



# Miracle of America Museum

MEMBER:  
MUSEUM ASSOC.  
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OF MUSEUMS

Spring 2024

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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## Executive Board of Directors

Gil Mangels, Chief Executive Officer and Board Chair; Helen Mangels, Secretary; Ryan Gage, Treasurer; Board members: Brandy Wallace, Cathleen Wilde, Art Mangels, Sam Allred, Carol Edger, and Julie Weber

## 35 States, International Visitation

Count is picking up after some tough weather. As of this date, we have had visitors from 35 states, three Canadian provinces, and nine countries. A wonderful family of four from Uganda really had fun as their smiles will attest.



Stillwater Christian School students sit for a quick pic. Teacher Ryan O'Rourke wrote, "Thanks for a great visit."

## Wishing All the Joy of the Season

Of course at the top of our list is to wish you a Happy Easter as you contemplate the resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ from the tomb making it possible for all to be resurrected into life eternal. Even a secular post card from 1900 symbolizes new birth in the form of baby chicks' new life.



## Winter Wallops Winter Fest

– Watch for machines during Live History Days

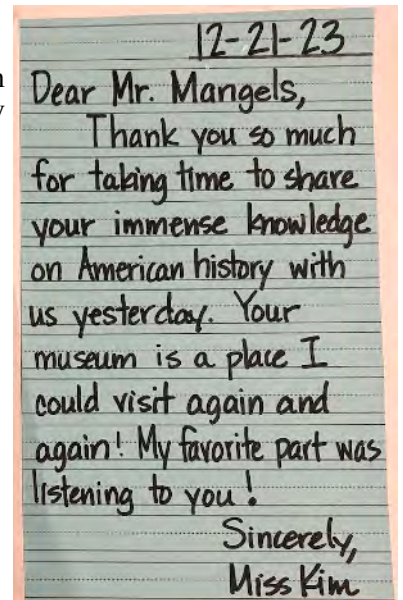
If you don't think time is flying past, just write a quarterly newsletter. Our Winter Fest got frozen out this January as the temps in the morning came all the way up to minus 19 degrees below zero. We did have 16 visitors that day, but no rigs would start and it would have been dangerous riding with the wind chill. Scheduled participants want to try again next winter and suggested a summer show of their vintage snow machines in conjunction with our Live History Days, July 20-21.

## MOAM Hosts Appreciative Students

School tours included youngsters from Dayton, and high schoolers from Stillwater Christian in Kalispell, and were a special joy to host. All were respectful, interested and responsive.

Many schools bus students all over the state to play sports and don't bring them here for a school field trip. It then depends on the students themselves and the parents to encourage the teachers to include us.

If you want to see some of our interpretational tours, just Google our name and watch some of our short YouTube videos. Of course we encourage discussion during live tours.



## Tiny Buckles . . .

While grateful, new donations coming in after the last newsletter can be a challenge because we must store a lot of it in our small apartment until we can photograph it, write it up, then work it in to an established display. So many unique items still show up, it is a challenge to list them here.

We just received four pairs of vintage baby shoes donated by **Jane Holland**, one pair with buckles, bringing to mind the nursery rhyme "One, two, buckle my shoe". Are nursery rhymes even in vogue in this AI (artificial intelligence) society anymore?



## MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS

I had not realized there was so much mining west of Kalispell, and around Hogheaven and Niarada until **Conrad Gipe** brought in a load of

mining maps, charts, lamps and other related equipment. It was the wishes of miner **Donald Lindblom** that they



come to us. On our bucket list, we will be reorganizing the mining building. While we do not intend to compete with the World of Mining in Butte, We do have some very unique items. The plier-like looking thing in the picture was for crimping the end of a blasting cap on the end of the fuse. A bit safer I imagine than some of the old timers clenching it with their teeth.

Chief picker, **Howard Hudson** always finds interesting items, and our Glacier Park collection keeps growing. Some of it I included in an article for their centennial a few years back. You may find it under "Crown of the Continent" and our museum name.

**Bob Day** brought in two bayonets, circa Civil War and earlier. His wife, **Donna** always fills in as school marm during Live History Days, which will be July 20-21 this year.

**Nancy Van Zant** donated a silver plated clarinet and case. It



was well used, so some of the plating had worn off, but that gives it character and has fit nicely in our music display.

**Curtis and Janette Rosman** delivered a 4 x 8-ft patriotic sign that they had used in parades, (*bottom image*)

**Virginia Butt Nygaard** brought in her late husband's Army uniform. Jerry had been a friend, and I had the honor in assisting with the Veteran Honor Guard at his memorial. Virginia came from a large family on a farm on the same section as my grandparents in Mountain View. Her father worked on our farm for many years. We have a large display of her grandfather's effects who served during the Spanish American War.



**Ray Burton** again donated some nice items including keys, one a railroad switch key from the *Atchison/Topeka/ Santa Fe*. For those unaccustomed to railroads, a switch was a heavy long handled device with which you would switch the rails,

sending the train onto a siding or another line. They had to be padlocked to prevent accidental or purposeful sabotage, causing a collision, or directing a train to a wrong destination. We have two antique switches in front of the train station

and another on our short line in the east yard. Ray also donated Boy Scout items. The 1936

handbook shows Mercurochrome being applied to a scraped knee. How many remember that the treatment stung worse than the pain of the wound.

**Jackie Gran** brought us a nice home use blackboard. That fits right in with today's emphasis on home schooling, and like the McGuffey readers and the Dick and Jane books of the last century, taught millions to read, but none to sin.

A nice Christmas present came from my cousin **Millie Mangels** who



### The American's Creed

I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people: whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed, a democracy in a republic, a sovereign Nation of many sovereign States: a perfect union, one and inseparable: established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.

I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it, to support its Constitution, to obey its laws to respect its flag, and to defend it against all enemies. By William Tyler Page



# MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS

mailed us our grandmother's butter dish. It is uncommon to have a handle which also kept the cover from sliding off if you were transporting it to a church social which I can picture her doing after she had hand-churned the butter from their own cow's milk. We can't imagine where she might have bought it in this area. Both grandparents came from northern Germany to America and by rail straight to Kalispell, then boat to the Polson area where they homesteaded.

**Mike Brooks**, in going through family effects discovered unique items

and gifted a cute little 1884 patent date alarm clock. I wish there were still clock repairman that could do a little repair. He also gave us the most complete traveling shaving kit I've seen. These were often given out to regular customers or employees as appreciation gifts.

**Beverly Drebes** sold her place and donated several kitchen items including a cherry pitter, pea sheller, grain grinder, etc. You'd think that with our having 27 cherry pitters, we would have all variations, but this adds yet a different model.

## 1964 Tragic Flood Documented

**Mike Brooks** also brought a Great Falls Tribune Booklet loaded with photos of the 1964 flood.

I knew it flooded part of Kalispell, but hadn't realized it had taken over twenty lives and did catastrophic damage around the Great Falls area. That spring, **Glenn Timm** flew me and another friend over Flathead Lake and you could see a stream of mud in the current flow from the inlet all the way down to the Polson Bridge.



## We Salute our Members, Donors, and Volunteers

**Greater Polson Community Foundation** again gifted us with their "Trust-Based Grant" of \$3,000 to use as we see fit. This year we opted for electrical installation in the antique machine shop/blacksmith building. This will enable us to demonstrate several of the machines while doing certain restoration projects. I will eventually video a couple of them working to post on Facebook.

Major individual financial donors are **George Brimhall, Denise and Don Loveless, and Mike Hutchin**. Other donors and memberships include, **Gerrie Boyle, Bill Hutchins, Pete Rupprecht, Robert Skans, Wanda C.Kemp-Maxon, Ellen Wicklund, and Garry and Janie Wunderwald** in memory of **Dick Christopher**.



Labor volunteers are also a blessing and include **Lee and Mrs. Perrin and Rick Wallace**.

### 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.**

*Now might be a good time to talk with your financial adviser about helping to perpetuate the museum. There are many different ways to invest in us to benefit the next generations.*

## Importance of Miracle Endowment

We are especially mindful of the importance of planning for the cost of operations when we can no longer rely mostly on volunteers in lead positions. Please consider the Miracle of America Endowment Fund. The endowment allows for a way to continue the Museum into the future. Donations are tax deductible.

You may send contributions to the Museum directly, or through the Montana Community Foundation (MCF) with your check payable to MCF/ Miracle of America Museum. Mail to 1 North Last Chance Gulch, Suite 1, Helena, MT 59601. See [www.mtcf.org/Giving/Ways-to-Give](http://www.mtcf.org/Giving/Ways-to-Give).

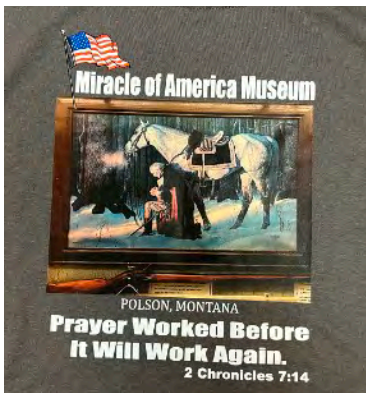
## Innovative Ice Sled Revived



A friend a couple of miles away found the skeletal shell of a homemade air powered ice sled in the brush on his land. A deal was made and among my

treasures was an airplane engine we made to fit, and using a drawknife, I carved out a pusher propeller. We built skis and since all the canvas covering had rotted off and we had some aluminum sheet left over from another project, David did a nice job of putting new skin on it.

**Super 1** and **North Lake County Library** had some leftover plexiglass that worked for its door windows and windshield. It will remain a static display, but wish it could tell us of its history.



## Take home a T!

We just stocked a few of these locally printed T shirts to sell in the gift shop. It features Arnold Friberg's iconic image of General George Washington praying at Valley Forge. Select yours while supplies last!

## Grateful for Barn Upgrades

A big thank you to **Sam Allred** for wiring in the barn and installing lights on both levels and a couple of outlets. The motion switches have a mind of their own so we still have adjusting to do there. The roof gutter over the ramp to the top floor was just installed, so that will make it safer.

## Culture Center Gifts Display Case –

Thanks to **Marie Torosian** and **Geraldine Hewankorn** of **Three Chiefs Culture Center** for donating two nice glass showcases that didn't fit their plans. The large one came in just in time to display some rare woodworking equipment in the ground floor level of the new barn. The barn exhibits are still a work in progress, so even this display isn't quite finished.



## Save the Date –

## Live History Days 2024!

We're announcing our Annual two-day Live History Days event July 20-21, 2024. It's bigger and better every year. We hope to revive the machinery from January 13's Winter Fest, so you can enjoy those operational displays as well.

We hope you plan a few hours here yourself, or for your annual family or friends reunion.



## Easter Quip to bring a Smile

Gil borrowed this little interview from Facebook: Pontius Pilate asks Joseph of Arimathea:

“You're one of the richest men in the region, and you've spent a whole fortune on a new tomb for you and your family and you want to give it to this man, Jesus?”

Joseph replies, “It's just for the weekend.”

Please enjoy our quarterly newsletter and share it with your family. If you are no longer interested in receiving a printed copy a note or phone call is appreciated.

**Open 9am to 5 pm  
Year-Round!**



## Enjoy the Museum's YouTube Channel!

We've added QR codes, and WiFi is available throughout the grounds to enhance your enjoyment of our displays. Learn “the rest of the story!”

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