

Coastal Museum Association

Business Meeting

Congregation Mickve Israel

March 4, 2020

Meeting Minutes

CMA President Elyse Butler, Presiding

In Attendance

Jeff Freeman - Davenport House
Joe Stahl- Savannah Area Council of
Garden Clubs, Inc. Botanical Garden
Kelly Zacovic- City of Savannah Municipal
Archives
Glenda E.A. Anderson – GHRAC
Herbert Victor- Mickve Israel
Kayla Clark - UGA Marine Education Center
and Aquarium
Jamie Credle - Davenport House
Alena Pirok - Georgia Southern University
Laura Seifert - Savannah Archaeological
Alliance
Kat White - Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace
Holly Elliot - Coastal Heritage Society
Lydia Moreton- Coastal Heritage Society

Elyse Butler- Georgia Historical Society
Bre Hewitt - Georgia Historical Society
Mark Lawson - Belfor Property Restoration
Deborah Johnson Simon - ADMI
Kara Bridgeman Sweeney - GA Southern Lab
of Archaeology
Eizabeth Srsic - Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace
Gabrielle Heinzelman - American Prohibition
Museum
Wilma Wheten - Bonaventure Historical Society
John Brannen - City of Savannah Cemeteries
Chris Sergi - Andrew Low House
Rebecca Eddins - Andrew Low House
April Flojo - Andrew Low House
Natalie Hefter - Coastal Discovery Museum

Member Introductions and Announcements

Elyse Butler - There will be a Weeping Time Commemoration ceremony

Kayla Clark - UGA Marine Extension - May 9 is World Migratory Bird Day; Tourism Conference on
April 17th;

Jamie Credle - Davenport House - Wednesdays and Thursdays will have tea at the house at 5:00;
200th Anniversary in April - April 25th Champagne and Cake event

Gabrielle Heinzelman - Prohibition Museum - Museum will feature Savannah stories for their
monthly display to celebrate 100 years of Prohibition

Joe Stahl - Botanical Gardens - May 2nd is their Rose Festival and Plant Sale

Wilma Wheten - Bonaventure Historical Society - In conjunction with the Tour of Homes,
Bonaventure will have cemetery tours with costumed portrayers - looking for
volunteers for the actors

Kara Bridgeman Sweeney - GS Archaeology Lab - Partaking in an undocumented migrant project

Chris Sergi - Andrew Low House - Savannah Antiques and Architecture weekend is March 5-7

Natalie Hefter - Coastal Discovery Museum - March 28th - Low Country Fair with Historical Flair;
April 26th - Annual Art Market

Kay White - JGLBP - Renovations of Gardens and outbuildings is ongoing - contact the house if you want direct answers about any of the projects

Laura Seifert - Savannah Archaeological Alliance - soliciting pictures of Old Fort Jackson

Alena Pirok - GS - Student walking tours are a go! Will be held April 4, 11, 12, 18 with a final meet and greet on the 18th

Deborah Johnson Simon - ADMI - CSAADMC is now ADMI (African Diaspora Museology Institute); partnering with Savannah State for a new degree program; Beach Institute Genealogy Research Support Center will have ongoing seminars with each month focusing on a different region

Business Items

- Approval of Minutes
 - Minutes will be emailed after the meeting for approval
- Treasurer Report- \$0 income, \$574.03 expenses, final balance of \$7,373.75
- Audit is being scheduled for the end of the month
- CMA Awards of Excellence is seeking committee members
 - Award nominations due by April 30th
- Call for Committee members - Awards Committee and Nominating Committee
- CMA will be represented by Alena Pirok and Laura Seifert on the Archaeology Ordinance Review Committee
- CMA Career Night and Pizza Social is still seeking staff members to sign up

Program

John Brannen, Savannah Cemetery Information and Event Coordinator: *Tombstone Tourism in the 21st Century*

Cemetery tourism includes tours, movie filming, TV shows, programs - these things have to be permitted

10,000 Burials in Colonial Park Cemetery

80,000 in Laurel Grove North and South

30,000 in Bonaventure

Visitation in Cemeteries is growing proportional to tourism growth

Cemetery records include trying to compile information about people buried in the Cemetery, and this includes a number of significant individuals to CMA sites

Laurel Grove was founded circa 1850's, segregated

Bonaventure was originally private and just for elites, then went "wild" again, then became a tourist destination with a trolley that ran out to it, then was sold to the City of Savannah in 1907

Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil really exploded the tourist interest in Bonaventure in the 20th century - John's position was created in response to the desire for tours and tour buses in the cemetery

Now there is security at Bonaventure Year Round

Tourists can cause harm to the graves, such as a girl who poured fake blood on a tomb and it permanently stained it - Staff was able to find the person via social media and they got in trouble.

Cemetery's response:

Last year cemetery rules were posted for the 1st time

Improving web presence to share rules

New bathroom facilities - new expenses come with increased visitation

Starting traffic studies to understand the impact of cars in the cemeteries

"The future of cemeteries is tourism" - After lots are sold, cemeteries bring in very little money so how do they keep paying for themselves? How do they pay for upkeep? Many do things like movie night screenings, concerts, 5ks to raise revenue.

There will have to be serious consideration of how to preserve the cemeteries and continue to provide access to them

Meeting Adjourned