

Penn State Pasto Agricultural Museum Report January 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010

This report covers a period of 18 months from January 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010. Our previous reports followed a 12 month period from January 1 to December 31. We have altered the time frame in order to be consistent with Penn State's fiscal year.

Goals for the Penn State Pasto Agricultural Museum

Our first goal is to **create and maintain** a museum filled with interactive educational exhibits that promote the field of agriculture. These exhibits will be part of a program that not only supports the collection and preservation of farm and household items but also uses these items to teach museum visitors about the links between past and present agricultural practices.

The second goal is to **design sophisticated and professional exhibits** that will appeal to and support the educational needs of visitors of all age groups.

A third goal is to **increase the educational component** of the Pasto Agricultural Museum within the College of Agricultural Sciences and within Penn State. By expanding the museum's programmatic capacity in this manner, we hope to involve faculty and students from a wide range of disciplines in research and education in the history of agriculture.

The fourth goal is to **continue outreach efforts to all programs** in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Penn State University.

Our final goal is to **continue to support and increase our volunteer** base.

By carrying out these goals, we will establish a museum presence at Penn State befitting a major university in the Big Ten Conference that:

- Demonstrates the relevance of its collection to museum visitors.
- Provides high-quality interactive educational exhibits to stimulate intellectual thought .
- Shows the advancement of agricultural technology from muscle power to mechanical power.
- Explains how studying these objects can lead to technological advances of the future.
- Helps to fulfill the education, research and public service missions of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Penn State.

In order to achieve these goals, the Museum staff and volunteers focused on three main areas: administrative activities, outreach and projects and the organization and use of volunteers. The following is a summary of achievements:

Administration

1. Continued to identify and strengthen museum ties within the College of Agricultural Sciences (CAS) and Penn State University (PSU).

a. Meetings within the college

- Between 1/1/09 and 6/30/10 there were 52 meetings with CAS personnel, several meetings with communications staff and more than 360 meetings with office staff.
- Linkage between the Deans' office and the museum continued to be strengthened with the establishment of a Policy Committee to assure that the museum was operating within CAS and PSU guidelines, policies and procedures.

b. Meetings within the university

- Meetings were held with PSU Risk Management personnel (4) to determine the proper procedure for inventory of items in the collection in order to establish the monetary value of the collection in case of catastrophic loss (fire, theft, natural disasters). This had never been accomplished in the history of the museum.
- Regular meetings were scheduled with the Policy Committee and the Office of Risk Management personnel (9) to help set guidelines for the protection of the museum and its volunteers.
- Meetings were held as necessary with the APD supervisory person and staff to help secure appropriate donated items for the museum collection and to move those items out of storage buildings when these buildings were needed for other purposes.
- A potential offer of a 40' X 80' (3200 square feet) piece of university property immediately to the north of the "older" museum building was made by the APD coordinator. A building would have to be constructed for use in storing the larger equipment in the collection. This project is on-hold until a need for such an addition is determined. If a need is established then potential sources of funding can be sought and a building type selected.

2. Construction of the new building was completed and an occupancy permit was Issued.

- Meetings were scheduled on an ongoing basis between Triangle Builders (main contractors) and sub-contractors: concrete work, water and sewer, HVAC, and electrical; CAS Facilities Administrative Officer, Ferguson Township Supervisors; Bureau of Labor and Industry personnel – including inspectors, and Penn State Office of Physical Plant Planning (pro-bono from this source). These meetings resulted in an occupancy permit being issued in February, 2009. Because the

Occupancy Permit was delayed by 18 to 24 months, the decision was made to establish temporary exhibits through Ag Progress Days, 2009 and 2010.

- Triangle Builders and all of the sub-contractors who were concerned with the structural issues also had to adhere to the policy issues set forth by Ferguson Township and the Bureau of Labor and Industry. The CAS Facilities Administrative Officer dealt with all of these issues in a professional and personable manner. He was the calm before, during and after most “storms”.

3. Continued to reorganize office management

- The office space has been upgraded since the inception of the museum. Dr. Jerry Pasto started the museum with a small office which was expanded by Dr. Darwin Braund.
- New office space now includes three offices that can accommodate the expanded physical plant and outreach efforts undertaken by the museum.
- There are two offices in Agricultural Administration (main office – 137 and work office in 101G) and an on-site office in the museum at Rock Spring.
- The expansion of offices – about 460 square feet total for the three offices - will permit working spaces for the benefit of all aspects of museum programming. All office furnishings/carpeting/painting were “in kind” donations.

4. Explored examined and pursued potential funding sources.

- Several meetings were held with the CAS Offices of Development and Grants and Contracts to examine potential funding sources.
- The one successful grant to date is from the Centre County Foundation for \$1500 to revise the outdated museum pamphlet in order to reflect accurately the current state of the museum and its potential for visitors.
- A second potential grant is being processed by the CAS Development Office to be sent to Fulton Bank for use in field trip supplements (schools are beginning to eliminate field trips due to budget restrictions) and for help in off-setting exhibit design expenses.

Outreach and Projects

1. Continued to expand outreach programs and projects

a. Web site development and expansion

- The expansion and development of the website is ongoing and crucial to the promotion of the museum to donors, visitors (especially teachers), and current and potential volunteers. The support of CAS for this development and expansion effort has been extremely valuable and productive. If the Dean's office had not provided release time for the web site designer to assist the museum there would have been little or no progress as no monies were allocated for this purpose in the museum budget.
- Beginning on 11/1/2009 and continuing until 6/16/2010 the revised web site registered "hits" from **41 countries** and **territories** involving **246 visitors** (60% new and 40% returning) each averaging nearly 5 minutes per visit. There were **186 visitors** from March 1 to June 16, 2010.

b. Network development

- Networking continues to be explored among the various CAS Academic Units and the University Academic Units. These include linkages with individuals (internships or sponsorships) and clubs (Ag Systems Management).
- Connections to the museum were expanded with the Department of History. This work was delayed due to the lack of an Occupancy Permit but can now be resumed.
- Meetings continued with the Penn State Museum Consortium.
- Links were continued or initiated with the Bradford County Farm Museum in Pennsylvania, the Carroll County Farm Museum in Maryland, the Russell Historic Museum (in Russell, New Zealand), and the Isett Museum in Huntingdon County Pennsylvania.

c. Projects included the following:

- **The tenth Silent Auction** to benefit the museum was held during the 2009 APD at Rock Spring. This event was chaired by Larry Harpster. It was the fourth year of a five year \$50,000 pledge to the museum by the Silent Auction Committee. Gross earnings reached over \$53,000 in four years

- **PA Farm Show 2009.** This was the third year for this effort which was staffed throughout the week by volunteers. The Museum did not participate in the 2010 Farm show due to the lack of funding. The Farm Show represents the largest audience for the museum (estimated at 7,500 visitors) and APD is the second largest (estimated at 2,500 visitors). Moreover the Farm Show reaches a large urban audience – mainly primary aged school children, teachers, and other adults – who do not have access to the historical agricultural information provided by the interactive exhibits from the museum. A DVD entitled “*300 Years of Haymaking*” was shown throughout the Farm Show exhibit and many were sold to teachers and other interested viewers for use in various venues.
- **Tours** of primary aged school children (11 schools sending 385 persons), teachers (3 tours involving 130 visitors), special organizational associations (4 tours of 275 persons), families, and senior citizens. (See the 2009 APD report on the web site for detailed information regarding visitors to the museum during this event). In addition, in 2009-2010 there were four new school tours, one new teacher tour, three new special organization/association tours and one new senior citizen tour.
- **Media coverage** of the museum included a College of Agricultural Science Newsletter article about Dr. Pasto and the initiation of the museum; a New Castle Newspaper article; a 30 minute Public Cable Network broadcast; a State College Magazine article; and a book authored by Lee Stout (retired University Libraries Archivist) about the Penn State Creamery with several items from the museum pictured.
- **A display** of the Penn State Creamery milk bottles was opened on June 30, 2009 in the lobby of the Berkey Creamery (bottles date from the period 1904 to the present).
- **New exhibit designs** to enhance educational programming and expand the collection into the new building have been initiated. The museum curator met eight times with personnel from Laird Designs, Inc. In addition, Roger Martell representing the museum policy committee is working with the designers to insure adherence to college and university policies and procedures. Items will be cleaned, necessary restoration completed and then they will be showcased in the museum as space permits. Hopefully, the museum will be able to expand its display of items from about 35% to 80 % of the current collection. Other items will be shown in rotating seasonal displays, e.g. maple syrup making.
- **The addition of educationally interactive displays** is planned. Some special ones include a maple syrup display and a honey display featuring two rye straw antique bee skeps (recently donated). A home feature will be added with an antique baby crib and flax winder, a weaving loom which includes a teaching

demonstration donated by Meredith Weber, and a 1912 “knitting machine” (used by Dr. Pasto’s father). In addition, a blacksmith/wood working area and an expanded old fashioned water pipe display will be incorporated.

- **The web site** will include learning modules for students and teachers that meet State educational requirements. The museum web site continues to explore a new category entitled “linkages to other appropriate sites” in order to expand the educational focus.

Volunteers

1. Expanded and reformulated volunteer committee structure and projects

a. Expanded Committee roles and responsibilities were determined to be needed for three committees.

- A Financial Committee was formed to explore potential funding sources needed to maintain the museum and its programs.
- The Operations Committee has increased its responsibilities to meet the needs for expansion of exhibit designs, moving displays into separate areas, reviewing the museum collection for overlaps and gaps, and maintaining the museum for educational tours.
- The Volunteer Recruitment and Training Committee has added new members because of the increase in the physical space and educational programming.

b. New Committees were needed to reflect the expanded programming needs of the museum.

- An Off-Site Committee was needed to answer the increased programming requests from the PA Farm Show and other off-site venues, e g, Old Home Days at Greenwood Furnace State Park, Shavers Creek, and county-based museums and historical associations. The roles and responsibilities will be defined for this committee in the coming year.
- An educational committee was “drafted” with appropriate responsibilities.

Toward the Future

The foundation on which the future of the Penn State Pasto Agricultural Museum will grow remains solid. This is due to the expansion of the museum space, the help of volunteers and the commitment and support of the College of Agricultural Sciences. New directions should include:

1. The design and construction of interractional educational exhibits.
2. The completion of the inventory and the appraisal of the collection for insurance purposes.
3. The design of educational programs for tours, the web site and for scholars interested in internships.
4. An expansion of the volunteer training program.
5. The continued recruitment, training and retention of volunteers.
6. The continued maintenance and repair of items in the collection.