



Miracle of America Museum

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Autumn 2023

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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

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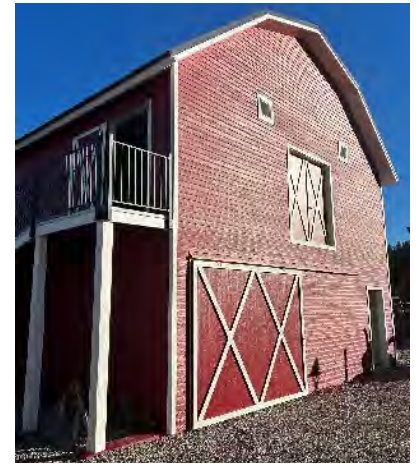
First Tour Bus to “Fall In” – Year’s Visitation Steady

Royal has brought visitors several times before and has scheduled more MOAM tours. This group was given two full hours and would have stayed longer if their schedule had allowed. While it was a smaller group this time, they made up for it in enthusiasm with more than one person saying we were “better than the Smithsonian”. What I presume they meant was that there is more variety here on display. Several visitors in

The Barn is Finished!

Good news! The barn is finally finished and painted. We’re so thankful for the contractors that made the time between jobs to work us in.

Now the slow process of filling it up with historically correct meaningful displays. We’ve been able to restore some of the burned items and find other agriculture artifacts similar to what we lost in the fire. I am concentrating on the top floor of the barn first. Public access is up the ramp on the north side with a handrail. A hay mow door on the west gable end allows us to lift heavy thing up and in with our forklift. *Related story, page 4.*



comparing us with other name brand museums say that it is the almost overwhelming spirit of Americanism here. That is of course, unashamedly, the main emphasis.

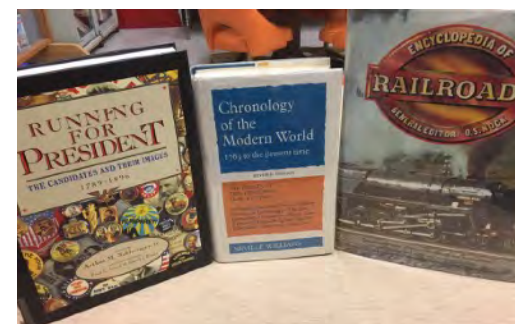
Visitation has been steady and we view it as a real plus when locals come in for the first time. Mid-September finally brought us our 50th state for the year. So far, we have gotten seven Canadian provinces and 51 countries.

Protecting Real American History – Preserving Discarded Books

George Orwell penned, “Who controls the past, controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past.”

There are those in our nation who are tearing down history and even making an attempt to rewrite it. Perhaps by rediscovering the past, we’ll gain control of the present, and save the future. As I was working on this newsletter, my picture file automatically – without any forethought or prompting – went to a September 2017 photo I took at Pacific Recycling in Kalispell. The high school dumped these and lots more books to be destroyed. These weren’t outdated, but very nice hardbound on various American history subjects. Pacific let us take a

couple dozen and we have them in our research library. Perhaps we needed to be reminded of the history destroyers as mentioned in the prophetic sci-fi book of Ray Bradbury’s, *Fahrenheit 451*.





Far From Home, and Coming Back

This happy couple from Rhode Island spent three hours here and said they would see us next year.

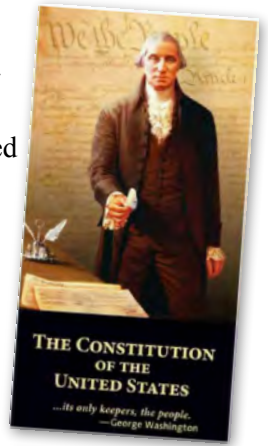


Constitution Day Remembered

How many remember the important anniversary September 17? It's not on most calendars anymore. Google our museum and click the YouTube video titled "the Constitution: a balanced government." Yes, the signing of this important document, the U.S. Constitution.

As you read this, there are those from both political parties who want to open it up to change with an Article V Constitutional Convention. How scary and sad, when the answer to most of our nation's problems is a return to the original spirit of freedom, respect, and personal responsibility.

Come in for your free pocket copy of this remarkable American document that includes the Declaration of Independence, kindly provided by **Dick Matejovsky**.



We Need Your Skills – Help Boost Volunteerism

HELP WANTED signs all over town, in fact the whole country seems affected by it. When a government gives money to people for not working, which many people think is the problem, it destroys the work ethic. We definitely are affected. For at least two months, Helen and I have had to be receptionists. **Marge Dickson** filled in a day so we could drive to Kalispell for an eye appointment. She also comes in occasionally and does cleaning. We really need to be doing administration and restoration/organizing tasks instead. The last two workers were doing a good job, but medical problems caused them to retire. While we can't match McDonald's wages, we pay a fair wage.

In order to boost the volunteering spirit, we have this to offer. If you want to set a good example for children and grands, and demonstrate volunteerism and even involve them in various projects, please let us know. Perhaps you'd like to adopt a building to neatening or clean, or a project engine, vehicle or wood item. Some may be taken home to do. Recently **Paul Wagle** of Columbia Falls made three trips here to help on our largest John Deere tractor, an 820 diesel. He also plans to take a smaller one home as a winter project. We of course, pay for parts and material. Your time is an invaluable gift to the museum and would be much appreciated.

MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS

So many wonderful and varied donations came in this last quarter. **Beth Timm Christian** brought many things from her family. Her brother **Glenn** was a classmate of mine, class of '60, and he has been featured here before. Her parents **Phil and Maria Timm**, managers of the Polson Airport for 20 years, and also previous museum

donors, were a most fascinating and well-traveled couple. One interesting grouping from Maria's extensive scrapbooking collection, I arranged into a collage featuring Phil's interest in auto racing. A beautiful little Sharps 30 caliber 4 barrel derringer has embellished one of our gun displays. Many vintage local photographs help

make our collection more complete.

Among the several items brought in by **Jerry Duke**, were three wooden pieces. A very early cigar box, a sugar mold and a unique and working turkey call. I can make a lot of different noises with it, but don't know if it would call them in or scare them away!



MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS

Four Generations of Funke Family

Eric John Funke added to our Four Generations of Funke corner by adding his helmet and flight suit.



The **Flathead Lake Museum** in downtown Polson did some rearranging this summer and deaccessioned (a fancy word for getting rid of surplus) and gifted us some agriculture items that fit in with our collections. Among the items were a horse drawn mower, horse drawn cultivator, a John Deere parts binder which will aid us in restoring the one badly damaged in our barn fire, and a concrete mixer.



Yard employee, David went right to work on it, and we added one of our antique engines to make it presentable. It is not feasible to completely restore many of the items, but mainly to make them complete and look authentic and operable.

Veteran **Mike McCloud**, most recently serving as post chaplain in our local American Legion recently passed away and we honor his memory with a display of some of his effects.

George W. Phelps donated several WWII cloth aviator helmets and goggles. They immediately found their home in our WWII recreated bomber barracks.



We Salute our Members and Donors

While our door receipts cover operating and daily upkeep and hiring David, our financial donors are our lifeblood to invest in our endowment fund for future longevity. If you are able, and desire to help the Museum in your Will, please don't put it off. A recent unexpected death of a friend who'd wanted to help the museum, had not taken care of it, which left us out of his estate.

Among the donors in the various categories:

Hammonds, Don Lodmell, Irv and Mimi Milheim, Susan Campbell Reneau,

Richwines Burgerville, VanVoast Farms/ Big Sky Sporting Clays, Western Montana Community Tel, Inc,

Ellen Wicklund, Mike Wood, and Garry Wunderwald.

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.

Please enjoy our 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. Please check out our easy to find YouTube channel.

Next up is our third annual Winter Fest January 13. Add us to your calendar, and watch for news of next summer's Live History Days!



“Old” Barn to Display Important Local Agriculture History

The Barn will become a safe and comfortable place to view an important part of Mission Valley agricultural history. My grandfather was a pioneer of the certified seed potato industry in the Valley. We will be covering the potato industry. David and I just finished restoring this 1896 single row potato planter.

Another display will feature artifacts related to the Flax and Linen

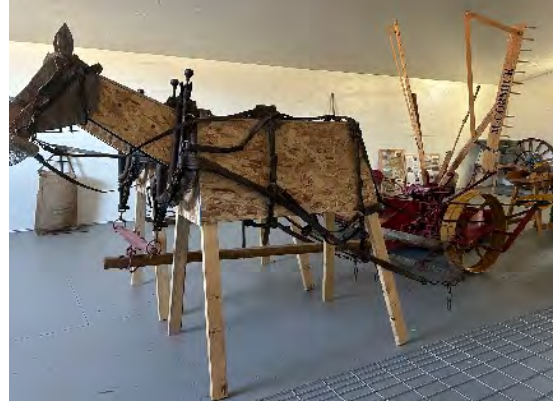
industry. **Anna Lonnevik** donated a flax spinning wheel.

Down the center will be our McCormick grain reaper harnessed up correctly thanks to brother-in-law, **Gary Abbey** for donating his grandfather’s work harness. Along the south wall will be some rare artifacts related to seeding or planting grain. We will also have some neat items pertaining to corn, and will probably

squeeze in a few miscellaneous agriculture items.

While I seem to accumulate a lot of related memorabilia to most any subject, I don’t want the cluttered look. Somewhere, I’ve got to find room for our numerous hay grapples and trolleys. Some of it will probably be displayed under the ramp. We welcome help in any of these ventures and making more labels.

The ground level of the barn will house our large fencing tool and barb wire collection. Fortunately most of it survived the fire. It is truly amazing all the different patterns of wire and the process of making it, especially around 150 years ago. There were at least 700 variations. We must have a dozen post hole diggers and 30 or so wire stretchers and other items. Two of our electric fencers survived.



Kids Party and Experience History Their Way

Many children want to have their birthday parties here. A recent one had cake and a lot of trimming. There were 26 in that group.

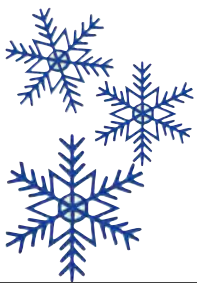
Another group just wanted to tour the museum and play and climb on the interactive exhibits. The Paul Bunyan now ties with the “Huey” helicopter as children’s “favorite spot,” since we now allow boarding of the locally historic logging tow boat (while accompanied by an adult).

Live History Days A Great Success – Planning Begins for ‘24

This year’s Live History Days was a great success thanks to our volunteers. Many are looking forward to next year. Perhaps you or a friend would like to be involved in some way. Please call us and we’ll find a task you’d like.

Date for 2024 is July 20-21. Come join us!

We’re open 9am to 5 pm Year-Round!



Mark your calendar! Plan now to bring your family and friends to our third annual Winterfest Saturday, January 13, 2024!



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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