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# Miracle of America Museum

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

Summer 2018

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

36094 Memory Lane Polson, MT 59860 406-883-6804 [www.miracleofamericamuseum.org](http://www.miracleofamericamuseum.org) • [info@miracleofamericamuseum.org](mailto:info@miracleofamericamuseum.org)

## Executive Board of Directors

Gil Mangels, President  
Ned Wilde, Board Chair  
Nancy Pray, secretary  
Ryan Gage, Treasurer

Board members: David Bauer  
Brandy Wallace, Cathleen Wilde,  
Kendall Dupuis,  
Mike Maddy, Helen Mangels,  
Annette Schiele,  
Art Mangels and Sam Allred

### Notice of Annual MOAM Board Meeting

Our annual Board of Directors meeting will be held on the 23rd of August at 5 pm preceding our monthly program in the Museum public meeting room.

Board members please RSVP.  
(Law requires that we post this.)

## No wrapping, always fits! MOAM donations make thoughtful Father's Day gift

Here's the perfect gift idea: A donation to the Miracle of America Museum that benefits its endeavor to preserve history for posterity. It's a meaningful gift, and you can choose any amount.

It all goes into the MOAM Endowment, or your choice of projects, in the name of the gift recipient.



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

## Socials, Parade, Tours keep MOAM busy—

Since our previous newsletter, we've hosted a Polson Chamber SPLASH (Support Polson Late Afternoon Social Hour), hosted our monthly free "Night at the Museum" on the fourth Thursday, and given several school lecture tours. We've also had our public meeting room used by various organizations which sometimes brings in a small donation, or at least a plate of leftover cookies. We also had a successful April "Blacksmith Hammer-In", but had to cancel subsequent ones due to a shortage of smiths. We do have a firm commitment for *Live History Days* though.

We had six vehicles in the Polson Memorial Day parade. Besides helper David Bosley and I, we thank drivers H.J. Pieper, his son, Scott, and two sons-in-law Nate Lamphere and Jamie Shepard. Of the many Pieper flag-waving grandchildren riding in the vehicles, I was worried about losing Hillary who is no longer a child, and whose interests may be changing. However she still likes to man the 50 cal. machine gun (a non-firing replica) on one of the vehicles. How thankful I am for their dedication!



## Daughter donates Silver Star, Purple Heart

A picture is worth a thousand words. In this heart-wrenching photo, the Purple Heart and Silver Star for 2nd Lt. Thomas Boyle is being awarded posthumously to his widow and daughters. Colleen, the oldest daughter, donated these to MOAM in March.

Her father was honorably discharged as a Sergeant First Class from WWII. During the Korean War he was battlefield commissioned a 2nd Lt. He was awarded the Silver Star for extreme bravery and the Purple Heart for being killed in action.

Some (a very few) question the seeming futility of war. But perhaps we should wonder what flag the survivors would live under, had it not been for the sacrifice of our veterans such as Lt. Boyle.



# Our pledge to honor, preserve and display Veteran memorabilia

Every year we get phone calls asking if the museum is open that day. "Of course," I say, "especially that day." We claim unabashedly to have the largest tribute display to veterans in Montana.

Our collection keeps growing as baby boomers,



themselves aging slightly, are going through their parents' effects and thinking we would be a good home for many of these items, some almost sacred. I am humbled by the trust placed in me and the responsibility to display these things honorably, securely, and viewable to the public.

## Visitors from far and wide; New signage

As of this moment, we've had visitors from 49 states, (Rhode Island, wherefore art thou?), 24 countries, and five Canadian provinces. While word of mouth and internet queries rank high as to how folks learn of us, currently, drive-by seems to be highest. We average almost daily calls from ad agencies and magazines wanting us to advertise, but our ad budget can't make a living for all of their salespeople. Hopefully by the time this reaches you, a new vinyl wrap sign 12'x18' will be viewed on

the land where I grew up three miles south of here. The southbound side will invite those that missed us to do a U-turn at the traffic light just ½ mile ahead. Thanks to **Hu Beaver Builder, Dupuis Lumber, Jean Matt and Craig Morigeau** of Mission Valley Power maintenance crew, **Don Peterson**, and **Robert Feiorbach** for supplying labor and materials.



*Adding a bit of humor to our invitation, we paraphrased a line from an old Elvis song.*

## Help Preserve This Place Forever

I'm so thankful that the political primary is over. Perhaps fewer causes are now competing for your giving budget. I would be lax if I didn't remind you of our financial needs. Frequent comments in our comment book state, "**This place needs to be preserved forever.**" The Miracle of America Museum provides an environment for the preservation and presentation of history for all ages. Admissions generate income and help us pay the operational expenses, but to secure our future, our endowment fund must be enlarged by at least \$2 million. For some, that would not be a sacrifice. Another need is for overflow parking. Walmart has allowed us to use the adjoining field next door. That nine acres is for

sale, but the company won't sell us just a one-acre piece which would fill our need as well as allow a driving tour of outside displays.. They are asking \$850,000. There are numerous commercial opportunities for the remaining eight acres if a museum friend were to invest in the whole and allow us the one acre.

For every thousand donated, we will give a lifetime pass to a person of your choice. Remember that neither Helen nor I receive any remuneration. Memorials are another way of giving as **Lee and Bonnie Manicke** gave a \$50 gift in memory of Ed Holland. A trust is another way as in the case of the late Donna Rolfson whose estate managed by Mercer Law Office gifted the museum another \$100.

## Bigfork Fellowship Services Appreciated

Helen and I and the Miracle of America Museum were extremely blessed in April by 24 saints from Crossroads Christian Fellowship of Bigfork, all putting their belief in service to fellowman to work. Spearheaded by recent first time visitors Andrew and Tracey Donkin, this virtual army used shovels and rakes, dust cloths and swiffers, glass cleaner and vacuums to give the Museum a much needed spring cleaning. Progress was even made on a couple of restoration projects. The Donkins even paid for feeding all of the workers and Museum staff. Andrew had defined assignments and marked them out on copies of our maps so everyone knew what and

where. I'm afraid I'll leave someone out, but included in the work crew were Andy, Bill, David, Don, Elmo, Gail, Jay, Jim, John, Jon, Mark, Mel, Naomi, Paula, Sharon, Teresa, Tim, Teresa, etc. A wonderful bunch and a job well done and much appreciated.

## Facebook post nets Virginia donation

Facebook marketing has generated some success by letting special groups know about our collections.

A recent post about our 50 page museum booklet mailed to your stateside door for only \$10 generated a buyer, Bill Hutchins, all the way from Colonial Beach, Virginia who included an extra \$90 as a museum donation.

Again, I'm disappointed at the quality of our photos on this black and white copy and encourage you to go to our website for the color version. Since I have to rely on the busy schedule of others to post it, it might be a few days after you receive this hard copy.



## Restoring Logging Tool

Here's one of a pair of 10-ft logging arch wheels in the beginning stage of restoration.

We thank **Hunt's Timbers** and **Ron Buentemeier** for their donation of some material.



# MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS



More coffee, sir? We never know what might come through the door in the form of a donation. This unusual

1944 silver plated Navy coffee server donated by **Fran Roose**, was used by Mess Stewards to safely and non-intrusively pour coffee over the shoulders of seated officers. Fran had gone to the effort to bring in the research on it as well, which was much appreciated.

**Lores Porter** sent misc. household odds and ends including a 1926 box of RIT fabric dye.

**Frances Tidwell** donated a 1934 Girl Scout uniform and scarf which belonged to Nadine (Frankie) Fincher whose mother had made it.

**Larry Eslick** brought us a 1941 Russian military issue Mosin Nagant rifle, bayonet and a double ammo pouch.

**Lee and Afton Moss** donated nice period cowboy gear including circa 1880-1920 Heiser saddle, Heiser batwing chaps, Hamley saddle packet, etc.

Brother **Art Mangels** picked up donations from **Larry Rennfield** of Deer Lodge and delivered here. Items include a Honda 50 scooter, John Deere snow-mobile and a rope-start Sea King boat motor.

**Jan Nelson and Steve Weissenberger** from Maryland are remodeling a home here, and thankfully checked with us before taking three pickup loads of items to the waste transfer station. A 1950 Dewalt radial arm saw is just one of many useful items. My favorites are a colorful child's 1930 Marx toy

typewriter and a 1930 Stevens "Echo" cap gun. I find it interesting that kids played for decades with cap guns — and yes even pointed them at one another. There were no school shootings, an occasional Valentines Day massacre notwithstanding. (I'm thinking it is not the guns fault.)

Our chief picker, **Howard Hudson**, has a knack for finding unusual collectibles in free boxes at garage sales. Some items go immediately into the General Store or Hardware Store as display stock, or Glacier Park items join hundreds of displayed park memorabilia. The last load he hauled down from Kalispell was a good running push lawn mower which has been getting a good workout on the fast growing grass and weeds.

**Bob and Sue King** donated a couple of loads of useful items including blacksmith tools and a WWII military pack saddle in memory of their uncle, Ted Sokoloski.



Left to right: Saddle in front of the reconstructed Welch Saddlery; rope-start Sea King outboard, 1930 Marx toy typewriter, 1930 cap gun, shown with bill to indicate size.



## The Past and Its Lessons are Gifts for the Future. Give Today

To ensure the future of the MOAM we have established an endowment and chosen the Montana Community Foundation (MCF) as our partner in philanthropy.

Through MCF there are many ways to give and 100% of your donation benefits the MOAM endowment, and is tax-deductible. It doesn't matter how you give, it simply matters that you give. To ensure that your donation benefits our endowment make your check payable to or direct your gift to "MCF/ Miracle of America Museum. Mail to Montana Community foundation, 1 North Last Chance Gulch, Suite 1, Helena, MT 59601. Find out more by going to [www.mtcf.org/Giving/Ways-to-Give](http://www.mtcf.org/Giving/Ways-to-Give).

## We salute our Members and Donors



**Annual sustaining**— Correction: last quarter I listed the \$100 donation over the annual sustaining donation of \$100 from **Linda Kosvick** as going to the gun shop. It should have gone instead for help in restoring our dental shop in which we have her father's, Dr. Lodmell's, dental equipment displayed.

**Single \$25**— **Phyllis Fulkerson**  
**Family \$50** — **Joe and Jill Read and Victoria Weinhandl.**  
**Corporate \$200**



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# Live History

## Days

### Saturday and

### Sunday

## July 21 and 22!



Join us for a fun-filled weekend!  
Your once-a-year chance to see living history!

- ★ Pioneer Crafts
- ★ Historic Demonstrations -  
Blacksmithing, Leather working, Woodcarving,
- ★ Rope making.
- ★ Free Rides!
- ★ Historic movies!
- ★ Music and Ice cream

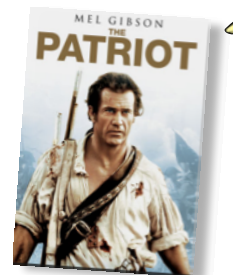


## "Free Night at the Museum" - Fourth Thursdays!

6:30 pm at MOAM - Free and Family-friendly!



- **July 26** — A showing of "The Patriot" with Mel Gibson.
- **August 23** — Birthday party for Gil (one day early) with readings from his book, *The story of the Miracle of America Museum* and a book signing.
- **September 27** — Free program showing a recently donated rare seashell collection from around the world, assembled by a Naval Officer who served as Chaplain aboard the *USS Missouri* and *USS New Jersey*.



*Treats and donations are always welcome!*