Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites Celebrates Fundraising through 29th Annual Holiday Dinner & Auction

BETHLEHEM, PA, December 2021 – Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites (HBMS) celebrated 29 years of holiday fundraising at the annual Holiday Dinner & Auction on Saturday, December 4 at the ArtsQuest Center at SteelStacks with an online auction through the Givergy platform and livestream by ASR Media. The event was able to raise over $200,000 for HBMS.

After a year of virtual events, this fantastic hybrid, virtual and in-person COVID-safe gathering raised funds to support, protect and maintain 20 historic buildings and almost three centuries of history in Historic Bethlehem. Events like the Holiday Dinner and Art Auction have enabled Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites to produce engaging and accessible exhibitions, tours, and programs for all ages.

The night kicked off with a Benefactors’ Cocktail Reception and the opening of the art and silent auctions in the Blast Furnace Room, with a spectacular backdrop of the lit-up steel stacks and holiday decorations outside. Many were glad to greet old friends after almost two-years apart. Guests then enjoyed dinner and complimentary wine in the Musikfest Café with music sponsored by the Taylor Music Fund while taking part in the live auction, where they bid on exceptional items such as the featured artwork *Colonial Quarter Evening Shadows* by Elena Shackleton. This masterful painting captures the serenity of the Colonial Industrial Quarter, alongside the Monocacy Creek in winter. The painting was the second highest selling painting in the history of the Holiday Dinner, at $12,000.

Another painting saw much fanfare, *Winter Barn* by Ruth Pook. Ruth’s interest in art began early, at the age of 18. Her portraits and landscapes hang in galleries and homes throughout the United States and Canada. Her most frequent subjects were the beautiful landscapes surrounding her summer home on St. Joseph’s Island, Ontario and the farmlands of eastern Pennsylvania. Ruth passed away in 2015 at the age of 92.

Ruth’s daughter, Peggy, has been a longtime supporter of The Holiday Dinner and Art Auction, even serving on the committee for several years. Though she was not able to attend in person this year, when she learned that one of her mother’s pieces was listed in the auction, she immediately put in a bid. She continued to check on the auction from the event she attended that evening via the online platform. The painting had attracted other admirers who put in competing bids, and Peggy had to step out on occasion, throughout the evening, to ensure she still had the highest bid. At the end of the night, Peggy Pook prevailed and was able to add *Winter Barn* to her personal art collection. “I love my mom’s paintings- whenever I find one, I buy it! This is a win-win- it’s a good cause.” Peggy said. “It’s back in Pook ownership and already hanging in my husband’s office.”

The 2021 individual honoree was Judy Thomas, who for over 50 years, has been involved with Historic Bethlehem helping to preserve the historic Moravian buildings which have been so much a part of her
The 2021 business honoree was Quadrant, a proud supporter of Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites.

The event was sponsored by Presenting Sponsor: Moravian Village, Major Sponsor: Allied Building Group, and Crystal Sponsors: B. Braun and The Topper Foundation.

The Holiday Dinner & Auction committee was made up of Dolly Dyer, Judy Savchak, Gail Shook, Suzanne Mason, Joel C. Rosenfeld, Andrea Foucek, Ilene Wood, Jennifer Van De Voorde. The Art Committee members were Diane Hutchinson, Elena Shackleton, Wendy Steed and Jennifer Van De Voorde.

Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites is a not-for-profit institution that brings to life three centuries of American history. Historic Bethlehem tells the story of a small town of great influence, home to some of our nation’s early settlers, to the first pumped municipal water system in the American colonies, and to one of the world’s greatest industrial companies. Historic Bethlehem is located in eastern Pennsylvania, only an hour’s drive north from Philadelphia and 2 hours west of New York City. Historic Bethlehem is an Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and part of a National Historic Landmark District - a designated site on the US World Heritage Tentative List. HBMS is proud to be a part of the effort to bring World Heritage Site status to Historic Moravian Bethlehem. We are pleased to share that as of Spring 2021, HBMS will be working in tandem with international Moravian Sites – Herrnhut, Germany and Gracehill, Northern Ireland, UK to prepare a joint serial nomination to the World Heritage List – a first for the United States.

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