

**Minutes of the Center for Communal Studies Advisory Board Luncheon Meeting**  
**November 1, 2017 – 11:30 am – 1:45 pm**  
**USI – Room UC 227**

**Members Present:** Jennifer Greene, Casey Harison, Marna Hostetler, Carol Medlicott, Graham Perry, Donald Pitzer, Silvia Rode, Michael Strezewski, Leslie Townsend

**Members Absent:** James Beeby, Wendy Bredhold, Greg Brown, Don Janzen, Joshua Lockyer, Susan Matarese, Kristalyn Shefveld (substituting for Jason Hardgrave)

**Guests:** Deanna Engler, Stella Ress

**Administrative Assistant:** Marilyn Thielman

**1. Greeting and Introductions:** Director Casey Harison greeted all, noting those who traveled a distance to attend. Attendance was lower today than for recent meetings. Harison introduced guest Stella Ress (History). Harison reminded the group of the Center's move from Liberal Arts to Rice Library and thanked those who helped: Marilyn Thielman (Center); Marna Hostetler, Jennifer Greene, Deanna Engler, James Wethington (Rice Library); James Beeby, Kathy Oeth, student workers (Liberal Arts). Harison congratulated Greene on promotion to University Archivist.

**2. Minutes from Spring 2017 Board Meeting:**

Harison called for corrections or additions to the Minutes from the Spring 2017 Board meeting. Harison will make changes suggested by Joshua Lockyer. Silvia Rode moved that the Minutes be accepted; seconded by Greene; all in favor. The revised Minutes will be posted on the Center's website.

**3. Reports**

**a. Thielman reported on successful move** of the Center from the Liberal Arts building to Rice Library during Summer 2017. Thielman is working with Greene and Archives staff to integrate Center resources into University Archives and Special Collections holdings and adapting to office routine. Thielman and Harison reminded everyone that extra copies of books and journals are available for adoption at Liberal Arts 3056.

**b. Harison reported on trends in public programming and research** sponsored by the Center since 2011. Handouts listing public programming and Research Travel Grant winners were reviewed. Harison described an upcoming slight shift for the Center with less emphasis on public programming (perhaps one program each year, rather than two) and more emphasis on curriculum (see discussion of Communal Studies Minor below) and scholarship. Harison will update the Board on these changes. A suggestion was made to check with Christian Goodwillie at Hamilton College about ways to encourage faculty and students to make use of collections for scholarship.

**4. Communal Studies Minor Proposal**

The Board approved a motion in Spring 2017 that Harison should proceed with a proposal for a Minor in Communal Studies at USI. Harison produced the draft of a proposal, which was sent to Board members as an email attachment ahead of today's meeting. Harison introduced the proposal, and discussion followed. Comments focused on courses and disciplines to include in the Minor; making sure prerequisites are not a deterrence; making sure that a rotation of courses is regularly offered. Guest Stella Ress, and Board members Mike Strezewski, Jennifer Greene and Silvia Rode – all of whose courses are in the proposal – were supportive. Rode observed that the proposed required course on "Roots of Communalism" does not have to be housed in the History Department; the course can be offered at the 100- or 200-level and does not need a "HIST" (History) prefix. Lockyer sent comments via email. Board members remain

supportive of the proposed Communal Studies Minor, which Harison hopes to have in place by Fall 2019.

## **Lunch**

### **5. Reports (cont.)**

**a. Strezewski announced a weekend program** on the life of Rosamond Dale Owen (a granddaughter of Robert Owen), sponsored by the University of Evansville Department of Archeology and to be held at New Harmony the weekend of 11 November 2017.

**b. Greene reported on developments for the Communal Studies Collection** at Rice Library.

#### \* Collection Development

Continuing to receive photographs from The Farm members.

Received 20 8mm and 16mm films from the caravan and events held at and by The Farm members from the late 1960s to the early 1970s. I have sent the films out for an estimate to digitize the films, will be asking the Center to help pay for the digitization, 50/50 split with library.

Received additional materials from former members of Stelle Group, newsletters.

Albert Bates, The Farm, sent materials from the early development – the publishing company Mushroom People and Plenty.

Working with Dancing Rabbit on an agreement to deposit materials.

#### \* Outreach

Working with a student to apply for a grant to help fund 10 students to attend a workshop at The Farm during spring break as part of History of the Ecovillage. Will need some funding from the University, CCS, or the library. Grant will be finished by November 20, 2017, and copies will be sent to Board members.

Josh Lockyer, Albert Bates, and Tim Miller will be presenting to my Ecovillage class.

#### \* Circulation (since July 1, 2017)

Lauren Griffith, Research Travel Grant recipient, was in the Archives last week. She looked at over 40 community files. She was very pleased with the amount of materials for her project. Lauren was looking at how yoga and time management is incorporated in different communities.

6 requests for materials from the public

6 student requests for materials – 3 folklore students, 1 historical methods, and 3 public history.

#### \* Miscellaneous

Student worker for Center for Community Studies in spring 2018.

**c. Medlicott and Pitzer reported on developments at the Communal Studies Association (CSA)** and the recent CSA annual conference at Zoar, Ohio. The meeting went well. Board members Medlicott, Pitzer, Lockyer and Brown attended and presented papers. Next year's CSA conference will be held at the historical commune of Bishop Hill, Illinois, 6-8 October 2018, with a deadline for paper proposals set for 15 May 2018. Pitzer reported that Dan McKanan (Harvard University) is now president of the International Communal Studies Association, which will have its next bi-annual meeting in the Hudson Valley in Summer 2019.

Medlicott is serving, with other experts, on an advisory board for the Pleasant Hill, KY Shaker Village.

Pitzer mentioned the impact of his theory of developmental communalism and effect of recent hurricanes on Koinonia, Georgia.

Don Pitzer reported on the 43<sup>rd</sup> annual Communal Studies Association conference at Zoar, Ohio; a lively meeting which he, Carol Medicott, and upwards of one hundred others attended. Zoar was celebrating the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its own founding by Germans from Württemberg who were part of the general separatist movement that included the Harmonists of George Rapp. A delegation of German scholars, archivists, and officials from the Zoarite's homeland brought greetings and made presentations. Don was impressed by the number of graduate students from various universities who gave papers from their research. This is encouraging for the future of the field of communal studies. Also, Don said that the "Adaptability in Communities" theme of the conference led to his presenting a paper on his theory of developmental communalism and he was pleased to find that some graduate students were applying it to their dissertation topics. Now he is in touch with them and they are using the bibliography on his theory that he handed out at the meeting and Casey has put on the Center website.

Don noted that he was delighted to be asked to accept the 2017 CSA Distinguished Service Award on behalf of his friends and former directors of Historic New Lanark, Scotland, Jim Arnold and Lorna Davidson. Don said Jim had just become director when he visited this deteriorating Robert Owen site in 1974 and that under Jim's and Lorna's leadership it has been restored and designated a UNESCO World Heritage location. The Center has sent interns there and Jim and Lorna participated in New Harmony's Bicentennial celebration in 2014. Don also showed a copy of Ma'ikwe Ludwig's book *Together Resilient: Building Community in the Age of Climate Disruption* (2017) which won the CSA Outstanding Book Award. He further reported that he took some duplicate books from the old Center office collection for the auction at the CSA meeting. Total bids netted the CSA about \$75.

Don mentioned that the CSA will meet at the historic Swedish community of Bishop Hill, Illinois next October 4, 5, and 6. He urged the board to check the CSA website for deadlines for paper proposals and registration.

On the International Communal Studies Association, Don expressed his gratitude that the Center has become a supporting liaison member which includes mutual cooperation and an annual contribution to insure that this important organization remains vital. He expressed hope that the Center board members and staff can attend and present papers at the next triennial ICSA conference in New England in June or July, 2019. The ICSA president, Dan McKanan of Harvard Divinity School, is the program chair for this meeting and will conduct a tour of the Camphill communities in the area which he has studied. There are many Camphill groups in various countries that provide care for physically and mentally handicapped individuals.

Don showed the Fall 2017 issue of *Communities Magazine* that celebrated the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its publisher, the Fellowship for Intentional Community. The Center served as headquarters for the FIC in the late 1980s and early 1990s. This issue of *Communities* was underwritten by the CSA as a boost to the work of the financially challenged FIC, and it carried articles by CSA members Deborah Altus, Susan Matarese, and Don. Don also alerted the board that the community of Koinonia in Georgia where Habitat for Humanity originated is celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> year of its founding but suffered the loss of much of its pecan orchard during the recent hurricane. He encouraged board members to consider making product purchases or donations to assist this memorable community of racial equality, peace, and goodwill.

## 6. Other Items

- Graham Perry mentioned controversies related to one Civil War historical site development in Nashville.
- Board member Don Janzen emailed a list of items to consider that we will place on the Spring 2018 agenda.
- Harison thanked all attendees who were able to come to today's Board meeting, and reminded them of extra copies of books and journals left over from the Center's move to Rice Library available for adoption at Liberal Arts.

Meeting adjourned at 1:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Casey Harison, Director  
Marilyn Thielman, Administrative Assistant