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# Miracle of America Museum

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

Autumn 2020

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, Chief Executive Officer  
David Bauer, Board Chair  
Nancy Pray, Secretary  
Ryan Gage, Treasurer  
Board members: Brandy Wallace,  
Cathleen Wilde, Helen Mangels,  
Art Mangels, Sam Allred,  
Carol Edger,  
and Nola Dupuis-Catlett

## Seeking dedicated board member—

MOAM Board member Annette Schiele served us with enthusiasm and printed our return address labels for several years.

For personal and family responsibilities, she has retired from the board. That leaves an opening. A board member should have the best interest of the museum at heart. The American Alliance of Museums describes the work of the Board of Directors as:

"Board members have many responsibilities that fall within the board's broad roles of setting the organization's direction, ensuring necessary resources, and providing over-sight. They are guardians of the mission, ensure compliance with legal and financial requirements, and enforce ethical guidelines for their organization. They are policymakers, fundraisers, ambassadors, partners with the chief executive, and strategic thinkers. They monitor progress, evaluate the performance of the organization and the chief executive, and demonstrate integrity in everything they do on behalf of the organization."

## Grants go far funding improvements at MOAM

Thanks to a grant from the **Greater Polson Community Foundation**, we have been able to rescue/restore portions of the Paul Bunyan logging towboat which is so historic to

Flathead Lake. That grant and our emergency matching funds have allowed us to purchase material and hire David to stabilize weaknesses from dry rot, and begin work on the deck and rail. Our goal is to allow visitors to again board it by next summer.



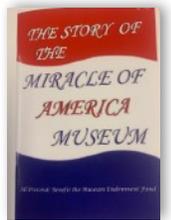
## 50th State visits; Book sales up

We've had many positives related to the museum, in spite of the chaos and negative waves in the world today. In fact, there will hardly be room to report all of them. Rhode Island, our 50th state, visited in August. Canadian visitors are those who came to visit the States before the pandemic, and the edict land locked them in the U.S. In spite of things, we did score four provinces and 22 countries!

We continue to stay open daily from 9 to 5. Visitation count is down, but when we hear of businesses who had to close – some permanently – we are thankful to provide this essential service to the public. We continue to stress care and sanitize often. We also strive to stay current with dangers lurking about so we have a couple of reminders to warn people to not pet the Bison and act responsibly.

Several visitors left generous tips and some have returned several times during the year, often bringing friends or family, which always encourages us.

Sales for our 50 page souvenir booklet, "The Story of the Miracle of America Museum," have increased also. If you would like a copy mailed, they are \$10 postpaid, or buy them here from our gift shop for \$7.50.



An increasing number of visitors are repeats or word of mouth referrals. More and more locals are bringing or telling friends or relatives. All of these sources of publicity are so important as print advertising has become less effective and more costly.

**Signs lead the way** – Thanks to a generous grant from **Jim and Donna Pomajevich** we have been able to refresh six of our highway road signs. Many visitors mention that they were attracted to us by our road signs. If you have property where you think a sign might help us, please let us know. Snoopy and Charlie Brown in their yellow bi-plane as well as other attractions cause a lot of traffic to stop in as well.



# Sale of duplicates strengthens Museum, and boosts Endowment

We went to a couple auto swap meets/flea markets being successful in selling duplicate, unwanted, or personal items and trading for a few museum related goodies at each place. I also sold a couple of vehicles as it was going to cost way too much to make them displayable. The money went into the museum endowment fund. However, these sales may have prompted a rumor that I was selling off the museum. **NOT SO!** My intention has always been to preserve the museum until the Lord comes and then it is in His hands. Until that time however, we need to keep enlarging the endowment fund so the interest from that will hire staff when I check out or am

incapacitated. Please remember us in you wills or other ways explained in our donation section. The cartoon has proven true in some instances we've been made aware of.



## *We salute our Members and Donors*

**Annual Support Levels: Single \$50;  
Family \$100; Corporate \$200; Life \$1,000**

**Membership includes free admission, newsletter and discount in our Gift Shop, plus the satisfaction that you are supporting our mission to preserve history.**



Recent donors were: **Garry and Janie Wunderwald, S. Ann Ross, Western Montana Community Tel, Inc. dba Access Montana (formerly Ronan Telephone), Whitefish Credit Union, Gary and Francis Abbey, and Robert and Donna Day.**

Family memberships include **Ron Fuller and Matthew Haack.** It is hard to remember to credit all the folks who make monetary donations at various times, some even the day our newsletter is printed. Please be aware that we are grateful for all help and forgive me if I don't mention you by name. We endeavor to use all money wisely and remind you that neither Gil nor Helen are paid from the museum.

Donor **Ralph Westermann** has advanced \$200 to pay for a

school or group without other means to enjoy a tour of our museum for fun, and for the benefit of a visit here.

Miscellaneous financial help occasionally comes in from Amazon Smile when shoppers select **Miracle of America Museum Story, Inc** as their non-profit of choice. It doesn't cost the shopper any more. Another way has been Facebook "Network for Good"/ "Go Fund Me" causes. For my birthday this year, among the donors were: **Wanda Kemp Maxson, Bill Hutchins, Marty Michelson, Frank Hale, Carl C. Ibsen, Patrice Gerrie, Brandon Wilde, Jennifer Mangels, Roger Bansemer, Ruth E. Neilan, Sarah Hall, and Steve Noe.** In addition to bountiful tips in our receptacles, anonymous donors have been generous, as well.

# MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS

Surveying our physical/item donations this past quarter has been somewhat overwhelming, but a



complete surveyors Keuffel & Esser surveyors transit with its carrying case, plumb bob, and tripod certainly rates some attention. It was made in

the 1940s and used by Jessie M. Jardine who lived from 1888 to 1980. It was donated by daughter **Bernadette** and her husband **Tom Sullivan** from

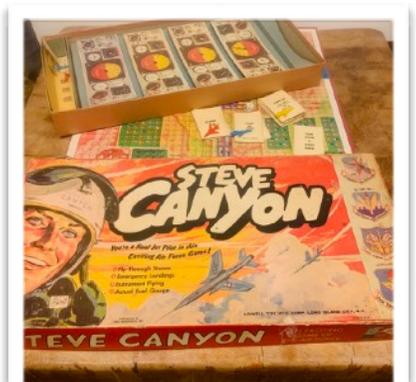
Billings. It is displayed in our railroad station/land office which houses many rare artifacts as well as local history.

These shoes are baby-sized leather imitations of "Father's loafers" and in 1946 when a boy grew so fast that he didn't wear them out, the shoes were saved for a sibling or the next generation. **Carmine Mowbray** brought these in, and said her brother Jeff outgrew them at around two years old in 1948.



Chief picker, **Howard Hudson** is always looking out for us as he haunts garage sales,

sometimes getting things donated as he tells the seller it is for the museum. Thanks to him, we are amassing quite a library of Montana history books. *Now if I could just remember what I have read!* Another rare item was a 1959 board game. How many of you youngsters remember hero fighter pilot Steve Canyon?



## October brings ghoulish decor

Near Mid-October, we will be displaying some circa 1920 antique and quite unique Halloween decorations as historical artifacts brought in by **Jackie Gran**. How about this if you are asked to “mask up”?



## What does Gil do in his spare time?

What does Gil do in his spare time? Some restorations take a while due to finding the correct parts, logistics as far as getting the item over to his machine and welding shop, allotted time, affordability, and sometimes help. One such item was his 1946 Knucklehead Harley. Friend **Jim Beyer** “Peeper” from Missoula was just the help he needed to replace some correct parts and get it back on display. Jim had also provided parts for the Snoopy Bi-plane which attracts much attention.



## Country church coming to MOAM!

Serious readers of our previous issue might remember that we asked if anyone would like to finance the building or moving of a church to the Museum grounds.

A donor sent a check for \$3,000 as seed money for that project to get it started.

We visualize either building one, remodeling a structure we could move here resembling a typical country church or one like the church in Ravalli. It would be non-denominational and could be used for weddings or memorials, etc.

Speaking of weddings, another one was performed on the porch of our general store last month and the grateful bride and groom stuffed \$200 in our tip jar!



## B17 “Nine-O-Nine” tragedy commemorated

We’ll soon be reaching a first year anniversary of another tragic event, the wreck of the Commemorative Air Force’s B17 Flying Fortress, 9-0-9.

We lost pilot Mac and others in the flaming crash.

Fortunately our good friend **Frank Hale** who is pictured in the co-pilot’s seat was home in Kalispell at the time of the crash.

To continue with the bomber barracks display, we need to find a few more sheepskin flight jackets and lined boots. Any condition is fine. These became more fragile with age, and may have moths or bugs in them, so bring them to the shop where Gil will check them over and do any cleaning, repairing or insect abatement.



## Are YOU a Senior with artistic talent? Part-time paid position open

Regarding MOAM painters, we have lost **Ramona Cajune** from the Experience Works program and will miss her artistic talent.

That leaves an opening under that program for a receptionist or other talent by working for pay about 20 hours a week. You must be a senior and low income.

For more information inquire with us.

## Gun Shop display peppered with pistols

Room problems also play a part in setting up some displays. The gun shop has been needing improvement in one particular corner. Finally, Gil decided he needed to arrange the corner wall display of mostly pistols you see here. He admits some displays are a bit crowded, but many visitors like it that way where they can stand in one place and see so much.





## MOAM donations and memberships make thoughtful gifts!

Help MOAM preserve history for posterity. You can choose any amount and it is entirely tax deductible to the extent of the law. Your contribution goes into the MOAM

Endowment, or your choice of projects, in the recipient's name. Browse our Gift shop — Many Montana-made items, and every purchase helps us fulfill our mission.

We're open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. all year long in spite of closures. We consider ourselves "Essential Service" in teaching our upcoming generations about the importance of the US Constitution. Watch our Facebook page for updates.

### Easy and secure ways to support MOAM

We encourage people to shop at home, but when you shop using Amazon Smile and wish to select MOAM as your charity, note that we are listed as *Miracle of America Story Inc.*

Occasionally someone will set up a GoFundMe option on our Facebook page. We appreciate this also, and Facebook users may see that option from time to time.



## Highlights of the fun during Live History Days, 2020

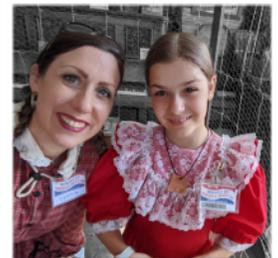


Live History Days 2020 went better than expected, considering world conditions. A new exhibitor this year was leather worker **Paul Hammond**.

We were grateful for all of our volunteers, many of whom have helped previously. A nice surprise was grandson Ned Wilde and family from Beaverton, OR, with everyone helping. Pictured is granddaughter-in-law Lynnise being a school marm, and pupil great granddaughter Natalie. Room and memory doesn't allow mention of everyone, but board president, **Dave Bauer** kept busy

giving rides in our circa 1940 Fly-O-Plane. It brought back a lot of memories for folks who remembered them from circus and carnival days of yore.

We've been told that it is one of only two or three still operating in the world, so we feel very privileged to own it. Because of liability concerns, we do not lift the planes up in the air, but it still brings a lot of smiles. **Tim Taylor** joined **Wilfred Kenmille** both days for musical entertainment. Tim, by the way has helped do some painting projects.



Live History days  
July 18-19, 2021!



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