

Spring 2016

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Miracle of America Museum

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

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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

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Gift Shop gets upgrade

A major project has been the makeover and improvement of the GIFT SHOP with the assistance of board members **Annette Schiele** and **Nancy Pray**. That involved a trip to St. Regis to procure an antique bean display counter that was embellished by RSVP volunteer **Gene DeCarlo** who built two glass top shallow compartments which secure our more valuable gift items for sale.

Early visitation from far and wide –

As of this date/minute, we have had visitors from 39 states, two countries, and two Canadian provinces.

We observe new life and a passing

In my memory, this is the hardest newsletter to write. It seems the world is spinning faster. Seen and unforeseen circumstances have put not only me, but our board members under a lot of time constraints and pressures. There were babies to be born – fortunately it was not me, but board member Brandy Wallace who had the baby, and I offer congratulations to her and family for the addition of a healthy baby daughter – endless meetings to attend, serious illnesses, and deaths to deal with.

As for me, the rather sudden demise of my youngest brother Charles put a lot of strain on middle brother Art and me as we assisted his children in making final arrangements. I used the WWII Freedom Truck to give him his last ride to the cemetery and our meeting room for the memorial service. Charles loved operating the large switching engine back and forth on our railroad tracks for Live History Days last year.

My thanks to all who assisted and attended the services, and also those making memorial donations. Charles loved the museum and was always bringing visitors through. The memorial fund will go toward expenses to restore and conserve the 6 ½'-ft wide x 9-ft high rare Cracker Jack poster which he had helped us purchase. Donors thus far are **John Burke, Ron Currie, Art Mangels, Lores Porter, and Ron Tollefson**, in addition to **Charles Mangels**.



Rebekah K. Wallace was born September 28 weighing 10 pounds 5 ounces. She is welcomed by her brother Noah, 4, Caleb, 3, and sister Naomi, 1. Proud parents are Brandy and David Wallace.



It's hard to show the impact of this nine-foot-tall Cracker Jack poster in a photo. It is scheduled for restoration to its original grandeur.



Charles Mangels, longtime MOAM supporter, in the switch engine during Live History Days. A military veteran and brother of Gil, Charles passed suddenly in February in Polson.

Made In Montana items on sale— MOAM expands retail; gets new exterior slab

The morning of March 11, I left at 4:30 a.m. for Helena for a “Made In Montana” Trade Fair, returning back home after midnight. I was a registered wholesale buyer in search of items/souvenirs that museum visitors couldn’t live without. Requests for meaningful souvenirs reminding visitors of Montana, Flathead Lake, Polson and the MOAM prompted me to try and think like a tourist and what one might like.

I’m excited about our new offerings and some of them are pictured here. Specific to the museum are a beautiful sew-on patch and a troy ounce - .999 silver coin minted with the museum on one side and our beautiful 1941 Indian four cylinder motorcycle in front of the American Flag on the reverse. Please take a look at these on the website posting for a better view. Or better yet, come in and see them for yourself!

We will be offering locally made huckleberry jam, a

selection of key chains, Duckboy Postcards, etc. With the influx of small breweries and bottled beer, I thought we might try selling bottle openers. My first choices are the keychain

grizzly claw and the griz paw. We’ll be expanding our T-shirt line and thinking about including onesies with the museum logo in size 6-12 and 12-18 months. Any thoughts on these since they are very expensive?

I’ve also moved most of my metal sculpture art and some miscellaneous to one of the two bays just outside where the pop machine used to be. That is where we will sell duplicate or excess items for fund raisers. We just had a nice cement slab poured which looks more professional and will hold the dust down. On the other half, we are displaying four of our vehicles. The slab

was poured and finished by **Matt Whetzel Concrete Construction**, who not only had the low bid, but also donated one third off the price. His phone is 406-240-3444.



A real “Oh Wow!” item –

SnowRunner videos on YouTube

Occasionally items come in that cause me to say, “Oh, Wow!” Such was the case of a dealer sales and service sign for our 1971 Chrysler Rabbit Snow Runner. This was donated in memory of **Bob Kirkland** by his son **Robert Jr.** of Helena. These unusual machines were tested by the military, but considered impractical.

If you would like to witness what a blast they are to ride, though, you may watch David having fun in the snow. There are several clips on YouTube of it and some of our other snow machines. Start by Googling YouTube - Sno Crawler at Miracle of America Museum and look for some of the surrounding pop-ups.

We salute our Members and donors

Memberships

Ronald Hoefke, Grace Larson, Bill McDermott and Pat Hutchin.

Family

David and Mary Sergent, Andrew and Diane Speer

Sustaining

Richard Beauchamp/Kathryn Johnson, John and Mary Erkkila, Bob and Sharon Fulton, Don and Joan Lodmell, Milton Nickel, Tony (and the late Polly) Ostheimer, James and Joanne Simpson, Bob Skans, Bobby Unser.

Misc. cash donation

Rick Van Voast and Ray Winn



Local volunteers appreciated

New helper at the desk under the Experience Works Program is **Ron Marquardt** who works weekday mornings. Two afternoons a week under the RSVP program is **Dorla Scott**. She is a real historian and enjoys meeting the visitors. Both programs are great, so check with me or their website to know more. As **Erma Wall** is retiring, we need more receptionist help. Currently I work the weekends and do enjoy meeting people, but it ties me up so I can’t be working on new displays. Friends occasionally stop by on Saturdays to run errands.

We also are in need of a grant writer.

The endowment fund is still a priority. Please look at any contribution to it as an investment for your posterity to enjoy.

Newsletter layout courtesy of
Carmine Mowbray of



MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS

Numerous miscellaneous donation filter or flood in, some right up to press time.

Howard Hudson – Girl Scout memorabilia, oversize Milton Bradley Wizard of Oz puzzle, miscellaneous;



Morehead family – Cherry related items, miscellaneous. ammo and vintage cartridge boxes;

Sadie Haack – butter churn, Harley Davidson books, miscellaneous;

Nellie Heckman – Tiffany family kitchen and store collectables;

Lloyd Ingraham estate – 1950 Brownie dress and cap, school teacher bell, oil lamp, ink wells, misc;

John Cowan - misc. books and pinking shears;

Arnold Steinert estate by Susan Hodgins – Misc. farm antiques to



Port Polson Inn co-hosts with museum – St. Pat's Day SPLASH at MOAM a success

Our Polson Chamber SPLASH (Support Polson Late Afternoon Social Hour) event on March 17 went very well with great support from the community. It was co-hosted by **KEVIN** and **ANNIE**, owners of **PORT POLSON INN** who provided the food and drinks and did a whole lot of set up. Annie is happy to literally take the coat off your back to give to a poor coatless person as a special mission. So if you have a nice, clean coat or jacket that you want to contribute to the cause, just drop it by their motel, You will warm more than

include tools, horse gear, slide projector, *shown at lower left;*.

Dick Schieke – Tobacco leaves for our smoking display.

Larry Eslick – Early tobacco tins and 1930 auto license plate;



Bill Hocker – old Lake County, Montana license plates;

By the way, I am looking for two pairs of Lake County 1957 or '58 plates, as we have two '57 autos in the collection.

National artists feature MOAM

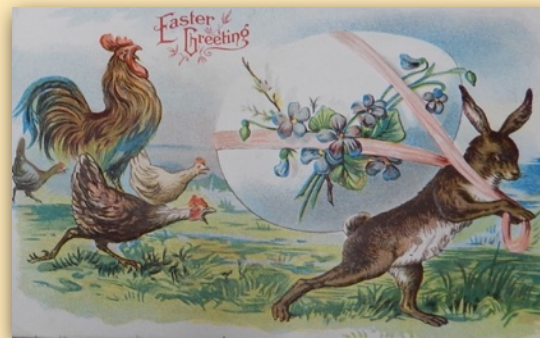
This personally autographed 11" x 16" print of a painting done as a part of his Route 66 series was donated by artist **ROGER BANSEMER**. Note the museum bumper sticker on the sidecar. Roger and his wife **Sarah** produce painting workshops and are featured on nearly 200 PBS channels nationwide. We occasionally get letters, calls, or visitors because of one or both half-hour segments they did when they spent three days here a few years ago.

Google "Painting and Travel" to see and learn more.



Historic Easter cards in collection

The symbols of the rabbit, egg, and chickens supposedly stem from paganism of the 1500s. These beautiful circa 1908 Easter cards, however, remind many Christians to think of the eggs and baby chicks as a symbol of new life (resurrection) and perhaps the young maiden so happily dancing with the lamb, is rejoicing over the resurrection of Christ, the Lamb of God.



one heart in the process.

A big thank you is due **KERR RADIO** and **JEFF SMITH** for their community service program, "The lighter side of the news" after the 8 a.m. local news portion who do a great job covering our events.

Kalispell's **KGEZ** with **DIANE**, **JOHN** and **JOHN** also do a live interview with me about our programs/events. And of course, if I can remember the submit deadlines, the print media is very cooperative as well.



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*Rejoice in the miracle
of Easter!*



LIVE HISTORY DAYS
July 16 and 17, 2016

"A Night at the Museum" - Fourth Thursdays!

6:30 pm at MOAM

**Free and fun family entertainment. Movies! Readings!
Displays and tours of select items!**

• **April 28**— "Common Sense, Self and Home Defense." Panel of experts from different backgrounds on protecting life, limb, and property. Preventive measures, situational awareness, neighborhood watch, legal aspects, non-firearm weapons, etc. Thinking to purchase a firearm? Bring your questions for answers on the best choice for you; and get information on classes stressing safety and proper usage.



• **May 26** – In remembrance of Armed Forces Day, we will show "WWII in Color." Digitally restored film of actual footage showing the real brutality of war. Not recommended for young children because of the scenes of terror, chaos, and blood in actual battlefield conflicts. Time permitting, a museum tour of artifacts like those seen in the movie.

• **June 30** – Back by request, a reshewing of the Montana Centennial "Smoke on the Waters" documentary of steamboats on Flathead Lake, plus a segment covering the Paul Bunyan, the only remaining logging tow boat of Flathead Lake. Another short film covering early day logging in the area. Time permitting, a tour of the Paul Bunyan, and related artifacts in the museum collection.



Treats and donations are welcome for "Night at the Museum." Call Gil, 406-883-6264.