



City of Arts & Innovation

**Public Comment for June 14, 2017
Metropolitan Museum Board Meeting
Prepared at 3 p.m. on June 14, 2017**

Item	Name	Neighborhood	Position	Comments
2. Need to shutter the Museum for three years to reorganize, re-tool and re-train staff focus on the Harada House, begin full collections inventory, and plan and construct main building renovation and possible expansion.	Benjamin Jenkins		Oppose	<p>As archivist and professor of history at a local university, I urge you to keep the archives open and maintain Kevin Hallaran as the archivist. Having used RMM, I can professionally testify that they are a priceless public resource. More, Kevin Hallaran is a wonderful public asset. When I interned at the Riverside Metropolitan Museum, I saw Kevin service researchers and members of the city council at public meetings. As a fellow archivist, I can say that Kevin Hallaran is the professional model to which all archivists aspire.</p> <p>Backlog is common at museums. Patrons often donate new collections, expanding the backlog. Carrying out other tasks minimizes archivists' ability to catalog unprocessed collections. Closing the museum to process collections will not permanently remove the backlog, but simply render the museum inaccessible to patrons. More importantly, terminating a professionally skilled archivist will complicate the museum's ability to professionally catalog its collections.</p>
2. Need to shutter the Museum for three years to reorganize, re-tool and re-train staff focus on the Harada House, begin full collections inventory, and plan and construct main building renovation and possible expansion.	Carol McDaniel		Oppose	<p>Closing the museum is unnecessary and will impede accreditation. None of the 60 recommendations from MMC, AAM & the assistant city manager report requires closure. 20 of the recommendations cannot be addressed without active programs. All recommendations can only be addressed with a qualified director. Focus needs to be on hiring a director to address the recommendations. No well-qualified director will want to lead a closed museum. If we want to attract talent we need a program that is operating. 16 weeks is not too long to take to hire a director.</p> <p>This closure is not recommended by a museum professional, but by an acting director with insufficient qualifications to assess programs and staffing.</p> <p>The statement that the report holds no fiscal impact and that impacts will be disclosed as they arrive is inadequate.</p> <p>Closing the museum is not necessary and will have long-term detrimental impact on the community. The board cannot accept this report nor forward it to council for approval.</p>



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2. Need to shutter the Museum for three years to reorganize, re-tool and re-train staff focus on the Harada House, begin full collections inventory, and plan and construct main building renovation and possible expansion.	Frances Vasquez	Arlington South	Oppose	<p>We, the people want our Museum open to the public, at least until construction begins to mitigate substandard storage conditions. The Accreditation commission rightfully stated that "The solution lies with the political leadership." And, "On average, 30 percent of all museums are tabled at each commission meeting." RMM issues can be resolved without drastic measures proposed by management. The City needs to hire a museum professional to lead the inventory of collections and address issues identified by AAMA Commission. They lauded RMM core standards of excellence. The commission never recommend a 3-year closure.</p> <p>Shuttering the museum for such a long time deprives the community of a unique asset. Closing the archives and laying off the archivist sends a negative message about the City's priorities and interests. Page 8 of the AAMAC letter cited the City's error in making RMM use its endowment fund... and eroded donor confidence. Let us learn from history. Please, NO shuttering!</p>
2. Need to shutter the Museum for three years to reorganize, re-tool and re-train staff focus on the Harada House, begin full collections inventory, and plan and construct main building renovation and possible expansion.	Robin Whittington	Outside City Limits	Neutral	<p>I support a plan that keeps the Museum open at least several days a week. We know they are not going to be breaking ground in the next 90 days for renovation. So, without a clear, precise plan, why not stay visible to the public?</p> <p>I find disturbing report language that uses management problems as reasons to close the Museum. Reports not filed? Letters not written? Who was in charge? These are easy fixes and should not require closing. Retraining staff (stuck in silos)? How insulting. No one has pointed out that the way things have been structured and operated is not the fault of individuals but rather management decisions. We have a curatorial staff that has a long history of working miracles with little and would really blossom if given the opportunity to pursue ideas they have. When there is a blessed and delineated plan and direction, whether it is for exhibits, for events, or for the structure itself, all the Museum staff will be happy to be fully engaged.</p>
2. Need to shutter the Museum for three years to reorganize, re-tool and re-train staff focus on the Harada House, begin full collections inventory, and plan and construct main building renovation and possible expansion.	Katherine Wilson		Oppose	<p>I do not support the closing of the Museum in the near future to tackle the huge list of needs as identified in the Museum Board Memorandum because I don't see the necessity of it. I do see the necessity of scaling down certain Museum activities and possibly the hours open to the public. The damage done to the reputation of the Museum from a 2 or 3 year complete closure, and the lack of a communication plan to deal with this possible change will result in more harm than good. I don't think the "shuttering" process and its effects has been thought through. Also, as a volunteer for nearly 20 years and a freelance contractor, I feel slighted that the longtime support group, the RMA, has not been brought into the formal discussion. Also, these proposed moves will jeopardize the ability to save the Harada House, which could become a nationally recognized feature for the city if the public understands its value and the City supports the process.</p>

To: Riverside Metropolitan Museum Board

From: Venita Jorgensen
Former RMM Board Member and Chair
4435 Mission Inn Avenue
Riverside, CA 92501

Re: Discussion of Three Year Closing Plan

As a former Board member I offer my empathy. Totally closing public access to Riverside's public museum for a multi-year period is a serious denial of a service for which the public has already paid. It is a drastic and possibly fatal response to the accreditation report. Other alternatives do not appear to have been examined. For example, the suggestion of closing a few days a week while remaining open the rest of the week is not considered. You have a heavy responsibility to consider this plan in a serious and deliberate manner. What I can offer is historical context.

Shortly after I joined the Board the then City Manager, Brad Hudson, arrived at one of our meetings with his Assistant City Manager, Tom De Santis to announce that our director had been "retired." No satisfactory explanation has ever been publically given for this decision. With the City Manager was his chosen selection for the position, Ennette Morton. She was an assistant of his. At first she was Interim Director and later made permanent. As an individual I protested the process used in the removal of the Museum Director and the appointment of the Interim Director to my councilman and the mayor. In the event I worked harmoniously with Director Morton.

Several positive developments occurred during Director Morton's tenure. The Museum building was repaired. Its roof was replaced, the interior was painted and the downstairs restroom was renovated and made ADA compliant. A number of exciting exhibitions were mounted. In this, the Museum benefitted from its partnership with the Smithsonian. For several years the Smithsonian sent out its staff for Smithsonian Week in Riverside. Carl Carey the City General Services man briefed us on the exhibit space we were to receive in the Fox Performing Arts complex. This did not happen. The site is now slated for use as a food court.

Director Morton left when her job was expanded from Museum Director to also include the entire Cultural Affairs operation. The Museum took a back seat. Another Interim Director, Sarah Mundy was brought in. She later stepped down and the newest City Manager sent in his assistant- Mr. Nguyen. Mr. Nguyen now holds two jobs, Interim Museum Director and Director of Cultural Affairs. I believe this is what the accreditation committee is getting at, the lack of a permanent director whose exclusive responsibility is the museum. I would point out that this is not a decision that can be blamed on the staff. It is a choice made in City Hall.

Staffing instability has not been confined to the director level. Soon after I joined the board, the Curator of History was let go because of budget cuts. Then in 2009 the museum was singled out for the largest portion of city budget cuts in anticipation of a three year drop in city revenue. The Curator of Anthropology was let go. Remaining staff stepped up to take on these additional responsibilities. When the economy improved, the two positions were added back only to be cut by the third City Manager who again found a serious deficit of city funds. Administrative staff was also cut. When the James Bryant, the most senior Curator retired, his position was not replaced. The staff of the Nature Lab has declined drastically.

Storage has also been a political football. When I joined the Board, we were given a tour of the storage facility. It was located in a former Safeway store. That location was taken away to make room for the Convention Center parking lot. Collections were quickly moved into the Stalder Building and the basement of the Museum. As you can imagine moving them was a challenge. Later the Board was offered half of the present storage building. The Board insisted on getting the whole building. Collections were moved a third time. Since additional funds were not forthcoming, the staff made do with repurposed shelving.

While on the board, we considered joining with the City Clerk to establish a comprehensive city archive. Several locations were considered and vetoed by city management. Our last suggestion was to give the Museum use of the old fire house when the fire department moved to new quarters. We were told the city needed to gain revenue from the old fire house. Using the old fire house as restaurant and night club was considered. In the event, the city chose to lease this city owned building to a charter school. It would have made a great place for the archives. It is just a block and a half from the Museum. Again, city management, not museum staff, failed to give available city owned property to the Museum and the archives remained in the basement because they had nowhere else to go. I believe it is this kind of political choice that the accreditation committee is addressing.

I served on the Harada House Committee. Efforts were made to make it a priority in the city budget. The most hopeful development was to acquire the Robinson House for a future interpretive center. The city chose to make repairs to the Heritage House, repainting it and fixing the roof, but it did not choose to make repairs to the Harada House. There is support for the Harada House from the public. I and others have contributed to its funding. Hopefully, the city will accept its responsibility to protect this property just as it has accepted responsibility to protect the Heritage House. But supporters of Heritage House will tell you that it took considerable public pressure to achieve that result.

In my view the Museum has suffered from inconsistent, intrusive and unreliable mismanagement originating in city hall. The Staff have suffered from inconsistent working conditions for years. I am not surprised they are demoralized. Now that the situation has gotten dire, they are being blamed as failures when the decisions that brought on the crisis were not theirs.

I am concerned that the harsh and the drastic solution of closing the Museum will result not in progress, but in a loss of services for our most vulnerable populations, a loss of public good will and a loss of volunteer support for the Museum. Riverside children will lose access to the very popular Nature Lab. Primary school students now in First Grade will not be able to go to the Museum until they are in Fourth Grade. Hundreds of school kids are now taken to the Museum on field trips. They will miss out on this important experience.

Closing for renovation, if it ever materializes, does not need to be for three years, but only for the length of actual construction. The plan to expand out the back of the Museum and to uncover the dome was first floated in the term of Councilman Beaty – two councilmen ago. Be skeptical of the chimera of new construction. Those sorts of things were promised to us and they never materialized. Ask yourself, do we have a new Downtown Library yet?

I support you in your role as stewards of the public interest. Consider all the input you can get. Do not allow anyone to rush or bully you into a rash decision. Remember, Mr. Nguyen's estimate for the

duration of the closing has increased 50%, from two years to three in the month since he first announced it in May.

From: Nathan Ellstrand <nathanellstrand@gmail.com>
Date: June 8, 2017 at 9:55:53 AM PDT
To: "Bailey, Rusty" <rbailey@riversideca.gov>
Subject: [External] Riverside Metropolitan Museum

Good morning Mr. Bailey,

I am a former Riverside resident, Poly High grad, as well as former intern and volunteer at the Riverside Metropolitan Museum.

I've been informed of the news about the temporary closure as well as restructuring at the museum. I'm saddened to hear about both especially given what an essential resource the place has been to the Riverside community for decades. Not only through its exhibits, but through its programs, the museum is vital to a thriving, educated and enlightened community. Were it not for the museum, I would not have the love for local history that I do today and continue on studying as a PhD student. Were it not for the museum, I would not have been engaged as a young Riversider through the First Sunday program. And were it not for the museum, I would not have built partnerships and gained mentors from the staff at the museum who are extremely valuable for maintaining the real legacy of the city.

Sincerely,

Nathan Ellstrand

cc: Mayor
City Council
City Manager
City Attorney
ACMs

6-14-17
public
comment

Hi, I want to thank you for taking the time to read what I have to say.

Let me start with pointing out that while the museum reports are very detailed and speak of a need of a vision for the museum, which is true, I feel the reports fail to take into account the actual people of Riverside city and the surrounding neighborhoods. The comparison with other museums nationwide seems to suggest charging an admission for museum visits. I would counter to say that the Riverside Metropolitan Museum should be commended for being the ONLY ONE that does not charge its visitors in a community where many potential visitors, especially families, are in debt and an added cost would be prohibitive of attendance. Cultural practices here in southern California included looking for the cheapest deal for entertainment and if a city building charges for admission people are more likely to turn away and complain that the city is charging them for a service they already pay taxes to support. For not charging an admittance fee, I would like to say the museum has expressed an understanding of the local economic climate and cultural norms. Charging fees at other museums nationwide may work in those localities but no comparative study was cited for similar museums that do charge for attendance in southern California.

I would like to speak from my own experience as a student and a new volunteer at the museum. I believe my point of view is one that could stand for many of my fellow students.

I'm a full time student at UCR studying anthropology. I've been considering a career in archaeology but the requirements for most jobs are beyond what the schools in the area offer, including the prestigious UCR where I am a student. Most employers require a bachelor's degree and at least a year of experience working with archaeology or cultural resource management. That is hard to come by around here. I've looked. With a large student community in Riverside and the surround neighborhoods we find ourselves either competing for jobs, which is normal, volunteering at places like the Riverside Metropolitan Museum, working at a fast food restaurant, or without any job and not enough experience through education alone to get a job in our field which we dedicate 3 to 8 years pursuing.

For me, the Museum allows me as a student the chance to get some experience in my field, build connections with other professionals, and a chance to teach other people what we have been taught. We get large groups of kids visiting the nature lab and other parts of the museum and for some of them it is their first time seeing or even thinking about the animals, biomes, and peoples of the inland empire. To see the excitement in their eyes and knowing that they are inspired to learn more about the world around them is amazing, and in line with the what people expect from a museum. More personally, I am depending on the museum being open in the summer for me to graduate as I have already signed up for volunteering for enough UCR credits to allow me to graduate at the end of summer. I will be continuing to volunteer after my graduation as well.

My own personal problems aside, I would like to see more students be afforded the opportunity to gain professional experience in their field through the museum and other city programs. It can be life saving if more paid jobs were open for us. I've met many students who are close or have graduated and have no idea where their next paycheck will come from. I've seen the despair in their eyes and I've felt a fair bit of it myself. I'm not paid to be a volunteer at this museum but I know the value of at least starting somewhere.

That said, I know there is much to be improved on.

In my own experience, I have seen the utter disconnect between city services and administration and the needs of the museum. I applied to volunteer at the museum several months ago using the city application process and was excited to work for my city's museum and aid in whatever way I can. However I had not heard back from the city for months. Eventually it took me contacting one of the staff at the museum for the city to begin processing me.

I know there is a lot of work to be done with the collections. I and many other experienced and trained students are willing to help with that, either through paid positions, internships, community events, a simply volunteering as I do.

I understand that this city is facing financial issues. To me it feels as if the city council does not have a vested interest in the museum and rather see it such down for an indefinite period of time while it sorts out whatever other issues the city is facing. But taking this vital opportunity away from students like myself would be a disservice to the Riverside community. Whatever your vision for this museum, please keep students of all ages in mind.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Stephen Marts

June 14, 2017

To the Riverside Municipal Museum Board of Directors:

I write representing a team of scholars and researchers from California State University, San Bernardino. We are in the process of surveying and researching a Chinese railroad camp site on the San Bernardino National Forest in the vicinity of the Cajon Pass. This site was identified as a result of the recent fire and in the process of surveying historic sites associated with the Caltrans road realignment for Highway 138. A Chinese camp site was discovered. That site is now a research site associated with the graduate programs in Applied Archaeology, Social Science and Globalization, and History. It is most importantly being surveyed to determine a mitigation plan for Caltrans and the San Bernardino National Forest.

Our first survey of the site was conducted Friday, June 9, 2017. Vital to this research is the collection at the Riverside Municipal Museum's archives from the Riverside Chinatown dig. We know based on preliminary research that the artifacts found in the Cajon Pass have similar characteristics to those found in Riverside. The research that will inform the way the San Bernardino National Forest directs Caltrans in its mitigation plan must be conducted in consultation with the collection held in the archives at RMM. Without access to these artifacts, research will be stalled, will be incomplete, and any reports completed will knowingly be partial. Access to the archives at RMM over the next few months and the coming year is vital for several agencies work (Caltrans, San Bernardino National Forest, CSUSB) and for graduate student research for completion of a thesis and graduation requirements. This is but one example of a project underway that would be harmed without access to the RMM archives.

Please do not close the museum and archives without a clear plan for renovation to minimize the length of the closure. Neither the reaccreditation report from American Association of Museums nor the consultant report recommended closing the museum. Closing the museum and archives will harm local projects that rely on access to the archives, and will harm the city's reputation with funders, academic researchers and various government agencies.

Please include people with museum and archive experience in the region (not just in Riverside) on your community outreach efforts as we have information and experience that could be beneficial in substantive ways moving forward.

Sincerely,



Cherstin M. Lyon, Professor of History, CSUSB

Coordinator, Social Science and Globalization MA; Public Oral History Program

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5500 UNIVERSITY PARKWAY, SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92407-2393

6-14-17
chuck
wilson
item 2
~~2020~~

Response to "Need To Shutter The Museum..."

The Acting Museum Director has shared an abundance of verbiage relating to problems and concerns at the Riverside Metropolitan Museum. The report provides clear information on the process of selecting a new Director, as proposed by the museum consultants hired to evaluate the museum several months ago. If this process begins in mid-June, as suggested by the consultants, the new director should be selected by the first of November.

What the report fails to do is follow this good example by providing a time line for resolving any of the problems noted in either the consultants' evaluation or the suggestions of the AAM accreditation team report. In addition there is no connection made between the problems noted by the consultants and the AAM team and a closure of the building, much less one for a three year period.

The Acting Director calls for focus on the Harada House, completing a collections inventory, fixing internal systems and processes, initiating the search for director, and beginning planning for museum renovation and possible expansion. While all of these are lofty goals, NONE require a closure of the building. These are all program and administrative needs, not building renovation or construction. Indeed, even the planning for building changes is not suggested until a new director has been in place.

At some point there may well be the need to shut the museum for a period of time, but it should be linked to a specific project, not a pie in the sky number of years. This report finds it more convenient to focus on the negative than to provide a program for positive progress. Nobody denies there are problems, but simply reiterating them without presenting a program to fix them is a waste of time for all of us.

Let's assume all of the Acting Director's concerns are legitimate. If so, the following questions arise.

1. Has the collection survey, which was described in one of the reports as an "immediate" need, been started?
 - a. What inventory system has been selected
 - b. How much information will that system allow for input
 - c. How many staff and at what level will be/are involved in the inventory
2. What are the internal systems which need to be fixed?
 - a. Who will be responsible for the fix
 - b. How long will it take for the fix
 - c. What are the specific goals of the fix

One logical answer to these questions might be that they would be addressed by a new Director. However, this report does not state that would be the case.

Good afternoon, Museum Board members. My name is Rosalind Sagara, and I'm an historian and historic preservation consultant. I'm a co-founder and serve as the board chair of the Save Our Chinatown Committee, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to preserve and share the history of Chinese Americans in Riverside, a mission that over the years has been shared by this institution as well. I have volunteered at this museum for several years, helping to launch the Day of Inclusion program, which will celebrate its seventh year in 2017. Today I am focusing my comments as an historian and historic preservation consultant who is greatly concerned over the potential closing of the museum and its impact on city planning and development projects.

Historic preservation plays a vital role in maintaining Riverside's character and identity. Protecting our city's cultural resources have been a part of the City's community planning, development, and permitting processes for some time now. A historic context statement is the foundation for decisions about the identification, evaluation and treatment of historic properties.

In 2016, I served as the project manager and lead historian for the Chinese Americans in Riverside Historic Context Statement, which was funded in part with federal dollars from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, through the California Office of Historic Preservation, as a result of a competitive Certified Local Government (CLG) grant awarded to the City. I coordinated this project with City staff, advisors, CSUSB Public & Oral History Program, Riverside Metropolitan Museum, students, and community members. The museum's archives and staff expertise were an invaluable component in the successful completion of the historic context statement. Under my supervision, a team of researchers consulted with the museum's archives and archivist Kevin Hallaran on numerous occasions. Meeting space was provided for group research meetings. Historic photographs from the museum's collections

were consulted during the research phase and were included in the final report. In addition, the project included two community-collecting events, where we asked community members to share their private collections and personal histories related to the project. One of the two collecting events was held at the museum. We gathered valuable new information at this event, which was included in the final report. Lastly, the project team held a culminating event at Heritage House in partnership with museum staff, where we highlighted report findings to a wide audience. The successful completion of the Chinese Americans in Riverside HCS benefitted greatly from its partnership with the RMM and would not have been as thorough had we not been able to consult with its valuable archive and staff.

The closure of the museum and its archives may put federal funding for similar projects at risk, including the recently submitted Latino Historic Context Statement that is pending review and award of \$40,000 and the recently awarded \$50,000 African American Civil Rights grant from the National Park Service in which RMM is a named partner. In addition to the impact the potential closure of RMM will have on historic preservation professionals, closing the RMM will undoubtedly put City planning staff at a disadvantage when processing development projects that include historic resources, and will make it more difficult, or impossible for the public and developers to make inquiries regarding local history and potential development projects.

I strongly urge you to consider all the impacts a potential closure of the RMM will have on the public, City staff, and business community, and to express your opinions to City staff and the City Council. I look forward to participating in continued dialogue on this matter. Thank you for your time.

~~July~~ 7, 2017
June

Riverside Metropolitan Museum Board
3580 Mission Inn Avenue
Riverside, CA 92501

Dear Museum Board Chairman and Members,

You serve on the Board of an institution that approaches its Centenary. In seven years the Riverside Metropolitan Museum (RMM) will have reached its first 100. But a question to be answered is will the Museum be left in the 20th century or living its potential in the 21st? Are you willing to seize this critical moment and lead the RMM forward?

Change is a constant in our lives and if we don't use opportunities positively we will stagnate. This Museum is at a cross roads. The museum world has evolved in recent years. The RMM has not! There are multiple issues that need to change; some were addressed in the Reaccreditation Report while others were identified by the Museum Management Consultants Report.

The City through its commitment to their Museum in its FY17/18 budget is providing an opportunity to take the challenge and make the leap forward to rethink, revitalize and recreate a renovated/expanded Riverside Metropolitan Museum. I have worked at the RMM since 1993 and this level of City assistance has not happened before!

I support the Museum shuttering which is necessary for all this to happen. It is an opportunity to fix what needs fixing. It is time we had a Museum we can all be proud of!!!

The RMM can't be everything to everyone. But what it must do is be the BEST. A great City with a great Museum goes hand in hand. A supportive Museum Board which reaffirms the City Council's vision can help lead the Riverside Metropolitan Museum into the 21st century.

Sincerely,



Brenda Buller Focht, Ph. D., Museum Curator

cc: City Council
City Manager Russo

June 13, 2017

Alex Nguyen, Assistant City Manager/Acting Museum Director
City of Riverside
3900 Main St
Riverside, CA 92522

Dear Mr. Nguyen

My name is Nancy Wilkeson and I am writing you about your recommendation to shutter the Riverside Metropolitan Museum for 3 years. I have been a member of the RMA for the last 30 years and had planned to attend the June 14 RMM board meeting, but due to a last minute conflict I was unable to attend.

Based on my years as a volunteer, I do want to express my feelings regarding the proposed shuttering. But first I want to give you a brief outline of my career and volunteer experience. I retired in late 1987 after 26 years with Pacific Bell Telephone Company. The last 10 years before retiring I spent as a training manager. I specialized in training employees in customer service and motivation. After I retired I joined the RMA and became active as a Museum volunteer primarily at Heritage House to begin with. In addition to being a docent leading tours through Heritage House I was:

The founder of the Heritage House Teas
Tea Chairperson for 15 years
Docent Chairperson
A member of the Heritage Operations committee
At the main Museum I was:
RMA Vice President for 2 years
RMA President for 2 years.

Currently I serve on the RMA Trip Committee as Treasurer and help plan the RMA day trips.

When news articles first appeared in the Press Enterprise I was against the shuttering plan. However after reading the report from the AAM and your June 14, 2017 Museum Board Memorandum about the need to shutter the museum, I changed my mind.

Many of the concerns listed in the AMM report and your memorandum are not new. They were pointed out 14 years ago in 2002. While staff at that time assured AAM corrections would be made, no corrective actions have ever been taken.

The Museum needs to remain in the public eye during the shuttering period. One way to do this is to set up temporary displays in various high traffic public or city locations such as City Hall, the Library and the Convention Center. A previous city manager suggested

this in a meeting that I attended, about a dozen years ago, and a staff member got very upset, feeling that we could not properly insure the safety of the artifacts. What good are the artifacts if they are locked in the basement under a 105-year-old pipe and no one knows we have them? We need to start thinking about what we can do and not what we can't do. The primary purpose of the museum is to make our artifacts available for public viewing, not to protect them by hiding them from the public.

I am delighted that Heritage House will remain open. They have a hard working and dedicated group of volunteers that do an excellent job of welcoming visitors.

When the Museum does reopen, we need to be ready to welcome the public back and show them what has been accomplished during the shuttering period. The RMA can help with this if the Museum will allow us to start a docent program. The docents themselves can do the training themselves, like they do at Heritage House which is a very active and successful program. The museum had such a program several years ago until a museum staff person arbitrarily canceled the program.

I also believe the Museum, during the shuttering period, should set up an area for interactive exhibits. That is what most of the successful museums are doing.

In addition, I think the RMM Board and the RMA need to work together in the area of publicity and fundraising. Working together would also enhance RMA membership.

Sincerely,

Nancy Wilkeson, RMA member.