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Miracle of America Museum

MEMBER:
MUSEUM ASSOC.
OF MONTANA
AND
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OF MUSEUMS

Spring 2017

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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

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MOAM survives winter, thrives

Spring is certainly welcome here at the museum after a real Montana winter. The heavy snow load broke down the top bows on our WWII army truck, but fortunately we have an extra set. We will put temporary support in for next winter. The ice was very worrisome, but fortunately no falling. Our right hand man, David, wasn't so lucky ice skating at Woodland Park in Kalispell however, where he fell and broke his right arm. He has still been getting a lot done one handed though. Our main winter shop project has been a rare horse-powered water well drilling machine which had been donated years ago by Jens and Jackie Gran. There was just enough rotted wood left to have a sufficient pattern to restore the main unit. Unfortunately the rarer something is, the harder it is to find information or photos of it so we can fabricate the boring auger lifting tower. Neither the internet nor our extensive research library has been a help, so if anyone can help with information, you'll earn a brownie button. *(Photo at left.)*



Our heating budget was tapped pretty hard due to the long winter even though we use frugality. The high price of propane more than doubled our expense over last year. While the number of visitors is down slightly, we have already had visitors from 28 states, six countries, and two provinces. Many come because others told them about us, so please help spread the word on social media or any other way you can think of.



Pinterest image

This newsletter may be viewed online. Please go to our website and click the Newsletter tab for clearer color photos: Miracleofamericamuseum.org

Friends of Museum pass on

We are saddened to lose museum friends this last quarter:

Gerry Kohne of Dixon Welding and Machine was a kindred spirit in the realm of collecting neat antiques. While we (occasionally) bid against one another at auctions, we remained friends. He had donated an early horse-pushed sweep rake and a site to place our museum sign.

I had known **Paul Fugleberg** for almost 60 years. He had written many articles and taken many photos about the museum. He was a great journalist and historian and will surely be missed.

Doug Wendt had donated vintage model airplane items.

Condolences go out to their families.



Donation memorializes local hero Harry Shryock

When some donations come in, I am so humbled and honored that I can't always hide my emotions. Such was the case with the recent gift from the Shryock family. Harry Shryock had piloted B-24s in WWII, commanded a B-29 crew in the Korean war, and flew refuelers for fighter jets in Vietnam, finally retiring as a Colonel. He again became a hero when he volunteered for a situation where an innocent young boy had been taken hostage by a drug-crazed criminal. Harry exchanged himself for the young hostage and volunteered to fly the criminal out of the Polson airport in a small plane. It was a touchy situation that went terribly wrong when the law enforcement sniper only wounded the criminal, who then turned his gun on Harry and fatally shot him. Harry's sacrifice saved the life of the young boy.

This Heroism medal was the first civilian one issued in Montana and awarded to Mrs. Shryock by Governor Schwinden.

Left: Col. Shryock's uniform; Right: Front page of Flathead Courier EXTRA describing the tragedy; Col. Shryock's Heroism medal.



We are so thankful

for **Marge Dickson**, our cheerful receptionist for modifying her schedule so Helen and I can get away occasionally. Helen and I just attended a buyers day in Helena at the Made in Montana trade show and picked up a couple of items as gift shop stock.

We salute our Members and donors

Individual, \$25 – Ronald Hoefke;

Annual family, \$50 –Caldbeck family, Tamara Fisher;

Annual sustaining, \$100 – Don Lodmell, Jim Manley, Wanda Kemp Maxon.



If I have forgotten anyone, it is unintentional. Perhaps it was in the last newsletter or got in too late for this one.

WANTED:

A painless way you can help us is to donate your aluminum cans and expired license plates. I even buy certain old plates from the early 60s and older if you can't afford to donate. Any state or condition. For those not needed to fill gaps in our collection, we can raise money in our gift shop by selling to tourists for souvenirs and "man caves".



MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS

Gene Johnson: Unique old coin receiver from Seattle bus lines, etc., **Kathi Neeley:** Old Bible, purple heart citation, etc., **Howard Hudson,** our official picker, brings in some very unusual stuff occasionally. The last load included about 30 feet of chain made from gum wrappers. This was called “tramp art” and probably was from the early 60s. He included a 1936 “Landon/ Knox for GOP President” pin which will go in our historic political display and a Dick Tracy pin which will report for duty to our kids’ toy section.

Also in was a donation from **Tobi Draper Campanelle** of two tintage photos and early correspondence concerning Frank R. Miles. We have a letter dated 1910 when he resided in Polson. At some point he played violin in Alaska during the gold rush.



The only other information we have on him was that he was an uncle to Will McBride who looks like quite the dandy in a picture postcard from 1907. We seek information about either of them.

While in Helena at the Made in Montana trade show, Helen and I drove to Clancy to load a 1974 Yamaha snowmobile



donated by **Peter Holm.** While not especially archaic in appearance, it has a unique and rare torque drive system and in good displayable condition.

A very personal question . . . How

much are you worth? Most who receive this newsletter have helped the museum in some way or another. Some have given the widow’s mite. Others, more financially blessed have helped tremendously. One donor pledged a One to One match up to \$25,000 for deaccessioned items (things no longer important to the mission or collection of the museum) if the sale money goes into the endowment fund. We recently deposited \$11,000 from combined sales to our endowment through the Montana Community Foundation/ Miracle of America Museum endowment fund, so the endowment was enriched by \$22,000 last quarter. We still need to raise about \$2,375,000 so the interest can fund a manager and assistant to ensure the preservation of the museum. To some that seems like a lot of money, but to others – perhaps friends who don’t know about us yet – that would be a manageable amount.

There are many ways that your gift could benefit the museum and I suggest you talk with your tax or estate planner.

This just in: Anonymous donor gives one million for Kalispell jail. So they are out there. Ironically, especially with the school or other youth group tours, we teach things that make youth better citizens which would keep them *out* of jail.

Another blessing would be the acquiring of the 9.2 acres adjoining the museum to the west. Owned by Walmart, it is listed for \$850,000. It would give us overflow parking, further display of outside type artifacts which would enable a driving tour route for elderly and disabled, and a key location for a highly visible sign. We also envision a dry camping site for campers and motorhomes which is sorely needed in the Polson area during the tourist season.

And one last shot for this issue is a proposed antique gunsmithing shop set up like the late 1700s to the late 1800s. We already have many of the hand- and foot-powered machines and around 100 antique guns and related memorabilia, much of which is in storage that would make a pleasing display. We could also relocate the cases which are

currently cramping our meeting room, which would add around 75 more vintage firearms.

The underlying message of this project would be the importance of the 2nd Amendment, the fact that gun ownership carries tremendous responsibility, the individual and family fun that can come from hunting, range shooting and plinking, and the joy that comes with collecting firearms for the functional art form or historical significance.

Donors to the building of the Gunsmith Shop will be on a four-category Contributors List and may display literature or information about their business or organization. Tax deductible donations are broken down into these categories, although any help will be appreciated and used wisely:

Marksman, \$100; Sharpshooter, \$500; Expert, \$1,000; and Sniper \$10,000. The estimated cost with security cases and state-of-the-art security system is about \$45,000. Thus far, donors include:

MARKSMAN: Glacier Bank; Hellroaring Detachment Marine Corp League; Polly (memorial) and Tony Ostheimer; Polson Shooters Association; and Whitefish Credit Union/ Polson.

SHARPSHOOTER: Pledge from Big Sky Sporting Clays.

EXPERT: Brimhall family; Bert (memorial) and Kathy Smith.





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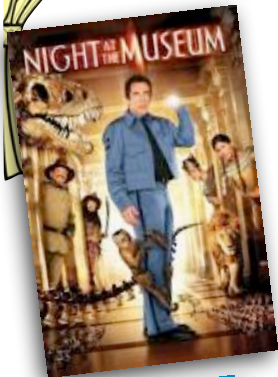
Live History Days – Mark Your Calendar for July 15-16, 2017!

Commitments are already coming in for Live History Days!
Why not see if you can involve a youth and bring them by earlier in the year to see where they would fit best?

"Free Night at the Museum" – Fourth Thursdays!

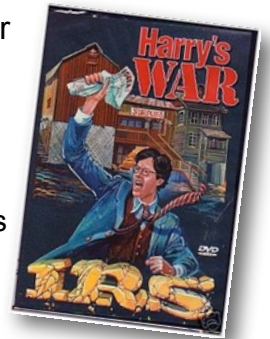
6:30 pm at MOAM

**Classic family movies with background discussion
Displays and tours of select items!!**



• **March 23** – We'll watch "Night At The Museum" starring Ben Stiller and Robin Williams.

• **April 27** – "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 25** – Guns, Guns, Guns, mixed media program including historic tour, presentations, safety issues presentation by shooting sports groups.

• **June 22** – "The World's Fastest Indian". Plus a tour of the Indians in the MOAMs motorcycle collection.

Treats and donations are always welcome!

