



Miracle of America Museum

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

Spring 2019

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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

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

Visitors keep drifting in with the snow—

As I start this newsletter, it is still very much winter. Our heating and snowplowing budgets have really taken a hit. If we get the snow that is still forecast, the plow lanes will be a bit constricted. Have no fear, though, visitors from 24 states have found plenty of room to park and we will always save room for more. We can't keep all the paths and doorways to 42 building in the museum village plowed and shoveled, but many people already dressed for the cold, trudge through the snow to get an idea of what's to see and promise to come back in the summer.

We are very pleased that locals are bringing in many visitors from as far away as Missoula and Whitefish. Many are finding us on the internet. Receptionist surveys are telling us that other than our brochures, that print advertising produces very little results. Drive by and word of mouth are still at the top. Please help us spread the word and tell your friends, or even folks you don't know, at the gas pumps, grocery store lines, etc.

Come in and meet our new weekday receptionist, **Ramona Cajune**, a woman of many talents. Ever faithful, **Marj Dickson** will thankfully still cover weekends. Think Spring.



Supporters pass; intend lasting gifts

Our condolences go out to the **Russell Diehl** and **Tony Ostheimer** families. Russell had donated our rare Polaris snow machine powered by an airplane engine. You may find it operating in a couple different areas on YouTube as an attachment to Sno Crawler-Miracle of America Museum. Tony was a long time patriotic friend and he loved the museum who along with his wife Polly demonstrated pioneer living including shake splitting at our Live History Days as long as their health permitted. About a month before his passing, he had emailed me and indicated several areas that he intended to financially help the museum. The largest was transfer of stocks to our museum endowment fund, a memorial to his late wife, and a railroad memorial to his sister and railroading friend, Will Davis. He also wanted to pay for additional magnetic vehicle signs, so wherever we travelled, people would be aware of the MOAM. As far as I know, none of his intentions were acted on. I have not heard from any of his family, nor do I know how to contact them. I do not know if they will follow through on his intentions. Historically, that seldom happens among any families.



Please act today to preserve MOAM for posterity

We are stable and have no indebtedness. Operating expenses are covered by our admissions. But we need sustaining funds. Your help will ensure that posterity can continue to enjoy MOAM. Dividends/interest from invested endowments will hire directors and staff to keep the museum going 'til the Lord comes. I remind you that my time is all volunteer, but also remind you that, although still functioning fairly well, that I am not getting any younger.



A four-generation family enjoying the museum together.

Spring opening planned –

Showboat Cinemas Building Donation becomes WWII Barracks

Although we saved the Pickerill family the cost of demolition, we are grateful that **Gary Dupuis** of Showboat Cinemas facilitated the donation of a good condition 16' x 20' building that David and I moved to museum grounds. Miraculously the winter weather held off and on the spur of the moment, **Matt Whetzel Concrete Construction Co.** of Arlee, not only was able to fit us in to pour a slab for it, but did the job as a total donation. Please remember Matt if you need some concrete work done.

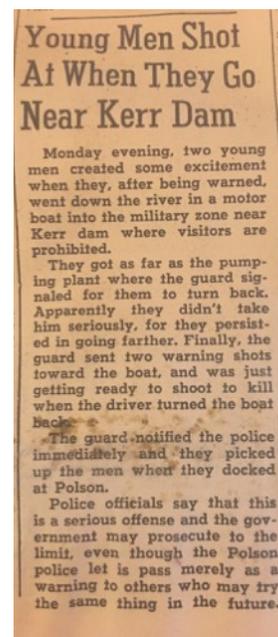
We are busy making the building into a recreated WWII U.S. Army Air Corp barracks. Friend **Bob Lassila** of Great Falls, just happened to have a correct era set of military bunk beds which he donated along with a correct mattress. I had a second correct one, but could use another army blanket. Footlockers, laundry bags, uniforms, shaving kits and numerous other related things have been sorted out of main building which tidied up that a bit.

We should have it open to the public by spring, but I will show visitors inside by request. I happen to have framed photos of GIs in uniform that spouses and family would have had on the home front, but I am lacking any of sweethearts that their husband would have had displayed in their barracks. The walls will be covered with art, military maps, probably a couple of pin-ups, (no nudes) etc. I am especially looking for

leather flying jackets with artwork on them, or even plain jackets and an artist that could duplicate some period “nose art” which was painted on many planes of the time.

Let's back up a bit to physically moving the building. It was probably built in the teens, but recently had a new paint job outside and a new steel roof. The inside studs were sheathed with 1 x 10 boards in early 1944 after insulating with newspapers, magazines and a 1943 calendar which survived surprisingly well as you can see by the photo.

Again I remind you that the internet shows our pics in color. We discovered those because we had to remove the bottom two rows of interior sheeting in order to temporarily stabilize the building by installing beams, and jack it high enough to get our trailer under it. Of particular interest was the article concerning the security that Kerr Dam was placed under during WWII as noted in this September 1942 article from the Flathead Courier.



No wrapping, always fits!

MOAM donations make thoughtful gifts for any occasions!

Here's the perfect gift idea: A donation to the Miracle of America Museum that benefits its endeavor to preserve history for posterity. It all goes into the MOAM Endowment, or your choice of projects, in the name of the gift recipient.

It's a meaningful gift, and you can choose any amount that fits your budget!

We salute our Members and donors



Individual, \$25 – **Dennis O'Neil Jones, Barry Blaine, Dick Christopher**
Family, \$50 – **John Erkkila, Sharon Coppedge Fulton** Both of these donors happen to be school classmates.
Sustaining, \$100 – **Tom Bartel, Mike Hutchin, Don Lodmell, Robert Skans, and Irv and Mimi Milheim.** Milheims moved all the way to Pennsylvania last year. We appreciate their loyalty!

Amazon Smile benefits MOAM

We are pleased to be one of the select charities that benefit when you shop Amazon Smile. Amazon will donate 0.5% of everything you purchase to MOAM. It's easy! Just follow these instructions to start “sharing smiles” with us:

1. Visit smile.amazon.com
2. Sign in and select “Miracle of America Museum”.

We certainly believe in shopping locally, but if you are going to buy online, Amazon Smile is a no-cost way to support the Miracle of America Museum.



Newsletter layout courtesy of
Carmine Mowbray of



Our newsletters appear in living color

on our website:

www.miracleofamericamuseum.org

MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS

A recently made new friend, **Hal Roys** has gifted the collection with some nice items. A homemade mousetrap made by his uncle was a perfect fit in our over 100 different trap display explaining the Free Enterprise system. A boon to the boat motor collection was not only a nice 1936 Johnson Sea Horse, but the shipping box with the artwork still intact. An unusual folding boat was coaxed out of the boathouse attic, which Hal doesn't ever remember it being used.

So you see, our collection just keeps getting more diversified and better.

Steve Stanley – 1950s law enforcement fingerprint kit and misc. Civil Defense memorabilia;

Aaron Thiel – very early Boy Scout pack and sleeping bag;

Cary Weyrauch – wire recorder and spools of wire;

George T. Halverson – watercolor painting of Green Mountain School when it was still at Irvine Flats;

Carolyn Palmquist – 1948 Girl Scout uniform;

Marc Carstens Surveying – early Amish buggy;

Chief Picker Howard Hudson – numerous items including Gettyburgh Battlefield relics, Alladin brass lamp, 1930s swimming medals.

Pat Fleming remembered us as a way to help the gift shop sales by bringing us a stack of license plates.



Left to right: Homemade mousetrap, 1936 Johnson Seahorse shipping box, watercolor of Green Mountain School, 1948 Girl Scout uniform.

Notable Quotes

“The longer you can look back, the farther you can look forward.”

– *Winston Churchill*



“Honor, justice and humanity, forbid us tamely to surrender that freedom which we received from our gallant ancestors, and which our innocent posterity have a right to receive from us.”

– *Thomas Jefferson*



Helper David Bosley's corner:

Besides doing much of the snowplowing, making picture frames and wooden mannequins, and other odd jobs, David is concentrating on making a pile of battered circa 1960s Grumman Ag Cat biplane parts into a pleasing static display.

Some parts we've had to make or repurpose from pictures and trial and error deductions and I was able to get some important landing gear parts from Nebraska. He should have the 9 cylinder Lycoming installed this week, but it is pretty externally stripped of parts like carbs and mags and rocker arm covers. If any of you fly boys have any timed-out parts gathering dust, we'd like to know.

Could also use some large head dzus twist lock fasteners to install the body panels. Of course my favorite Beagle, Snoopy will be at the controls with Charlie Brown as his gunner in the forward cockpit. I've about got Charlie done, but I'm afraid Snoopy's sculpture parts are buried under two or three feet of snow.

We also got some help on this project from a juvenile community service worker whose name I can't use, but he was a joy and a true help. He wasn't afraid to get right to work and get his hands dirty and had a good attitude. It is heartwarming to know, in spite of some infractions, that there is some hope in the next generation.



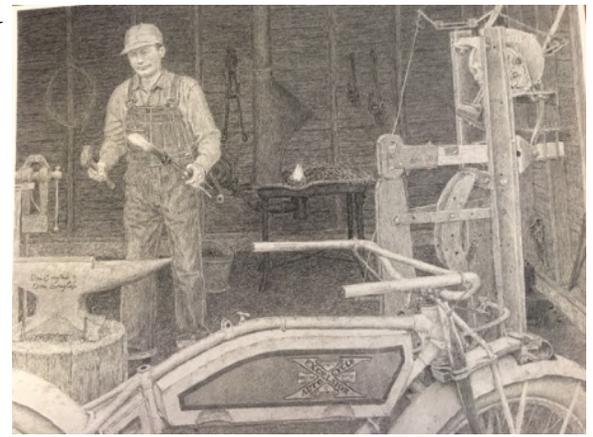
Greytak's Art and Ingenuity at MOAM

I just received a rather personal sketch done by noted Montana pencil sketch artist Don Greytak, of his father forging a finishing piece to put his homemade blacksmith trip or power hammer in operation. Albert was the old school type – if he needed something he'd try to build it himself.



Along about 1926 he acquired three old motorcycles pretty cheap. Not interested in riding, he found value in mechanical parts he could use to invent and tinker in his shop. He dismantled the oldest bike, a 1913 Excelsior twin cylinder. You can just see the cylinders lying behind the hammer on the floor. He used the engine crankcase, flywheels and one rod for the eccentric and attached it in a framework made from old truck parts including a rear frame crossmember from a Model TT Ford. Al attached a pulley to the end of the crank and when he stepped on a lever, it would tighten the belt going to the spinning line shaft from another power supply, making the heavy hammer pound up and down leaving both hands free to hold the work.

After a project was finished, Al



would dispose of extra parts so as not to trip over them. Some 50 years later Don offered to donate the hammer, so I drove up to Havre to pick it up. I spent hours rummaging through all the scrap piles for parts. Thankfully I was able to find a few that allowed me to finish my 1913 Excelsior motorcycle which is displayed in our cycle section. Al's ingenious hammer is again attached to a lineshaft in our vintage gunsmithing shop next to a forge.

2019 Live History Days Lining Up

We are pleased that a few Live History Days exhibitors and helpers have already scheduled us in. 2019 will be the 20th and 21st of July. We have lost two of our regulars due to death and a couple of families due to other commitments.

We will depend on you to help spread the word and participate where you can. It means a lot, especially to our various musicians to just have an audience. So if you were just going to sit at home either or both days, we have plenty of chairs.

Live history Days is our annual fund raiser, and we do charge extra for the children(2 to 12) at \$5.00 to help with the

cost of gas for the rides

Some say we should charge at least \$10. For 13 and up even all year but especially for Live history Days. I need local input here as I've tried to keep it affordable. In comparing our price with other museums around the nation I find for much smaller and less diversified museums, they are charging from \$12 to \$28 for adults and triple what we charge for children. One of our visitors stated that if she had known what we had here, that she would have gladly paid \$50, but then we have people come up to the door and say, "Gee, you have to pay to come through?" So please help me with my decision.

If she had known
what we had here,
she would have
gladly paid \$50



Save the date!
Live History days,
July 20-21, 2019



Don't miss Live History Days, where kids of all ages have fun!!