

Darwin R. Barker Museum Technology Upgrade

Pomeroy Fund for NYS History

Updating the Darwin R. Barker Historical Museum's hardware, software, printing, scanning, and storage technologies was identified by the Board of Trustees and curator as a necessary step toward realizing the goals described in the museum's Strategic Plan for 2020, specifically within the sections on Asset Management and Museum Operations. The importance of this goal has been magnified by the closing of our physical spaces due to the pandemic containment efforts, because it will enable enhanced access to digital outreach and access to records. In pursuance of this goal, the Barker Museum submits this application in a request for \$1,792.93 for a new computer with basic software, as well as a month of internet connectivity and the associated costs of installing the network.

The Barker Museum's activities were revived with the addition of a curator in early February 2020 to conduct cataloging projects, enhance accessibility to the collection, and develop interpretive exhibitions and programs. With the closing of our doors in March, efforts have shifted toward online content, with outreach being done primarily through the museum's online presence in the shape of our webpage and social media, and through the continuing exchange of emails with the public. The crisis occurred during the museum's rebuilding phase, and so our strategic plan initiatives for March and April, as well as for the immediate future, have been altered. Specifically, our goal to upgrade our technology to allow for the safe use of our digital database and the computer on which it is stored is central to our outreach efforts and our resumption of cataloging upon reopening.

Hardware upgrades are needed to run a supported operating system, i.e., Windows 10, (in contrast with our current unsupported operating system, Windows XP,) to maximize the safety of the museum's files from external digital threats. The current Collections Management System can be migrated to these viable operating systems and allows for an online database. This update will also enable internet access, which will aid in research and dissemination of information through the planned museum website, email communications, and outreach through social media management; it will enable our institution to develop its web presence to maximize public accessibility of its records and organize its internal communication to coordinate staff and volunteers. It would also allow us to handle all museum operations a single computer, which will later be networked with others, rather than using a patchwork of platforms for the various purposes stated prior.

Our computer system's functionality would create a platform for our communications and management of our online presence. It also currently contains the artifact and exhibition records necessary for our cataloging progress, as well as the museum's membership records. With the computer ordered, we plan to install infrastructure for faster internet access at the museum. Currently, the museum has a volunteer with professional web design experience, and when the technological prerequisites have been met, we plan to proceed with the launch of a website to host an online version of our artifact database and digitized archival records.