulating and rewarding. Perhaps that is why I sought to learn more about its origins as the years passed.

I was honored that Phil asked me to do this. I only wish I could have prepared this history jointly with Solan W. Weeks. It was a chance to bring together in a confined paper information which may be of value and service in the years ahead; not just a nostalgic rehash of the past.

I wish to thank a few people and organizations for contributing to this paper. Robert N. Bowen, the Association's first President, was very helpful. Also Dr. Roger Van Bolt outlined his thoughts about the organization's early years. In addition William E. Story, who hosted the reorganization meeting in Jackson in 1971 provided us with a few of his reflections. Darwin Davis came forth by loaning some of his documentation. Of course, all of the editors of the Michigan Museums Association Newsletter did their part by publishing valuable information since 1974. The Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan had on file some early records of the Michigan Museums Conference. These records were made available to me. Lastly, a thank you is extended to the Board of Directors and the officers of the Michigan Museums Association for making the publication of this history possible.

How fortunate that during this Sesquicentennial Year of the State of Michigan, the Michigan Museums Association is able to designate this history as an official contribution to this celebration.

W.H.A.

CHAPTER 1

How It All Began

After 35 years the Michigan Museums Association's gears are well lubricated and operating smoothly. However, a successful organization has to have a beginning regardless of how simple or plain it may have been.

In order to trace the origins of what we commemorate in 1987, I researched the early records associated with the Historical Society of Michigan (HSM). The Society was the initial sponsor of what became the Michigan Museums Conference. A semi-formal relationship existed between various Michigan museums' staff and this long-established institution until 1971 when a reorganization came about at Jackson, Michigan.

Tom Jones, the Executive Director of the Historical Society of Michigan, indicated that all old records had been turned over to the Bentley Historical Library. A search led me to the Board Minutes of a meeting of the Trustees of the Historical Society of Michigan. The Board had met at the Detroit Historical Museum on October 20, 1951. On that occasion, Alexis A. Praus, was elected president for the upcoming year. The election of Mr. Praus was significant regarding the future plans for some sort of museums meetings in the state.

In the November 19, 1951 Board Minutes, there was discussion about an Upper Peninsula Historical Conference. The first meeting of northern museums came about in 1950, and had been followed by another in 1951. However, the Lower Peninsula, where many museums were located, was without any museums organization.

Although the minutes on file at the Bentley Historical Library were incomplete, the first mention of a Michigan Museums Conference surfaced at the Board Meeting of March 7, 1952. At this time President Praus described plans for a museums conference to be held at Kalamazoo the following July (1952).

At this point I quote the HSM Board minutes of July 15, 1952, at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing.

President Praus called upon Mrs. Boyer (a Trustee) to report on the museums conference at Kalamazoo. Mrs. Boyer mentioned the seven panels, discussed their purpose and described the program. She and others present who had attended the conference stated that it had been a very successful affair. Mrs. Boyer moved that the secretary be instructed to send a resolution of appreciation to Mr. Henry Brown for his contributions as program chairman to the success of the museums conference. The motion was seconded by Dr. Kuhn and adopted.

Mr. Praus reported that forty people had registered for the conference and that the expenses for the affair had been paid for largely by the Detroit Historical Museum and the Kalamazoo Historical Society. He informed the trustees that \$40, collected from registration fees, would be turned over to the treasury of the Society, to be used in mimeographing the report of the conference.

So, from this simple beginning the ground work for a regular State museums conference had been set. I could not determine whether plans had been set while the conferees were meeting in Kalamazoo to have another meeting in 1953.

What is certain was that the election of Alexis Praus to the Presidency of the Historical Society of Michigan played a major role in getting the ball rolling. As President, he had clout and as a museum director, he had a museum where an initial conference could meet.

It should not be surprising that this initial meeting and in fact all of those held under the sponsorship of the HSM were aimed primarily at historical museums. Then as now, history museums were more numerous in Michigan than any other type.

CHAPTER 2

The Michigan Museums Conference and the Historical Society of Michigan

Two executive directors of the Historical Society of Michigan who were extremely helpful in the development of the annual Michigan Museums Conference were William K. Alderfer (1963-1967) and Herbert J. Brinks (1969-1971) who will be mentioned later. Unfortunately, the decade from 1952-1963 reveals no director's information.

In the Director's Quarterly report of February-April 1964 - regarding the Michigan Museums Conference - Mr. Alderfer wrote:

Met in Lansing February 1 and Grand Rapids April 1 to sit in on the planning ... My job here was to keep things practical enough for easy and inexpensive Society participation yet make the contents general enough for all Society Members to have a worthwhile time attending the conference...

An easy group to work with and they planned a good program. I've been encouraging some of the local societies who do not have museums to send representatives to the conference in order to get acquainted with the practitioners...

Alderfer's Director's Report of May, June, July, 1964: "Museums Conference, Grand Rapids 6/25-26/1964 reported as good conference with about 150 present, and full range of presentations. Idea presented ... that the Society should plan to budget for the meetings so can give free meals to speakers, as registration costs didn't cover all."

In order to give the Michigan Museums Association membership a bit of a background as to how the old Michigan Museums Conference operated, some mention of the Conference Planning Manual is helpful. By 1963 a need was felt for at least a nominal structure in planning the conference. The following guidelines were established, some of which were later adopted by the MMA:

Organization of the Conference Planning Committee:

The Membership of this Committee shall consist of the following persons:

- + Director of the State Historical Museum.
- + Chairman of the HSM Development Committee.
- + Three appointees - appointed for overlapping 3-year terms by the Board of Trustees upon recommendation of the Committee.
- + Two persons from the community where the conference is to be held.
- + One person from the community where the conference will be held the following year.
- + Secretary of the Historical Society of Michigan.

The chairman of each year's conference shall be selected from and nominated by the committee, subject to the approval of the president of the Historical Society of Michigan.

The Director of the State Museum shall be permanent corresponding secretary of the Committee

Neither the director of the State Museum nor the chairman of the Society's Museum Development Committee shall be chairman of the Conference Committee.

All expenses incurred by members of this Committee in attending planning meetings shall be borne by the delegate's own institution.

Location of the Conference

Accept invitations each year for 2 years hence - this to go to Board of Directors for approval.

Cities should have substantial museum interest and some sessions held at museum if possible and utilize exhibits to emphasize points.

Planning the Conference

Chairman to call meeting at a central place.

Decide dates, headquarters, facilities, recreational facilities, registration areas, exhibits or space.

Conference scope or theme, possible speakers, topics, leaders, breaks, main dinner, etc.

Program and publicity

Program printed early and sent to all members, registration forms, press releases, consider TV.

Newsletter shall carry information of summary in subsequent newsletter.

Local arrangements

Even with a set of written guidelines, however, planning remained relatively informal. I recall Solan Weeks calling some of us in the museum field during the early and mid 1960's and suggesting we get together to formulate plans for another Museums Conference. It was relatively simple yet, it worked.

CHAPTER 3

Crisis Brings Change

The Conferences were held each year until 1969 when Alpena was to have been the host city. Due to problems at the Jesse Besser Museum, including the departure of its director, the Committee had to cancel the plans and there was not time to reschedule another city on short notice.

The summer came and departed, and many of us accustomed to the annual gathering of the clan were disappointed. Not only were the sessions profitable but it was a great time to see our peers as well as exchange ideas in a pleasant location.

On September 26, 1969, I wrote a letter to Executive Director Herb Brinks of the Historical Society of Michigan, and voiced my disappointment about the turn of events. Experience had shown me that oftentimes when an organization stumbles it is difficult to rise to the occasion and continue on by reorganization. I noted that I had worked the past three years on the planning committee and did not wish to see so many people's efforts become simply memories. I also said that the Annual Meetings were opportunities for the profession to exchange views and work for the mutual good.

In the letter I requested that Brinks call a special meeting in the very near future to discuss revitalization and review the objectives of the Michigan Museums Conference. I indicated that I would be glad to help in any way possible and that other people would, too. I offered to send him a list of museum personnel to contact for such a meeting. A copy of the letter was sent to Alexis A. Praus, director of the Kalamazoo Public Museum.

Herb Brinks responded to my letter shortly thereafter and indicated he would be pleased to cooperate.

We arranged for a luncheon meeting at the Canopy Restaurant in Brighton on November 17, 1969. It was a very pleasant meeting. I recall thanking Herb Brinks for arranging this under the auspices of the Historical Society of Michigan as well as the other people who took the time to participate.

Much discussion followed but the key point was that all those present were in agreement that we should go forward in 1970 with the 18th Annual Meeting of the Michigan Museums Conference. We agreed that Dearborn/Detroit would be the location of the June 25-27 meeting. When asked, I agreed to serve as the Conference Chairman. Attending were Alexis Praus (Kalamazoo), Robert Bowen (Cranbrook), Roger Van Bolt (Flint), Lois Lance (Troy), Frank Kreglow (Troy), Herb Brinks (Ann Arbor), Harry Kelsey (Lansing) and Winfield H. Arneson (Dearborn).

Related discussion included the following points:

- + Suggestion was made that perhaps goals for future conferences be broadened to cover and to invite all types of legitimate museums: Science - art - history - and special institutions may be included.
- + Consider possibility of concurrent sessions in order to accommodate a more diverse agenda of interest to more museum personnel.
- + Herb Brinks tentatively agreed the Historical Society would assume responsibility for the Conference with help from various museums in the state. The Historical Society would provide mailing lists.
- + It was agreed that another meeting should be held in the near future to plan a conference for 1970.

That meeting was held December 8, 1969, at MSU's Kellogg Center. Our agenda included the following:

- + Consider revisions to the Historical Society of Michigan "Museums Conference Planning Manual of 1963"
- + Consider a stimulating program keeping in mind both small fledgling museums and established larger institutions.
- + Consider 2 1/2 day session.
- + Consider a Conference theme.
- + Consider location for Conference.

We were off to a good start planning another meeting!

As a somewhat personal note on this meeting, Henry Brown, director of the Detroit Historical Museum and I drove to East Lansing in his car. We had a delightful chat both riding to the meeting and during the return trip to Detroit. I learned much about the museum world from Henry that day. I'll always cherish that trip with him. He died about two months later on February 2, 1970. After his death, we still were able to go ahead with the meeting as Margot Pearsall said, "we will certainly go ahead as planned as Henry would want it to be that way." (Note: Solan Weeks returned from his only out-of-state job, a position at Sturbridge Village, to fill the position of director of the Detroit Historical Museum in the fall of 1970.)

CHAPTER 4

A New Beginning

The discussion and organizational soul-searching that followed cancellation of the 1969 meeting led not only to a revival/continuance of the Annual Conference, but to the decision to explore establishment of a Museums Association separate from the Historical Society of Michigan. A Steering Committee was selected in late 1970 and held its first meeting on February 16, 1971, at the Ella Sharp Museum.

Over the next few months both a constitution for a new organization and another annual conference - the last of the Michigan Museums Conferences as it turned out - took shape.

The opening session of the 1971 conference was a presentation of the proposed constitution and by-laws that would establish the Michigan Museums Association. James Marler and I discussed the proposals in some detail so that those present could make an informed choice when the constitution and by-laws were voted upon two days later.

On June 23, 1971, at Win Shuler's Country Inn, conference delegates overwhelmingly approved the establishment of the Michigan Museums Association. In addition to approving the Constitution and by-laws, those present elected officers and a board of directors, approved the establishment of a quarterly publication (The Michigan Museums Review) and the Association's involvement in activities beyond the Annual Conference, such as workshops, consultation services, the pursuit of grants and more.

Thus was the transition made from a loosely knit group of museum personnel, mostly history oriented, to a formally organized and inclusive statewide museums association.

CHAPTER 5

Members' Reflections

Before I wrote this history, I contacted various people as to their afterthoughts on the development of the Michigan Museums Association. Here are some of their words of wisdom.

Robert N. Bowen

First impressions are sometimes unusually strong. And so it was with my first contact with the Michigan Museums Conference, the predecessor to our present Michigan Museums Association. Professionally, I was a newcomer, returning to my home state of Michigan after eight years in the Hawaiian Islands with the Bishop Museum. One of my first duties as the new assistant director of Cranbrook Institute of Science was to attend a meeting of key state museum professionals on November 17, 1969. Brighton was chosen for the meeting because of its central location. Of the eight people assembled at the Canopy Restaurant, I knew no one. Nearly everyone else was well acquainted. They talked freely and casually, catching up on the latest personal and professional news. Soon I would come to know them well: Win Arneson, Henry Brown, Alexis Praus, Roger Van Bolt, and others.

The subject of the meeting was introduced and an air of seriousness settled on the group. This was the picture. The Michigan Museums Conference, an informal annual gathering of museum professionals, had been held each year for the past 19 years. These conferences had given museum people from throughout the state an opportunity to greet and meet old and new colleagues, exchange museum news, share information about programs, exhibits, and collections, and generally up-date one another professionally...and have an enjoyable time doing so. For a variety of reasons, during the year 1969, no conference had been held. Planning had collapsed and no one gathered. Around the table in Brighton there was a tone of general alarm as first one, then another, shared concerns that, should another year go by in the same manner, the conference might well come to an end. All felt it was a tradition worth continuing, a tradition which had contributed significantly to the improvement of both people and institutions.

Comment followed comment, and it became clear to those present, if not immediately to me, that one of the most effective ways of assuring continuity was to go one step further and formalize the gathering, legally establishing ingingingthrough incorporation a new state association with an annual conference as one of its principal missions. The goal was clear, and we left Brighton in a spirit of optimism.

Other meetings followed, and one year later a constitution and bylaws had been drafted. These were submitted to a large group of museum professionals assembled at the Ella Sharp Museum in Jackson on June 23, 1971. The documents were approved and the Michigan Museums Association was born. The election of officers followed and I became the first president. For me this was both an honor and a delight, which I continue to look back upon with great pleasure. Few professional associations can boast a 20-year record of achievement prior to their founding. What an incredible foundation we had to build upon. And build we did. The new association moved forward boldly, and so it has done ever since.

As the years have passed I have taken ever increasing pride in this fine organization. From 1978 to 1984, as a member of the seven-person Accreditation Commission of the American Association of Museums, I had the opportunity to meet with other state associations from coast to coast. During these meetings I consistently emphasized the extremely important role state associations play in the national picture. More often than not, the Michigan Museums Association served as my model, since it was and continues to be, one of the strongest museum associations in the United States. A tradition of excellence was set in motion in 1952, formalized to provide increased momentum in 1971, and now, sixteen years later, nobly continues its special mission as a forum for quality, both for all of us as museum professionals and the museums we represent.

Dr. Roger Van Bolt

The original concept for a Michigan Museums Conference in the early fifties was on target. It was history oriented and meant to appeal to the small, emerging museums. It seems to me that it was all part of a growing interest in local history which occurred nationally. Even the AASLH (American Association for State and Local History) was a very small organization made up for the most part of state historical society directors. But they all seemed to be aware of the need to broaden their programs.

As I think back upon some of the early participants of the museums conference, it was an interesting group. Few, if any, were trained museum personnel. Several had been volunteers who were offered a job. Others had been teachers. Their background for the most part was academic in nature. There was a newspaper person or two. But they were anxious to learn. The literature was rather scant as far as historical museums were concerned. The AAM (American Association of Museums) was oriented pretty much to art.

In a nutshell, there weren't too many avenues open to those in historical museums to gain knowledge. Consequently, the idea of a meeting of historical museum people found a ready market.

But there was more. There was Henry Brown. He provided leadership and those on his staff were also committed. Margot Pearsall, Glenn Stille, Robert E. Lee, Solan Weeks, and others were active from the outset of the Michigan Museums Conference. Henry always had an idea. I remember that he wanted us to trade items from the collection. He felt we all had material that should be somewhere else. He always wanted his staff to be helpful to others.

The first conferences were rather informal. There were no officers as such. There was instead a chairman and a committee. It seemed to me that the important thing was to go somewhere in the state and see what someone else was doing. There were so many museums that were in their initial state of organization. At times, it was almost like an on-site inspection.

...The organization grew slowly but surely. There was an increase in membership. The meetings were more expansive. Friendships developed. A few art museums and natural history museums were represented. And, of course, there were new museums in the state. And equally important was the fact that museum staffs were increasing in number. The result was larger meetings.

...I think that the coming of Solan Weeks to Lansing was rather important. Solan ...considered the (State) Historical Commission to have the responsibility of drawing all the state historical museums together. He made every effort to learn about every museum. On vacations, he would visit museums and photograph buildings and exhibits. During the time he was in Lansing, he was a tireless worker.



The MMA Board of Directors met March 15, 1972 to discuss plan for that year's annual meeting at Mackinac Island. Pictured left to right: Winfield H. Arneson, Dearborn Historical Museum; Diane Worden, Kalamazoo Nature Center; Dr. David A. Armour, Mackinac Island State Park Commission; Robert N. Bowen, Cranbrook Institute of Science; Dr. Harold D. Mahan; Richard A. Pohrt, Great Lakes Indian Museum; Kathryn Cummins, Midland County Historical Museum; Fred A. Myers, Grand Rapids Art Museum; William E. Story, Ella Sharp Museum; Millie Hadwin, Ella Sharp Museum; Norma E. Raby, Grand Rapids Public Museum; Jane Bricker (guest), Center for Cultural and Natural History; Virginia S. Stroemel, Manistee County Historical Museum; and James D. Marler, Grand Rapids Public Museum.



Conference attendees posed in front of the Krasl Art Center at the 1984 Annual Conference in St. Joseph.



For many years the MMA mascot was a rubber chicken. During the 1985 Annual Conference in Flint, this monkey mascot was unveiled. As the first recipient of the "Monkey Off Your Back" award, out-going president Carl Hansen became the custodian of the creature for one year.

QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE MICHIGAN MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION

 MICHIGAN MUSEUMS REVIEW

Volume 5, Number 3-4 Summer-Autumn, 1976

AMERICA'S

BICENTENNIAL

1776  1976

200 YEARS OF FREEDOM

Cover of the Bicentennial issue of the Michigan Museum Review.



MMA members Jim Schultz, Michigan Historical Museum; Chuck Hoover, Saginaw County Historical Museum; and Lynn Fauver, Center for Cultural and Natural History chat following the October 1986 workshop "Six Ps in a Pod."



Left: Original logo of the Michigan Museums Association. It depicts one of the Sanilac Petroglyphs near Case City, Michigan. It was selected because it reflected the various types of museums comprising the Association. This emblem represents science, history, art, general museums, children's museums, zoos, aquariums, planetariums and nature centers.

Below: Modern logos have been used in recent years.



William E. Story

I do remember an air of excitement over the reorganization and a general dedication on the part of the conferees, to vigorously support the new organization. Participation by the greatest possible number of institutions was a goal of the conference committee.

Therefore, in the programs planned the committee endeavored to cover a variety of topics and range of interest with an emphasis on group discussion and the sharing of ideas broadly relating to all types of museums. Programs were planned which would also be of interest to board members, volunteers and anyone interested in museums...

Everyone seemed to have a good time and there were a lot of ideas exchanged. I think people left with a buoyant determination to work hard for the new organization, which was aimed at improving Michigan's museums through mutual understanding and help. That spirit of friendship and helpfulness seems to have had a lasting effect on all the conferences which followed.

Since 1971: Meeting the Needs of Michigan's Museum Profession

The period immediately following the establishment of the Michigan Museums Association in 1971 was one of some adjustment. The board of directors, under the leadership of Presidents Robert Bowen and Norma Raby, worked to get the organization running smoothly. Changes were made to meet the needs and wishes of the membership. A monthly newsletter was begun in 1974 and provision was made for honorary members and other awards.

The MMA undertook its first special project as its commemoration of the Bicentennial of American independence. The association published a booklet listing museum resources for ethnic and minority history around the state. Another proposed Bicentennial project, for a field representative who could travel around the state assisting local museums, failed for lack of funding.

The late 1970s and early 1980s saw a considerable expansion in the MMA's programs. Under President Dar Davis much thought was given to services the MMA could or should provide. The board concluded that these services could best be offered through an executive director and clerical staff. Funding was arranged through the National Endowment for the Arts and the Michigan Council for the Arts.

The MMA newsletter advertised the position in September, 1978. Candidates were interviewed in November and Dolores Slowinski started work as executive director in January, 1979. Having previously been the MCA's museums coordinator, Ms. Slowinski was already familiar with many aspects of Michigan's museum community.

Working out of an office at the Detroit Institute of Arts, she travelled to museums around the state as a consultant. During her tenure a series of regional P.A.R.T.Y.'s (Proliferation of Answers, Resources, Techniques and Yarns) was begun. The number of workshops offered each year was increased.

In 1980 the scholarship program for Annual Conferences was broadened to include volunteer museum directors, a category which was eventually revised to include all museum volunteers. That year the board of directors held a retreat to take a look at how the MMA had developed since 1971. As a result, they recommended changes in the association's by-laws and internal organization to better coordinate its expanded programs.

By 1981, a changing financial picture, particularly with regard to federal grants, had caught up with the Michigan Museums Association. National Endowment for the Arts support for state museum coordinators was ending and the amount available from MCA was limited. Other funding would have to be found if the MMA were to continue to support the full-time services of an executive director and the office at the DIA.

Membership dues had already been raised significantly, from \$5 per year for individuals to their current \$20/\$25 level, with corresponding increases in institutional rates. When additional monies could not be found, the executive director submitted her resignation, and the position was eliminated by the board of directors.

Over the next few months the board of directors, led by President Michael J. Smith, formulated ways in which duties formerly carried out by the executive director could be handled by board members. In the end, all of the MMA's programs were continued, the only exception being the executive director's consultant function. With the elimination of the financial burden of staff and office support, the Association found itself well able to fund its programs. Before long it was able to undertake a special project in the form of an updated locator guide to Michigan museums.

After years of keeping membership records manually, an agreement was reached in 1983 with the Historical Society of Michigan to piggyback on their computer system. In 1985 these records were moved to the Sloan Museum in Flint.

The MMA in 1983 paid tribute to two members who had been active in the museum community since the days of the Michigan Museums Conference. Norma Raby, who served as the MMA's first secretary and second president, had died in September 1981. The board decided to honor her memory by creating the Norma Raby Award for Exceptional Achievement in Museum Education. Its first recipient, in June of 1983, was her friend and colleague Solan Weeks.

The Michigan Museums Association itself won an award in 1984. The American Association for State and Local History presented its Certificate of Commendation to the MMA for 32 years of service to Michigan museums and historical societies. As those in the history field are aware, such recognition is not bestowed lightly. This is an award of which all who have contributed to MMA over the years can be proud.

Throughout the first half of the eighties the MMA continued to offer a variety of topical workshops and regional meetings (the revised designation of P.A.R.T.Y.'s) and the Annual Conference. The newsletter became a more professional looking, typeset publication. Two special projects were carried out in 1985. Board member Michael Janis surveyed Michigan museums for information on salaries paid their staffs. The results were published in a booklet distributed to all MMA members. Revisions were completed on the museum locator guide, which was then published in an expanded edition with assistance from the Michigan Travel Bureau (see chapter 7).

The presidency of Phil Kwiatkowski began in 1985 with the MMA secure in its ability to support and maintain a variety of programs. The board, however, also perceived a need to look more closely at both current and future needs and resources. Some of this was prompted by the need to fulfill MCA requirements for long range planning.

The board decided to hold a two-day retreat in March, 1985, to allow time to discuss issues in some detail. Services to members and the public were the primary focus of the meeting. A general question-raising session was followed by small group brainstorming sessions. Finally, the full board reconvened to agree on general goals and objectives.

Some of the recommended changes have been seen by the membership in the past year. The new logo and format for the newsletter have certainly been noticed. A change in workshop presentations, from several small events to two larger gatherings each year has also been made.

Expansion of the MMA's public awareness and advocacy roles, has required more groundwork than the other changes. At the same time, these activities have a greater potential to bring real changes to the Michigan museum community and to MMA's role within that community. The institution of Michigan Museums Week in 1986 and the coordination of advertising by museums in The Christian Science Monitor's special Michigan insert in April, 1987, are only the first evidence of activity in this area.

MMA Publications

Those who worked for the reorganization of the Michigan Museums Conference into today's Michigan Museums Association realized that the new association would have to keep in touch with its members. They planned to do this through a quarterly journal, which would include news items as well as scholarly articles representing all museum disciplines and other items of interest.

This writer had the privilege of being the first editor of the Michigan Museums Review. The very first issue was published early in 1972. It was published for six years, through the autumn of 1977.

We began publishing with high expectations but there were several problems associated with this operation. Committed articles came very late for a scheduled publication date or never at all. Also, news items which were good and were incorporated in a particular issue oftentimes were beyond their current value to the membership at large.

It may interest some newer members to know how we published it and still had dues of only \$3.00 a year. All information for the Review came to the Dearborn Historical Museum where it was typed in a standard format. I would take the completed material to Robert Bowen at Cranbrook Institute of Science. He in turn had it printed at the Cranbrook Press in offset form at a reasonable price. In this way costs were kept to a minimum, as the printing was the main expenditure.

The printed issues of Review were sent to the Detroit Historical Museum where Margot Pearsall handled the mailing procedures.

This arrangement continued until Frank E. Walsh became editor of the Review with the Summer-Fall 1975 issue. Frank also had trouble procuring subject matter for his deadlines. Since he was located on the western side of the state, in Hastings, he arranged for printing to be done locally.

The last official action regarding the Review was a valuable service provided by Diane D. Worden of Kalamazoo. She prepared a 6-year Cumulative Index, which was sent to all members.

Some mention should be made of the contents of the Review. Material published in the quarterly included: scholarly articles about timely topics, exhibits: tips - techniques - ideas, a swap shop, book reviews, educational ideas, technical thoughts, youth, publications in museums, volunteers, new personnel, retirement, positions open, obituaries, upcoming meetings/conferences, etc.

The MMA newsletter came into being as a result of the problem encountered by the quarterly in publishing news items in a timely manner. In September of 1974 the Monthly Alert began as a one page information sheet, edited by Phil Kwiatkowski. It was published ten times a year. The Monthly Alert expanded beyond a single page as more and more subject matter was submitted.

Beatrice Parsons took over the Monthly Alert assignment in February of 1977. Bea expanded the Newsletter and faithfully kept fresh information in the hands of the membership.

The name of the newsletter became the Michigan Museums Association Newsletter in May, 1977. Bea Parsons resigned as editor in June, 1980. Linda Downs served as interim editor until the appointment of Yolanda Alcorta that September. A new format was established with attractive professional typeset. Susan Shaffer served as editor from June, 1981 to November, 1982. Maria Quinlan Leiby agreed to edit the remaining issue of 1982, after which Nancy Powell assumed the responsibilities for 1983. Sandra J. Houston has been editor since January of 1984.

Publishing a newsletter and meeting all of the deadlines and frustrations which go with such a task is not an easy job. We acknowledge the efforts of all these editors. The newsletter is one of the reasons our Michigan Museums Association has been a success and why the organization is admired by other state museums associations.

A third publication of the MMA has been intended to communicate with the public rather than with the association's membership.

In 1977 a guide to Michigan Museums was published by the Michigan Council for the Arts (MCA) with funding from the Michigan Chapter of AAA. The guide was prepared by Dolores Slowinski in her capacity as the MCA's Museums Coordinator. The MMA played an active role in the project, helping to gather the detailed information needed on locations, hours and admission fees of museums in the state.

Several years later in 1982-3, the MMA undertook to put out a revised and updated edition. Money from the Association's operating support grant from MCA was used to finance the project.

The format of the guide changed from a booklet to a poster-sized sheet of glossy paper with a map on one side and the listing of museums on the other.

The map/poster format was maintained in another revision done in 1985. The map became more detailed and the accuracy of the printed material on the back was double-checked. Funding was secured from the Michigan Department of Commerce's Travel Bureau to enable an expanded press run of 105,000 copies.

The state's Sesquicentennial celebration in 1987 has generated considerable demand for the guides, which have been distributed by the Travel Bureau as well as by the MMA.

CHAPTER 8

Annual Meetings in Review

For thirty-five years an annual gathering has brought together museum people in Michigan. During that time they have learned from each other, shared successes and failures, and simply enjoyed each other's company.

Although the Michigan Museums Association today is much more than its Annual Conference, the yearly meeting remains one of its most important programs. It is where new members first become acquainted with colleagues from around the state and where the organization finds new volunteers to carry out other programs.

Because of this long standing significance, a review of the entire thirty-five year history seems in order.

The first Michigan Museums Conference was a relatively simple affair. Registration for the two-day meeting was \$1.00. Rooms at the Hotel Harris in Kalamazoo averaged \$5.00 per night. The program included topics such as Record Keeping, Exhibits and Public Relations for Historical Museums, and concluded with a tour of the host institution, the Kalamazoo Public Museum. (see Appendix 2 for the full program)

The following year's meeting on Mackinac Island was even more ambitious. Fourteen different sessions, including four dealing with some aspect of funding, two with education-related themes, one discussing collections, and one for administrators. Those attending paid \$3.50 per night at the Island House or splurged on a lake front room at \$4.50! Registration was again \$1.00; the group meals were a \$.50 breakfast fry-out (at 7:30 am) and a \$4.50 dinner at the Grand Hotel.

And so it goes. In 1959 the conference had the first printed program and designated general chairman. In 1961 and 1968 the Michigan Museums Conference was held jointly with other meetings: in the former year the Midwest Museums Conference; in the latter, the Historical Society of Michigan.

Those who attended over any number of years became observers of the evolution of Michigan Museums. They saw Fort Michilimackinac before any reconstruction was done; they watched Flint's Cultural Center develop; they have seen work progress on any number of historical houses.

Naturally, prices rose as the years went by. By 1964, the registration fee had doubled to \$2.00, and an additional dollar was charged for late registrants. Registration for the last Michigan Museums Conference in 1971 was \$7.00, with a \$3.00 late fee.

The following year, the twentieth conference, but the first under the Michigan Museums Association auspices, was held on Mackinac Island. Accommodation prices had escalated somewhat since the 1953 meeting. Rooms on the American plan ranged from \$18.00 to \$38.00 per person. Registration costs were somewhat lower, however, reflecting the fact that the organization now had a dues-paying membership. In fact, the sign-up period for charter memberships was extended thru April, 1972, to encourage a larger number of people to join (at a rate of \$3.00 annually). Members paid \$4.00 to register for this Mackinac Island conference; non-members paid \$7.00. The late fee was \$3.00 for both categories.

The conference held in Flint in 1975 saw a major increase of the registration fee, although the \$40.00 paid by members also included all group meals. Fees have remained in the \$30.00 to \$40.00 range since that time. Registration no longer covers group meals, however.

"The more things change, the more they stay the same." This saying can be applied with considerable truthfulness to a survey of annual conference session topics over the years. Fund raising and making the most of available dollars have been discussed almost continuously for thirty-five years. Starting with "Cutting Costs in Your Museum" (1953) and "A Museum on a Shoe String" (1955) through "Busting Loose the Local Bucks" (1962) and "Inexpensive Exhibit Techniques" (1966), money has always been a hot topic. By 1971, conferees were discussing the "Economic Potential of Historic Preservation", while in 1979 it was a look at the future with "1984: Meeting the Needs of Michigan Museums through Government and Private Funding Sources."

Another perennially popular subject has been volunteers: getting them, keeping them, making the most of them. Whether they are called "Guides without Wages" (1959) or "Non-Salaried Personnel" (1965) or straightforwardly "Volunteers" (1971, 1973, 1974, 1977, 1984 to name a few), they are important to all types of museums.

Although museum education has only recently emerged as a sub-specialty within the profession, museums in Michigan have long been aware of their educational mission, and this has been reflected in conference session topics beginning in Kalamazoo in 1952. As early as 1959 Norma Raby presented a session on "Treasures Which Can Be Borrowed", discussing loan kits for schools, one of many ideas whose variations are still popular.

Collections and exhibits of course also appear on programs over the years, although with less regularity than one might expect. After the inaugural conference in Kalamazoo, it was a decade before museum collections were again discussed in terms of policies and procedures. Exhibits sessions appear on conference programs most often when the meeting was being held at an institution which had a staff member skilled in some particular aspect of exhibit production. For example, the 1966 conference took full advantage of Cranbrook's staff and facilities, with several sessions on the theoretical and practical aspects of museum exhibits. It should also be noted that this conference, in both program and participants, reflects the growing involvement of museum professionals outside the area of history.

Over the years annual conferences have also sometimes featured sessions which sound startlingly contemporary today. In 1957, Alexis Praus addressed his colleagues in Dearborn on the subject of "Statewide Acquisition Planning". The 1961 conference, meeting jointly with the Midwest Museums Conference, heard Governor John Swainson discuss "The Importance of Museums to Tourism and the Importance of Tourism to Michigan's Economy."

Looking back, there are sessions that sound almost scary to today's curators and others whose actual content remains a puzzle. "Good Housekeeping in a Museum - or the Art of Throwing Away" (1953) and "Things You Might Have and What to do with Them" (1968) are two such sessions.

Finally, there have been some additions to the list of topics discussed. Museum security did not rate its own session until 1970, but has been on the agenda several times since. Exhibit evaluation (1980) and computers (1981) are also newcomers to conference programs. And I'd rather not think about what it means for our profession that after three decades, the topic of dealing with stress suddenly appears twice within three years!

CONCLUSION

It is clear that the history of the Michigan Museums Association is far from finished. The plans and changes that have come out of the board's 1985 retreat bear witness to that. The enthusiasm of members organizing and participating in workshops, conferences and public awareness projects also testifies to the MMA's continuing vitality.

As the MMA celebrates the 35th anniversary of Michigan museum people joining together for mutual support, we are proud to be looking to the future for new ways to serve the state's museum community.

Appendix 1

Annual Meeting Locations

1952 - 1987

1952 - Kalamazoo	1970 - Dearborn/Detroit
1953 - Mackinac Island	#1971 - Jackson
1954 - Monroe	1972 - Mackinac Island
1955 - Manistee	1973 - Midland
1956 - Grand Rapids	1974 - Battle Creek
1957 - Dearborn	1975 - Flint
1958 - Ann Arbor	1976 - Detroit
1959 - Muskegon	1977 - Alpena
1960 - Mackinaw Island/City	1978 - East Lansing
*1961 - East Lansing	1979 - Muskegon
1962 - Harbor Springs	1980 - Monroe
1963 - Holland	1981 - Kalamazoo
1964 - Grand Rapids	1982 - Bellaire
1965 - Manistee	1983 - Midland
1966 - Bloomfield Hills	1984 - St. Joseph
1967 - Flint	1985 - Flint
X1968 - Kalamazoo	1986 - Alpena
1969 - Meeting Cancelled	1987 - Muskegon

*Meeting held jointly with the Midwest Museums Conference

XMeeting held jointly with the Historical Society of Michigan

#Reorganization meeting: Michigan Museums Conference becomes the Michigan Museums Association

Appendix 2

Michigan Museums Conference - Kalamazoo, 1952

Friday Afternoon, July 11

Methods of Museum Record Keeping

Chairman: Dorothy Barnard, Lansing
 Howell Taylor, Ann Arbor
 Marion Taepke, Dearborn
 Barbara Ufford, Detroit
 Elizabeth Wathen, Muskegon
 Alexis Praus, Kalamazoo
 Merle G. Perry, Flint

Public Relations For The Historic Museum

Chairman: Lewis Beeson, Lansing
 Willis Dunbar, Kalamazoo
 Mrs. C. P. Boyer, Detroit
 Willard Wichers, Holland
 Hayward S. Ablewhite, Dearborn
 Mrs. Harold Manley, Flint
 Representative of the Ft. St. Joseph Historical Museum

Preparation of Exhibits for Small Historical Museums

Chairman: Bartlett Frost, Detroit
 Robert Bauman, Dearborn
 Florence Kirtland, Monroe
 J. C. Sherman, Lansing
 Charles M. Barber, Flint

Friday Evening, July 11

Purpose and Function of Historical Museums

Chairman : Alexis Praus, Kalamazoo
 Frank Dumond, Grand Rapids
 J. C. Sherman, Lansing
 Willard Wichers, Holland
 Lewis Beeson, Lansing

Saturday Morning, July 12

Historic Houses and Buildings

Chairman: Emil Lorch, Ann Arbor
 Bartlett Frost, Detroit
 Charles Barber, Flint
 Eugene Atkinson, Whitehall
 Hayward S. Ablewhite, Dearborn
 Representative of Christ Church, Sibley House, Detroit

Acquisition Policies and Special Interest Collections

Chairman: Robert Bauman, Dearborn
 Lawrence Frost, Monroe
 Florence Kirtland, Monroe
 Margot Pearsall, Detroit
 J. C. Sherman, Lansing
 Willard Wichers, Holland
 Representative of Ft. St. Joseph Historical Museum

Chairman: Vernon Damoron, Dearborn
 Dorothy Barnard, Lansing
 Mrs. C. P. Boyer, Detroit
 Ruth Howard, Kalamazoo
 Elizabeth Wathen, Muskegon
 Alexis Praus, Kalamazoo

Tour of the Kalamazoo Public Museum

I consider this a significant list as it represents the people who served the needs of the museum profession in a pioneering way. This was the spark which led to the fine organization we have today.

Since I attended my first meeting of the Michigan Museums Conference in 1961, I have had the privilege of working with some of these people through subsequent years. It was certainly a pleasure, as I prepared this history, to reflect on the names of people I learned to know and respect.

Officers and Board Members Elected in Jackson, 1971

OFFICERS

President: Robert N. Bowen, Cranbrook Institute of Science

Vice President: William E. Story, Ella Sharp Museum

Secretary: Norma E. Raby, Grand Rapids Public Museum

Treasurer: Margot Pearsall, Detroit Historical Museum

Science Museums

Richard A. Pohrt, Great Lakes Indian Museum

Roger Van Bolt, Sloan Museum

General Museums

James D. Marler, Grand Rapids Public Museum

Nicholas Dana, Children's Museum, Detroit

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Art Museums

William A. Bostick, Detroit Institute of Arts

Fred A. Myers, Grand Rapids Art Museum

History Museums

Virginia S. Stroemel, Manistee County Historical Museum

David A. Armour, Mackinac Island St. Park Commission

Nature Museums

Diane Worden, Kalamazoo Nature Center

Mary C. Ellsworth, Nankin Mills Nature Center

Standing Committees

Annual Meeting Chairman: David A. Armour, Mackinac Island St. Park Commission

Nominations Committee Chairman: Alexis A. Praus, Kalamazoo Public Museum

Resolutions Committee Chairman: Harold D. Mahan, Center for Cultural & Natural History

Michigan Museums Review Editor: Winfield H. Arneson, Dearborn Historical Museum

Appendix 4

Presidents of the Michigan Museums Association

1971-73 Robert N. Bowen, Cranbrook Institute of Science

1973-75 Norma E. Raby, Grand Rapids Public Museum

1975-77 David T. Glick, Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village

1977-79 Darwin R. Davis, Battle Creek Civic Art Center

1979-81 Lynn N. Fauver, Center for Cultural & Natural History

*1981-83 Michael J. Smith, Michigan Historical Museum

1983-85 Carl R. Hansen, Frankenmuth Historical Museum

1985-87 Phillip C. Kwiatkowski, Sloan Museum

*Smith resigned his post March 15, 1983, 3 months before his second term expired, to accept the Directorship of the Putnam Museum in Davenport, Iowa. Vice-President Carl R. Hansen filled the unexpired term.