

Winter 2015

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Miracle of America Museum

MEMBER:
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QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

36094 Memory Lane Polson, MT 59860 406-883-6804 www.miracleofamericamuseum.org • info@miracleofamericamuseum.org

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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.

Fifty international countries add to total— New attendance record

It's a very hectic fall as we rush to get more items protected from the elements and expected winter weather. We set a new attendance record of visitors from 50 international countries, and it looks like our overall attendance will be over 15,000.

October included a museum board meeting, an artist reception at the Sandpiper Gallery where I was invited to display five metal and mixed media sculptures for a month. For the memorial service for veteran Guy Pulse, I used the Vietnam-era jeep which had identical markings to one he used in 'Nam. With his great grandson as co-driver, we transported his urn from the family home to the cemetery. I also portrayed David Polson for the fourth year at the "stories and stones" program at the old Missoula cemetery.

The CTEP grant folks finally thought we had jumped through enough hoops and allowed us to erect the cover over the Paul Bunyan logging tow boat. Hu Beaver Builders and his crew did their usual fine job in a timely manner. Because of additional guidelines, hoops, and hurdles, it cost more than planned. Hu ate some of it and the museum budget was stretched a bit. That took most of the money that we would have used to do repairs to the deck and railing so we could again allow people to board.

A cash donation mentioned last quarter and increased visitation (door receipts) allowed us to finally roof the fire hall building. We have been working on organizing that building into a display rather than a catch-all.

Our November "Night at the Museum" celebrated Veterans Day (originally called Armistice Day) which ended WW1 on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. We had about 50 in attendance including several youth. The

program was a real hit thanks to three beautiful young ladies who played and sang ten WW1 songs. Mother, Jackie

Johnson on guitar; and daughters Sylvie and Angelina on fiddles had fun, especially singing "Sister Susie's Sewing Shirts for Soldiers" We couldn't get any takers from the audience to sing the chorus, though, even when I offered an ice cream bar. Go ahead and try saying the song title over a few times.



Duplicates go to other collections – MOAM collection receives large local artifact

A few duplicate items which we did not need were offered free to other non-profit museums in Montana. Two different pike poles went to the Seeley Lake Historical Society and two different Butte miner's tags went to the School of Mines collection. The 14-ft long pike poles were used by men called "River Pigs" to poke, prod, push, or steer logs during the river drives, (locally) floating the logs to Flathead Lake so they could be contained by the boundary logs boom chained together. They were then pulled to the sawmills by logging tow boats. Pike poles were then used to position logs on to the pickup chain which carried the log into the saw.

The largest item donated this quarter was a 10-ft logging arch wheel from the Dr. Van Kirke Nelson family who had displayed it at the Glacier Art Gallery. Son Greg loaded it for us.

This wheel was one of a pair that when pulled by work animals with the front of the log or logs chained or cabled off the ground to the axle, made skidding logs easier.



MOAM Gift Shop selection expands

The museum board gift shop committee has been researching the best type of saleable souvenirs to stock. We welcome your ideas. I don't want to sell "rubber Snakes," but more meaningful items that could be useful, and a reminder of a fun time at the museum and in Montana. Upcoming will be a reorganizing of the gift shop area.

Stop in and see what we already have in the way of nice gifts, books and stocking stuffers for Christmas. We just got in our first dozen beautiful cups/

mugs handmade on a wheel at Whitefish pottery. These have a nice wide base, are lead free, dishwasher safe, and microwave proof. Suggested retail is \$21.95, but we are pricing these at \$20 as an introductory price. I had personally visited Whitefish Pottery earlier this fall and saw the hand work that goes into their product and was impressed enough to submit an order with our logo. These are untouched by automatic machines and not available in box stores. As you nurse your hot



drink, it will also warm your soul to know that your purchase helped our museum. I'm guessing we could mail one for around \$5.

We salute our Members and donors

Membership renewals came from **Pat Fleming** and **Dave Marshall**.

While we are on this subject, it is hard for me to keep track of when renewals are due like Joanne used to do. Why not renew in December to make it easier?

Buying a family membership as a Christmas gift would be a real memory-builder.

Your gift to the endowment fund will help insure the museum will go on when I can't.



Our local green thumb is appreciated

Thanks go to our green thumb neighbor to the east, **Charles Bertsch**, for gracing our front entrance with two large pots of beautiful flowers. They were a cheerful and colorful greeting to our visitors all summer.

And a tip of the hat to community helpers

Return visitors notice our more organized and neater appearance, some new signage, and more restoration.

As I look back, I am satisfied we have used our time and budget wisely. Part of the progress has been due to persons in the "Experience Works" program, and Retired Senior Volunteer Program, or "RSVP." Why not check them out ?

MOAM membership – for Christmas!

Newsletter layout courtesy of
Carmine Mowbray of



MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS

The most valuable donation (monetarily) was a 1973 Harley Davidson 74" Shovelhead motorcycle and sidecar from **Ronald Hoefke** of Hamilton who delivered it on a nice aluminum trailer which he also donated. Ron had special artwork applied to the bike and car to honor his father, M/Sgt. Robert Hoefke, a two-time Purple Heart recipient in WWII. Bob next was assigned to Pusan, Korea where he was instrumental in starting an orphanage for children whose parents had been killed by the North Korean Communists.



The Hoefke Harley is outfitted with extra lights to participate in the "Parade of Light" Christmas parade in Polson on Dec. 4.

A vintage oak and wicker wheelchair donated by **Andy and Pat Young** is the neatest one I've seen. It has all wooden wheels including the hand wheels. No visible makers name or date, but the



workmanship resembles that of the Bentwood Co. (PIC) who started business in 1830. Several years ago, I was perusing the back lot of Antique Auto Ranch/Ford'N More in Spokane, WA looking for a few Model T Ford parts when I spied a

circa-1940's International pickup cab and chassis with one door hanging on it. What caught my attention was the faded name of Davis Mercantile Co., Polson, Mont. "Phone 9." A portion of their business is where Lake County Leader is on 2nd Ave. (Hwy 93). The larger items and plumbing had to be taken out the rear entrance, fronting North Main Street.

As a boy, I used to buy Case brand stockmans three-bladed pocket knives there which were excellent for playing "stretch" at school where most boys and some girls carried pocket knives. Amazing that in 12 years attendance, no one was ever knifed. In the spring, dad would always give me two dollars to buy a new pocket watch at Davis Merc so I would be able to change sprinkler pipe at the prescribed time.



Anyhow, I thought that door should be preserved as part of Polson history, but didn't know if the budget could justify the asking price. Well, Sharon Coppedge Fulton – a niece of John Davis, the last of the family to operate the store – put me in contact with John's son, **Dean Davis** from MN. He graciously funded the project. Mark Nelson happened to be in Spokane and brought the door here and Heather Holmes repainted the sign to be more legible. I mounted a 1950 business calendar and old invoices, etc. dating back to 1942 in the window opening. It is now on display in our mercantile building behind the school;

Two large framed prints by Oglala Lakota Sioux artist, Elton A. Three Stars Sr. were donated by **Susan Stocks**;

Howard Hudson brought us Glacier Park memorabilia/souvenirs, a glass and brass garden "Hudson" brand sprayer, and useful misc;

Gehrand Bechard donated 8 branding irons;

Jim Doolittle gifted us 50 16mm Hollywood movies in tin film cans.



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*Have a joyous
and blessed
Christmas*

LIVE HISTORY
DAYS
July 16 and 17, 2016

"A Night at the Museum" - Fourth Thursdays!

6:30 pm at MOAM

Free and fun family entertainment.
Movies!! Readings!!
Displays and tours of select items!!

A Night at the Museum—Note our change to the fourth Thursdays.

• **January 28**—"A Pair of Kings" celebrating the birthdays of Martin Luther King by examining collectables in our Black History displays and sharing some important quotes from him followed by an early movie of the "King" of rock and roll, Elvis.

• **February 25** – Birthday celebration for several important persons who contributed positively to our society. This includes Thomas Edison, Lincoln, Longfellow, Reagan, Norman Rockwell, and George Washington. Bring and share your favorite poem, quote, or painting of these great persons or others born in February.

• **March 24** – To get us into the true spirit of Easter, we will show the classic feature length movie, "The Robe".

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



Our 1952 Tucker GNP Sno Track
Got Snow?

