



Miracle of America Museum

Spring 2015

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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Paul Bunyan Canopy funded

We have met the match for the Paul Bunyan logging tow boat protective canopy, however there is still a lot of paperwork and hoops to jump through, typical of a federal grant. A huge thank you to all who contributed!

Museum Thursday brings crowds

Thanks in part to good media coverage, our “Night at the Museum” Second Thursday brought a record attendance on February 12. Eighty folks came to watch “Timberjack” which netted enough money in the donation jar to pay for a new steel plasma cut and powder-coated sign to go on the Anaconda Company Mining’s Lumber Division logging cook shack.

Thanks, everyone, for coming and opening your wallets for this project.

See back page for upcoming “Night at the Museum” features, always 6:30 p.m. the second Thursday of each month.

Museum makes Capitol appearance; shown on “Wake Up Montana”

Spring seems to have sprung a little earlier this year, at least in northwest Montana, but I will not attempt to forecast the weather. The ice was the worst thing to contend with this winter and frost came early and went deep. That makes it greasy and slick in places as it begins to work itself out.

Good things have been happening at the museum although count is down somewhat, I imagine because of the weather and the poor exchange rate for our Canadian visitors to the north. The many repeat visitors who recognize that we are always improving and expanding is good for the ego. As of this printing we have had visitors from 20 states and six countries.

Among the happenings that have benefitted the museum was the “Museum Advocacy Day” in the rotunda of the state Capitol for which I displayed a restored 1946 Doodlebug

motor scooter and circulated information about the museum. I gave out about 50 free legislator passes and had a nice visit with Governor Bullock who liked the scooter.

In February I took a military Jeep and tribute trailer to the Whitefish Winter Carnival Parade. Since the theme was “Honoring Our Veterans” we had a good reception. (Photo, below right)

Some excellent unexpected publicity came from reporter Megan Boykoff of ABC Fox Montana on the “Wake up Montana.” show.

I also made a presentation to the Polson Shooters Association’s annual banquet and showed a few of the rare guns donated by Elmer Johnston. (Photo below, left.)



MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS

Diverse Donations add interest

The diversity of donations is amazing and often surprising. I certainly didn't hear this Train A' Comin' when **Jim Eggebrecht** beckoned me to the back of his Jeep and asked if I would be interested in a Christmas gift he had received several decades earlier. Still in its Marx box and in beautiful original condition, he didn't have to twist my arm. The cardboard



village looks like it had been set up once or twice, and we plan to include that in the layout in our train station.

Our chief picker, **Howard Hudson**, brought in more amazing collectables including 43 road

maps dating back to 1931. I love the artwork.

Ruth Caudill brought in a collection of National Geographic magazines from 1922 thru 1960. Her relative had missed a few years in the mid 1930's, in case you have those years lying around that would make the collection complete.

Just so I wouldn't run out of reading material, **Butch and Karen Pannage** donated a cast iron cook range and a collection of Life magazines from 1938 through 1950 and some old Colliers and misc. early womens magazines. These old magazines have neat ads that we can copy to place with the actual item or give us interesting history about some of our artifacts.

Robert Desch donated over 20 prints from famous area photographer, Herman Schnitzmeyer. Robert's uncle was one of the artists who would tint or color some of the black and whites for Herman.

Another 2 wheeler donated by **Lynn Weaver** was a "Tote Gote" made by his father, Harris in 1966. He incorporated a 5 hp Lauson engine and a Model A Ford transmission in building it.

A third two-wheel acquisition, a rare first-year production 1939 Whizzer bicycle attachment was obtained thru my trading some duplicate items I had in storage. Some missing mounting hardware was donated by **Mike Steiff** from Ohio who builds



Newsletter layout courtesy of
Carmine Mowbray of



modern Whizzers that are true works of art.

See www.whizzerworks.com.



Whizzers--foreground-- 1948, background--1939

New WWII book now available –

“Havoc Red – Surviving the Alaska-Siberia Route, 1943” by Polson writer Carmine Margo Mowbray is now available.

Beginning with important leads from Stan Cohen, research eventually took Mowbray from Deer Lodge, to the Yukon, Alaska and to Churchill's war rooms in London.

After Germany attacked Russia in 1941, Roosevelt allied with Stalin and promised 8,000 Lend-Lease aircraft and other war materiel to the Soviets.

Staged in Great Falls, brave Army Air Forces pilots ferried aircraft to Fairbanks with only a wavering compass, intermittent radio ranges and sketchy maps. But what emerged was a darker side of war. “There were breaches of security. It was a story that needed to be told,” Mowbray said.

The 232-page book is available at:

www.authormargomowbray.com or call 406-883-4677 for signed copies.

Soft cover and Kindle versions available at Amazon.

Mowbray will be at the Museum June 11 at 6:30 p.m. to share the story, and will discount books with a portion going to the Museum.

Photos adapted from originals in Stan Cohen archives.



We salute our Members and Cash donors

Memberships: Pat Deyo, Kathy Johnson/Rich Beauchamp and John Erkkila.

Misc. financial donors in addition to Jim and Donna Pomajevich – who gave a substantial donation – include the following, some who included more than their membership category: Beauchamp/Johnson, Pat Deyo, John Erkkila, Pat Fleming, Mike Hutchin, Grace Larson, Wanda Kemp Maxson, Brian Mahugh, Bill and Joan McDermott, Tony Ostheimer, Bert and Grace Poloson, Chris Pugh, and Bob Skans.



MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS

Haacks bequeath legendary '48 Panhead Harley Davidson to MOAM

While **Leonard Haack** was born and raised in the Polson area, he was needed to build airplanes in California during WWII.

After the war, he bought a surplus black and white Harley police bike for his ride home. At the exact moment he was entering Polson from across the bridge, **Sadie Peek**, a waitress at the Hut Café happened to look out the restaurant window and exclaim with a loud voice, "I want that bike".

Long story short, she eventually got that bike but she had to take Leonard with it. And even though Leonard would change Harleys a few

You could have
knocked me over with a
feather . . .

– Gil Mangels



times, he kept Sadie for over 68 years right up until his death.

Unbeknownst to me, Leonard had decided to will their last bike (a 1948 FL 74" Panhead Harley Davidson) to the Miracle of America Museum, and when daughter **Susie** made that announcement, you could have knocked me over with a feather. Bikers would call this a barn find, because it was just as it was put away after the last ride, but literally, this was a house find as they kept it in their house for security. Vintage bikers would also call this one of the most desirable of the Harleys. This was the last of the legendary springer front forks, going to the "Hydraglide" hydraulic front forks the next year which are still being used. 1948 was also the first year of the "Panhead" engine which Harley Davidson would use through 1965. It was so called because the engine valve cover looked like a cooking pan. This bike will stay in the present, original, unrestored, condition as a tribute to a couple that loved biking together.

Looking to the future of MOAM

People tend to support a winner instead of putting money into a sinking ship. Rest assured, we are afloat and healthy, and if comments in our book are any indication, we bring joy and pleasure to thousands of persons. **HOWEVER, IT IS TO THE FUTURE THAT WE ARE MAKING AN APPEAL.** I will not last forever, my last haircut showed more white than gray clippings, and we need a couple of million more dollars added to the endowment in order to keep the museum continuously operating.

There will be carpet and roof maintenance or replacement down the road. Every once in a while on the news, there is a report of how many millionaires or even billionaires there are in America. Perhaps you are a friend or acquaintance of Bill Gates, Shawn Hannity, or George Soros, or any other wealthy person who could endow us with even pocket change and you could influence them to invest in us.

Perhaps you could update your will and set aside a certain percentage to the museum without taking food from your heirs. Remember your heirs can benefit from the investment you are making in us by having a place to bring their families for meaningful experiences. Other gifts in the form of property, vehicles, art, guns, etc. might be a satisfying way to help.

Our Condolences . . .

We regret that several friends of the Museum have recently passed. It seems I know more and more folks on the obituary page. This quarter we mourn the loss of Bert Poloson, Joyce Wigfield Carlyle, and Gary Riebe and offer condolences to their surviving spouses and families.

Bert and Grace have been long time friends of the museum, making item and monetary gifts as well as facilitating other donations.

Memorials in memory of those who have passed are usually applied to the endowment fund or to help preserve, display, or make signage related to something they donated or was of particular interest to them. Even after two years, a memorial donation for Joanne came from Royalee Bishop. That will help replace funds used to buy our Statue of Liberty over the front entrance that Joanne had wanted.

Mural E. Fisk sent a \$50 memorial donation for Leonard Haack

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***LIVE HISTORY DAYS –
Saturday and Sunday
July 18 and 19!***



Mark your calendars
for a fun-filled weekend!

If you or a friend
could do a pioneer craft
or activity or help operate
or demonstrate some of our pioneer
artifacts please contact Gil.

***Historic movies
Saturday morning
and Sunday afternoon!***

“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!!

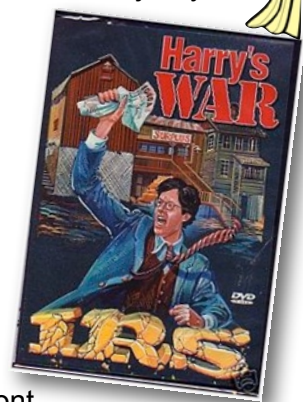
• **April 9 – “Harry’s War”** A postal worker quits his job to fight against the IRS who had unjustly treated his Aunt Beverly who owned a military surplus yard. Harry has to use a WWII halftrack (like the museum displays out front) to fight for justice. The museum displays some of the actual movie props.

• **May 14 – “To Hell and Back”**, a 1955 feature length movie starring Audie Murphy as himself in this true WWII action which earned him the distinction of being the most decorated soldier in American history.

• **June 11 –** Local award-winning writer Carmine Margo Mowbray shares her new work of historical fiction, **“Havoc Red – Surviving the Alaska-Siberia Route, 1943,”** set among the Army Air Forces Seventh Ferrying Group that flew nearly 8,000 fighters and bombers from Great Falls to Fairbanks where Russians flew them on to the front.

Two young men get caught up in the dark side of war. Their calamitous flight dumps them in the Yukon wilds. One commits a desperate act and has to find a new kind of heroism on his return.

Mowbray will autograph copies and is offering a discounted price of \$15 with \$5 of each sale going to the Museum.



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

