

Autumn 2015

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# Miracle of America Museum

MEMBER:  
MUSEUM ASSOC.  
OF MONTANA  
AND  
AMERICAN ASSOC.  
OF MUSEUMS

## QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

36094 Memory Lane Polson, MT 59860 406-883-6804 [www.miracleofamericamuseum.org](http://www.miracleofamericamuseum.org) • [info@miracleofamericamuseum.org](mailto:info@miracleofamericamuseum.org)

### Executive Board of Directors

Gil Mangels, President  
Ned Wilde, Board Chair  
Nancy Pray, secretary • Ryan Gage, Treasurer  
Brandy Wallace • Cathleen Wilde • Kendall Dupuis  
Mike Maddy • Kelly Bishop  
Annette Schiele • Art Mangels

### Endowment a priority

Priority is the raising of over three million dollars for the endowment fund. To help in that goal, we are including an insert page which we hope you will refer to often and become involved as you are able. Feel free to copy it and pass on to friends who may have won the lottery or otherwise don't know what to do with their estate.

## Live History Days 2015 another huge success!

Live history days was a huge success. We thank the regulars who have made this annual event so enjoyable for our visitors. Renée Loehr, again handled the concessions with her wonderful group of RSVP workers and the help of Shirlee Santorno, area RSVP coordinator. It is a wonderful program helping out various venues, so you might think about signing up. George Mahoney at Polson Bay Grocery, donated \$100

worth of fuel for our rigs giving rides. Jim Phillips, at Glacier Lake Sand and Gravel, donated a load of crush for our roadways which helped hold the dust down.

### Already planning next year –

I do have to mention two new exhibitors who have already committed for next year. Alessandra Alcalá, dressed as a Civil War Fifer, played and explained the different tunes that were actually commands to the troops to take certain actions.

Don Safford from Hot Springs is a professional flint knapper and exhibited his amazing talent making points, knives, etc. as well as a large display showing variations of arrow and spearheads depending on the

tribes, eras, and available materials from the area the tribes frequented or obtained by trading. Don also donated an atlatl with a 5-foot dart as well as a knife and spearhead.

## MOAM welcomes new board members

The most exciting news to report this quarter is the addition of board members Kelly Bishop, Brandy Wallace and Ryan Gage. They are all very capable and dedicated.

Ryan will now serve as our treasurer and Ned is the new board chairman. Stan Cohen's term had expired and we thank him for his support.

Board member Annette Schiele is heading up the committee to improve the gift shop. We would like to add meaningful souvenirs relating to the museum, Polson, Flathead Lake, or Montana. Visitors have requested pins, refrigerator magnets, key tags, cups with our museum logo, and a greater selection of shirts. If you have other suggestions, please let us know.



# Surplus sweep yields extraordinary discovery

Thanks to a donation of 12 sheets of plywood by Rick of Plum Creek Plywood, Columbia Falls, we were able to finish the agriculture building.

I always try to consolidate trips, so on the way home, I stopped in Kalispell to finish out my load with antiques, collectibles, etc. surplused by Flathead County from the old museum south of town. This was facilitated by Jessie Malone,

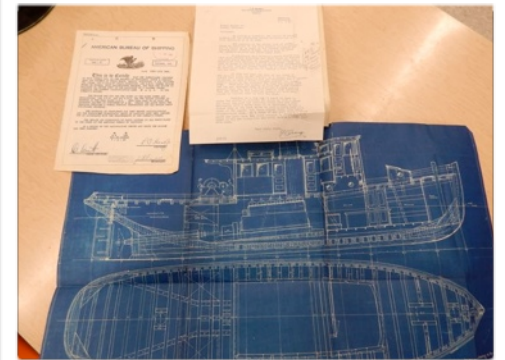
Flathead Museum board member, and Mike Pence, Flathead County Administrator, and approved by the Flathead Co. Commissioners. In the mix were numerous boxes of maps and records dating back to 1906. Of course Polson was a part of Flathead County until 1923, so some items were pertinent to local history.

## Paul Bunyan plans unearthed!

Imagine my excitement when I found two files totaling 2 ½ inches thick of all the correspondence concerning the need for and the building of the Paul Bunyan Logging Tow Boat for Somers Lumber Co. which was owned by Great Northern Railway. Discovering the blueprints of the boat and the operating manual for the engine was the frosting on the cake.

One of the pieces in the photo below is a signed letter by L.E. Geary, naval architect, engineer, and broker, the most notable ship designer on the west coast. The other paper is the certificate of the engine for the Paul Bunyan stating it had passed all tests and was suitable for use. Dated 24 July 1926.

I've been told that building the cover over the Paul Bunyan should start soon.



## MOAM gets Montana border sign

Another exciting acquisition would not have been possible from Mt. Dept. of Transportation without the intervention of Governor Steve Bullock and staff member, Dave Parker on our behalf. Suffice it to say, we are honored to have one of the border signs which I picked up in Helena and installed it the next day.



Remember roller-skating car hops? **Nellie Heckman** donated this A&W car tray.

## We salute our Members and donors

**Memberships:** Kelly Bishop, Nancy Pray, Brandy Wallace, Cathleen Wilde, and Ned Wilde.

**Family Memberships:** Lulu Stock, Patricia Wooldridge, Chris Pugh.

**Corporate level:** Western Montana Community Telephone Inc. (Jay Preston)

**Other substantial donations include:** George and Brenda Brimhall, Samuel and Nancy Gary, Grace Larson, Jim Paugh, and Acel Thacker.



## Unexpected visitor

An unexpected but welcome visitor caught me off guard as I was checking my orchard peach and plum trees. A strange noise turned out to be this Great Horned Owl clacking his beak to warn me as I almost stepped on him.

Newsletter layout courtesy of Carmine Mowbray of



# MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS

Item donations are sometimes overwhelming. I do not always feature them right away, as I want to do more research on their use and history. A couple of large items will wait until they tie in with another related item or story.

Here are a few for this last quarter:

**Carl Skabronski** – cash donation as well as several antique tools, etc. My favorites were a leather mail bag that hung over the saddlehorn and was used between Salmon, Idaho and Missoula around the turn of the last century. The other item is in the category of “Sweetheart Jewelry” and is a WWII gold and mother of pearl “Son in the service” locket. I have never found one in the original pouch, case, and box before;



**Howard Hudson** – ‘40s and ‘50s era labeled cans and bottles, matchbooks, Glacier Park souvenirs, etc.;

**Pat Deyo** – brass Pyrene fire extinguisher, Pflueger rod and reel, etc.;

**Dick Giffin** – glass- throw ball fire extinguishers;

**Chuck Harris** – Cub and Boy Scout uniforms from 1954 thru 1964, army uniform from 1966 thru 1969, US Forest Service, and fire dept. uniforms from 1970 thru 2000;

**Gene Hensen** – child’s handmade, hand-pulled bobsled;

**Chuck Trembley** – cameras, valve grinding machines, automotive tools, etc.;

**Darold Schaffer** – horse hames, automotive tools, etc.;

**Tom Needham** – projectors and fixed gun sight assembly;

**Greta Johnston** – Three leather horse collars, three display boards of mounted 18” lengths of vintage barb wire totaling about 100 pieces, books on barb wire history;

**Jim Gerrity** – LA International circa 1930’s stationary engine, in memory of Bernard Gerrity;



**Bob Skans** – Vietnam War folding, wheeled stretcher;

**Bob Lassila** – WWII photograph scrapbook, etc.;

**Dr. Paul Hanson** – Two loads of scrap metal, plumbing fittings, dribs and dabs of oil and prestone from a garage clean out. NOTE I can often use bits of metal

for sculptures or restoration, and the rest I recycle as a fund raiser. Odd

leftover oil and prestone, get used in the antique engines, etc. Often times,

license plates show up in the corners or nailed to the wall. We are getting

low on those we sell in our gift shop and I also need to find some for our display collection or to coincide with

the year of our display vehicles;

**Gary Mahugh** – Large CO<sub>2</sub> fire extinguisher for use in blacksmith shop, etc.;

**Jim Schultz** – National Cash Register Co. Credit File (at left) that would

have been used in early day stores for charging customers, and three vintage fire extinguishers;

**Nellie Heckman** – A & W Root Beer car hop tray. Now that brings back

some pleasant memories! See photo on

page 2.





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Miracle of America Museum honors one of America's most important

documents.

September 17 is "United States Constitution Day, and we encourage each American to take a moment and read or re-read our Founding Fathers' masterpiece. It's available at MOAM for \$1.50 or online at:

<http://constitutionus.com>

## "A Night at the Museum" - Second Thursdays!

6:30 pm at MOAM

Free and fun family entertainment.

Movies!! Readings!!

Displays and tours of select items!!

- **October 8** - *The World's Fastest Indian*. Plus a tour of the Indians in the MOAMs motorcycle collection.
- **November 12** - *America Over There*, America's involvement in WW1, the war to end all wars, plus a tour of rare artifacts revolving around this subject. A fitting topic just a day after the celebration of Armistice Day, now known as Veterans Day.
- **December 10** - *Tora-Tora-Tora*- just three days after the remembrance of the "day that will live in infamy" we will show this very accurate 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox feature-length movie. Plus a tour of related artifacts in the museum displays.



**Treats and donations are welcome for "Night at the Museum".**  
Call Gil, 406-883-6264.



# Look how we've grown!

**4.5 acres  
of  
intriguing  
history!**

**AWARD-  
WINNING  
MUSEUM**

## Looking to the future of MOAM

People like to support a winner. Visitors leave comments in our book saying we bring them joy and pleasure. We host thousands of folks each year.

It is to the future that we are making an appeal. To create a legacy, we need a couple of million more dollars added to our endowment in order to keep the museum maintained and operating. Perhaps you, a friend or acquaintance is a wealthy person who could invest in our mission to provide an interactive place to really *experience* American history.

Perhaps you could update your will and set aside a percentage to the museum without taking food from your heirs. Other gifts in the form of property, vehicles, art, guns, etc. might be a satisfying way to help.

Let me state that neither I nor the board receive any remuneration. Please compare with other charitable organizations that you support. Remember, your heirs can benefit from the investment you are making in Miracle of America Museum as a place to bring their families for meaningful experiences. *- Gil Mangels*

## Here's what some of our many visitors said about the museum:

- \* *Wonderful! Interesting!*
- \* *The most amazing experience! Thank you!*
- \* *Excellent! We don't have such a museum in France. Thanks!*
- \* *Absolutely amazing. I've never been anywhere like it.*
- \* *Way better than Disney World*
- \* *The BEST!*
- \* *A most amazing place - Rivals the Smithsonian. Truly an experience!! God Bless.*
- \* *This is fantastic! Lots of fun going down Memory Lane. Also we applaud your mission to preserve our freedom through education about our past.*
- \* *Best Money we've ever spent!*

SEE THE  
**MIRACLE OF  
AMERICA MUSEUM**  
POLSON, MONTANA



# Preserving and presenting history



## *INVEST in our FUTURE*

Miracle of America Museum provides an environment for the preservation and presentation of history for all ages. Admissions generate income and help us pay the operational expenses, but they are not enough to cover all the costs of running the museum. Additional resources ensure that educational programs continue and preservation and exhibits can be maintained. Please consider investing in the future by donating today.

The Endowment Fund provides long-term sustainable income for MOAM. Donations to this fund are invested for perpetuity and only the interest is tapped for operating.

Your donation to the Endowment Fund is a way of perpetuating your support for the Museum.

All memorial, planned and deferred gifts are designated to the Endowment Fund.

## *Ways to help*

### **Become a Member**

#### *Annual Dues:*

Single \$25; Family \$50;  
Sustaining \$100;  
Corporate \$200;  
Lifetime \$1000.

*Membership includes free admission, newsletter, and discount in gift shop. Call, write or email us!*

Volunteer time or skills

Donate items for display

Donate salable items for fundraisers

Make Gifts of Bequests, Real Estate, Stocks and Bonds, Cash, Trusts, Charitable Gift Annuities, Securities

Memorials

Life Insurance Gifts

Specify a certain percentage in your will

Specify memorials in your obituary to the MOAM

*Consult your tax or estate planner for ways to enjoy tax advantages.*

Donate on our secure PayPal site:  
[info@MiracleOfAmericaMuseum.org](mailto:info@MiracleOfAmericaMuseum.org)

