

Watch out for paparazzi!

The Red Carpet Club draws crowds eager to learn about local connections to some of Hollywood's biggest hits!

IN APRIL, at the inaugural meeting of our new series, we screened the film *Coal Miner's Daughter*. The Indiana connection? Wabash County native John Corso was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Art Direction-Set Decoration for this film. And, of course, the movie is about Loretta Lynn, half-sister to our hometown star, Crystal Gayle.

We followed up this initial event with two more films on which Mr. Corso worked; in June, *Ferris Buehler's Day Off*, and in August, *The Great Outdoors*. John regaled the audience with countless stories about his work in Hollywood, from working with Alfred Hitchcock to measuring Leslie Caron, feet to eyes! In October, we screened the thriller



Psycho II. Mr. Corso spoke about his experience of recreating the Bates Motel and home in color, 22 years after the original black and white film. Make plans now to attend this month's Red Carpet Club event on December 23. We will be watching that holiday classic, *A Christmas Story*. The local connection? It was set in Hammond, Indiana. Don't miss it!

Many thanks go out to our sponsors for the Red Carpet Club movies: Mr. John Corso, Guenin Law Office, and Wayne's Coatings Paint Store. The Red Carpet Club is open to anyone who would like to attend. Admission is \$5 and, of course, popcorn and drinks are available! Call the museum for more information on times and titles. ●

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the current and former citizens and the businesses of Wabash County to support us through your donations.

This is the time of year we do just that. Please give generously to the Wabash County Historical Museum's Annual Operating Fund. If you are a business owner, perhaps you'd consider following the example of Bill Gerding, owner of Market Street Grill, who donated a percentage of several day's lunch receipts. Or perhaps your business would sponsor an event at the museum. An individual might consider a pledge over three years or naming an exhibit. Planned giving (or remembering the museum in your will) is another long term way to support the museum.

Although I will no longer be president, I'll still be very much involved. If I can be of assistance in discussing the many ways you can support the museum, just call 260-563-9070. They'll know where to find me!



James Rollenour
Chairman,
WCHM Board

Diverse Exhibits

IN 2010, WE HOSTED two amazing and diverse exhibits in our Changing Exhibit Gallery. During our Lincoln Speaker Series, noted Lincoln portrayer George Buss visited to hold a press conference with his "press secretary", Bob Lenz. While touring our Lincoln exhibit, Lenz remarked to Buss that our gallery would be the perfect place to display Buss's collection of Stephen Douglas memorabilia. We happened to agree with him! Therefore, from February 27th through May 29th, an exhibit of national importance took residence in our gallery. **Out from the Shadow of Lincoln: Stephen A. Douglas**, was the perfect follow-up to our popular Lincoln exhibit, and a true learning experience for visitors and museum staff alike. Our guests learned that Douglas was a true gentle-

man, and a gracious loser. Following his defeat in the presidential election, Mr. Douglas held Lincoln's hat during the inauguration ceremony, and went on a campaign to the Southern states on Lincoln's behalf, urging them to remain in the Union as the rumblings of Civil War were heard. Special thanks to Mr. Buss for the loan of his collection, and to the Economic Group of Wabash County for sponsoring the exhibit.



Rare exhibits occupied the gallery this year exhibit that closes January 8, 2011. Thanks to the Honeywell Center and the Eagles Theatre staff for their assis-

On July 2nd, we brought a little bit of Hollywood to Wabash with our exhibit on local landmark, the Eagles Theatre. **Moving Pictures** paints a picture of the grandeur of this 1906 building, from its earliest use as an opera house, to its current movie theatre status. Visitors are encouraged to share Eagles Theatre memories in an album located in the exhibit. A claymation film from 1933 is showing in a specially-constructed theatre in the gallery. This film was made by Lyman H. Howe, the man to bring the first "moving pictures" to the Eagles Theatre on September 6, 1906. Artifacts from the theatre, including a fireplace used in the vaudeville days, photos of early stage productions, the Bank Night raffle drum, early lighting and projection equipment, and an assortment of programs and advertisements for the theatre, can all be found in this

tance in putting this exhibit together, and to our sponsors, First Farmers Bank and Trust. Let's go on with the show! ●

2010 Annual Operating Fund Drive

I would like to make a:

- Donation \$ _____
- Pledge for \$ _____ over ____ years
- Today, I am enclosing \$ _____

I would like to purchase a:

- Family Membership** **Price \$45.00**
(2 adults, plus children of the household under 18)
- Grandparent Membership** **\$40.00**
(2 seniors, plus all grandchildren under 18)
- Individual Membership** **\$25.00**
(One adult, non-transferable)

Total: \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

METHOD OF PAYMENT

- Check Visa Mastercard

Credit Card # _____ Exp. date _____

Signature _____
(Due to tax implications, a donation does not include a membership.)

Stop the Presses!

AS THE NEWSLETTER GOES TO PRINT, we at the Museum are ecstatic to make the following announcement.

From January 1, 2011, through the end of the 2010-2011 school year, ALL WABASH COUNTY SCHOOL GROUPS WILL BE ADMITTED AT NO CHARGE. This includes all classes, from pre-k through senior high school, as well as home school groups. (The program is designed for school-sponsored field trips, not individual daily admission.)

We love to have students visit the Museum. To see the excitement on their faces as they experience Wabash County history in a hands-on way pushes us to find even more ways to speak directly to them. We hope that this offer will entice teachers to use the Museum and the curriculum we have created as a second classroom.

This offer would not have been possible without the sponsorship of the following persons and organizations: Parker and Katie Beauchamp, the dental office of Dr. Bob Beckett, the City of Wabash, Posy and Art Jasen, and Pat and Marilyn Mitchell.

TEACHERS: Call Emily at 260.563.9070 today to schedule your field trip or e-mail emily@wabashmuseum.org.



NEWSLETTER OF THE WABASH COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

JANUARY-DECEMBER 2010

A President's Farewell Address

Well, friends, this is the last time I'll be writing to you as president of the Museum's board of directors. Although I'll remain on the board, my term as president expires at the end of this year.

Since it is my last opportunity, I'll use this space to remind you of one of the most important issues I've dealt with while I've been involved with the museum: Fundraising.

When a group of history-enthusiast community members incorporated to build the Wabash County Historical Museum, they were determined to do it right. Not to do it inexpensively or quickly, but to build something the county would be proud of for many years. They wanted to build a place to collect the artifacts of life in Wabash County, a place where those artifacts would be preserved, and a place where people could learn what those artifacts tell us about the way life was in Wabash County. And I think the result is fantastic.

Fantastic, but not cheap. To operate the museum costs about \$800 per day, every day of the year. Building insurance, utilities, salaries, and maintenance add up quickly.

Often over the last six years, I've explained to people that just because we are called the Wabash COUNTY Historical Museum does not mean that the county foots the bill. We receive an annual stipend from the county--and are grateful for it. If we break it down on a daily basis, the county pays for about 18 days out of the year. That means we have to ask you, our guests,

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A Year's Worth of Fun for Families

CHRISTMAS BREAK IS A TIME that every child looks forward to, and we at the Museum strive to add even more to the anticipation with our December Family Fun Day! This year, our theme was Mad Scientists and Inventors and it was a smash success! Kids of all ages were excited to try out the Van de Graaff generator (the spherical machine that makes your hair stand on end). Local mad scientist John Mason was on hand to wow the crowd with some pretty impressive science experiments. Visitors were also introduced to some of the more notable inventors of Wabash County. It was a spectacular day!

Spring Break is a great time to get Down on the Farm, making it a perfect fit for our April Family Fun Day. We had a fun farming video, farm-themed games, and even barnyard animals. In addition to baby chicks and some rabbits, we had a baby calf who took up residence in our east parking lot. The Wabash County Animal Shelter brought down some dogs to add to our small petting zoo, and both were adopted within the week. A gift from Wabash County Farm Bureau gave half price admission to the first 100 children.

With the opening of our Eagles exhibit, the theme for our July Family Fun Day just HAD to be films! We highlighted Wabash County natives that had made an impact in the movie world. We have actors, sound designers, and set designers, all from our very own hometown. We also had a craft that allowed kids to make a film reel to take home. Kids of all ages explored the Eagles exhibit, **Moving Pictures**, but the young ones especially enjoyed trying on the old time usher costumes and "selling" tickets, popcorn, and candy. Add some classic cartoons in our theatre, and you have a party worthy of Hollywood!

Be sure to bring your children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews, or come on your own to our next Family Fun Day which will take place on December 30th.

Our sponsor for Family Fun Day is 105.9 The Bash. Many thanks go out to them for their support. ●



Return Service Requested

Wabash, IN 46992-3108
36 East Market Street



phone: 260.563.9070 web: www.wabashmuseum.org
Open Tuesday-Saturday 10:00am to 4:00pm

NON-PROFIT ORG.
PAID PERMIT #9
WABASH, IN 46992

Growing Curricula

THE MUSEUM IS PROUD to announce that even more Educational Resources have been added to our growing collection of curricula. A Community Foundation of Wabash County grant allowed us to purchase a binding machine to add to our office equipment. We have used this binding machine to create hands-on, reusable, exhibit-based resources that teachers can use when they visit the Museum. Some are even designed for pre-visit classroom use. By offering resources like these, the Museum is a valuable education asset to Wabash County and the surrounding areas. Some of the activities offered include: Which Came First? A Wabash County Timeline Game, Native Americans of Wabash County, and Early Times in Wabash County.

Are you an educator? Have an idea for exhibit-based curriculum? Contact Emily Perkins at emilyp@wabashmuseum.org, and she will be happy to work with your specific education needs.

Honor Wall

ON NOVEMBER 11, Veteran's Day, the Museum shared a solemn moment with county veterans and other guests as we unveiled our new "We Honor" wall. This exhibit was redone to include 383 additional names of men who died in service to the United States. The majority of these names, 380 in fact, were listed due to the tireless research of volunteer Jennifer McSpadden, who created a comprehensive list of Civil War casualties. She visited countless cemeteries, scrutinized newspapers of the time, and read journals and diaries in order to come up with a definitive list of brave men who gave their lives. Speakers for our dedication included board members Bill Wimberly and Bob Beckett, veteran Earl Harrell, Major Shane Toomay, volunteer Jennifer McSpadden, and even an appearance by Abraham Lincoln (as portrayed by Murray Cox).

The upgrade to the "We Honor" wall, part of our military exhibit, was made possible by a generous grant from the Community Foundation of

ONE FOR THE BOOKS

Greetings from the Archives!

With the holiday's fast approaching, there's been a hustle and bustle in the Museum that gives me a sense of accomplishment; the smiles on people's faces tell me that we're doing something right! And when people see first hand that we are taking pride in preserving the history of Wabash, they feel secure in knowing that their family's "treasures" will be in safe keeping if they are left in the museum for future generations to appreciate!

With that said, at some point while working here, I may one day be able to say I've seen it all, but I haven't yet. Each day brings something new across my desk, and I'm still in awe of what people want us to have.



Marjorie Weber

A great example is Marjorie Weber. For the last 50 plus years she has been compiling her family genealogy. Two weeks ago, we had the privilege of meeting this lovely lady to discuss putting her family information safely in the Archives.

Not knowing what we were going to see when she came to visit us, we met over a cup of coffee and she produced four HUGE volumes, complete with photographs and even maps to the cemeteries of her beloved family members. She told us that her vacations were spent traveling to and from libraries, digging through countless files, contacting people she had never met, and making lasting relationships with people she could potentially call family! We assured her that we will take

care of her prized collection and we parted with a wonderful addition to our collection and a new friend.

As some of you may have read early this summer in the Wabash Plain Dealer, a 15-year-old named Joseph found a gun buried in mud here in Wabash County. Now for those of you who know me, you know I love black powder and was brought up on the hobby. When I was contacted about this gun, my heart raced and my palms got sweaty. I just had to see it for myself!

Joseph had found this mud-caked, rusted, piece of steel and wood, with no information attached, no names, no marking, and no story. What would it say once it was cleaned? We all agreed that was the only choice, and I contacted a friend of mine to do this task for us.

In the meantime, with the location in mind, I did some research, but it lead me no where and I was getting frustrated. I wanted so badly for this gun to talk! I wanted to know why the gun had shown itself to us now!

Through a trickling creek and only eight inches of exposure, Joseph and his father spotted it, jumped to its rescue, brought it to the Museum. Once the gun was cleaned, I was ready to see it in all its glory. The gun was beautiful, and we found it was a replica, not an original. Nonetheless, it is an excellent replica of a 64-caliber, English Fowler Flintlock rifle, with the ram rod still intact and the flint still squeezed tight, ready to be fired! The inside had modern parts, and was blued with new pins, which told us it was a kit that someone put together. Although we cannot determine the exact age, it is a great piece and Joseph has a wonderful story he will be able to tell to his grandkids someday!

He decided to lend it to us for the War of 1812 display here in the Museum until he is 18. We hope that then he will decide to let us keep it longer! I am proud to show it off and so is Joseph. Again we made another life-long friend of the Museum.

There are many more things I could tell you about, but for now I'll leave it at that.

Tomorrow is another day, another adventure. Who knows what will come through those doors! We're ready to hear your story and pass on the history!

Heather Allen
Head of Archives



A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Continued Growth

Don't you think it's a great time of year to look back over time? We do a lot of that here at the museum, but right now I'm thinking especially of the museum itself.

When we had our official grand opening four years ago, I thought, "Well, we sure know how to build a museum!" Once we were open, I thought, "Now how do we run this place?"

Over the last four years, I'm proud to say, we've become a strong, vibrant part of the Wabash County community. **And I can prove it!**

When it comes to education, the Wabash County Historical Museum has been added to the curricula in six of the county schools and we've increased the number of school children visiting by over 400%. We've also helped develop a fourth grade Indiana history curricula.

We have increased volunteer hours by 200% since last year and increased the number of memberships by 25%. The number of guests at our History Hunters events has grown and we are consistently full at these gatherings. Our newest programming series, the Red Carpet Club, is now established and guests who join us to watch Indiana-related films is growing.

Recently, volunteer Jennifer McSpadden finished a two-year project for the museum, compiling the names of 380 Civil War casualties from the county. This important research helped us update our "We Honor" wall, part of the military exhibit. These changes were made possible by a generous grant from the Wabash County Community Foundation.

We have become a regional presence as well. **And I can prove it!**

One look at our visitor sign-in book shows visitors from all over northeast Indiana, and clearly we are a destination for

people visiting from out of state AND out of the country.

We've had nine major shows in the changing exhibit gallery. Our Lincoln exhibit and speakers series won the 2009 award for Best History Event from the prestigious Indiana Historical Society. (We were competing against some big name museums: the Eiteljorg, the Indianapolis Children's Museum, and the Indianapolis Museum of Art!)

Eric Olson, from Indiana's NewsCenter in Fort Wayne, makes it a point to visit each of our new exhibits for his "Your Country" segments. During his piece about our Stephen Douglas exhibit, he called us an "important regional institution." We also had a great mention in columnist Frank Basille's article about Wabash in the Indiana Business Weekly.

So, what's next? Some things to look forward to are:

-A fantastic new exhibit in our changing exhibit gallery (look for more about this in the very near future!)

-A stronger connection with the schools. Our goal is to have every class in the county, from pre-k to senior high, here every year.

-An expanded War of 1812 exhibit.

-Updated and improved sports and farm databases.

I hope that all of you will visit the museum soon. I guarantee you'll see something you haven't noticed before and you'll leave proud of your county museum!

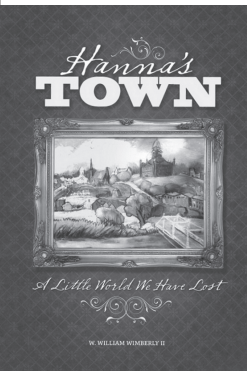
Tracy Stewart
Executive Director



BOOKSTORE BESTSELLERS

Hanna's Town is Now Available

It's HERE! Bill Wimberly's much anticipated book, *Hanna's Town: A Little World We Have Lost*, has arrived at the Museum Store! From the Indiana Historical Society website: "In late autumn 1902 a macabre scene unfolded at the original burial ground of Wabash, Indiana, which had been called both the Old Cemetery and Hanna's Cemetery. The task at hand was the disinterment of four bodies. The newest of the four graves held whatever might be left of the corpse of Colonel Hugh Hanna who, more than any other single citizen, was the founding father and civic icon of the prospering, rather stunning little city. It might be argued that Hanna's disinterment was a high-water mark in an outpouring of visible progress, cultural energy, and palpable optimism that his town had experienced during the preceding sixty-seven years." The cost for this book is \$24.95. Come pick up this, and other uniquely-Wabash items, in our gift store.



HISTORY HUNTERS

HISTORY HUNTERS CONTINUES to provide a high-impact learning opportunity over the course of a Thursday lunch hour.

In January, we were graced by a visit from former first lady, Mary Todd Lincoln. Heather Allen, the Museum's archivist, took us back in time with a first-person presentation on the life of the president's wife during the Civil War. With a soft Southern drawl and period dress, Mrs. Lincoln materialized at her writing table, composing a letter, then inviting us into the White House parlor as we shared in a quiet moment with her. While addressing some of Mrs. Lincoln's famous eccentricities, Ms. Allen also showed a very human vulnerability and sadness to Mrs. Lincoln, stemming primarily from the loss of several children. It was a fine transition between the closing of our Portraits of Lincoln exhibit and the opening of our Stephen Douglas exhibit. (Both gentleman courted Miss Todd, you know!)

The Big Four Railroad spurred on the development of a young Wabash County, and shaped its

future in ways that were unparalleled by forces prior to or following its run. In March, we were the recipients of historian Kyle Coble's tireless research into the history of the Big Four. In a timeline format, Mr. Coble shared the history of the railroad in Wabash County, complete with amazing photographs. The audience was so engaged, the hour flew by!

In May, wartime aerial photographer William Jones shared images he captured of the damage done at Nagasaki and Hiroshima, following the detonation of the atomic bombs. "Family man, mechanical wizard, photographer-artist, and monotone lecturer, Bill Jones has for fifty years carved his niche of nearly total obscurity in the photographic community," proclaims Mr. Jones's bio. As you can infer from this snippet, his presentation was somewhat tongue-in-cheek, adding much needed levity to the seriousness of the devastation of the a-bomb.

Bully! Former president Theodore Roosevelt fairly filled the room with his larger-than-life personality at our July gathering. Roosevelt portrayed Gib Young never broke character as our twenty-sixth president, fascinating the sizable crowd with tales of his time as a Rough Rider, the many pets he had in the White House, and even the story of the "Teddy" bear. (He prefers to go by Theodore, should you ever have the chance to address him.) It was certainly a memorable event!

In September, we couldn't wait til we got to Wabash! Susie Jones, author and composer of our local gem *Wait 'til You Get to Wabash*, presented the life of a canal boat captain's wife. She told stories of the first canal boat to reach Wabash, the Prairie Hen. (Apparently, there



was some trickery implemented by both the Hen AND the second boat to reach Wabash, the Indiana.) She even sang a few songs, one aptly illustrating the Irish War, and the other, the title song from her show.

November brought us a double dose of History Hunters events. The first, a special evening presentation by Bill Wimberly. Dr. Wimberly spoke about his new book, *Hanna's Town: A Little World We Have Lost*. This fascinating look at the development of the city of Wabash is now available in the Museum Gift Shop. The second presentation of the month was brought to us by author of *Heart of a Warrior: The True Saga of Sweet Breeze and William Wells*, Joe Krom. He told fascinating tales about "Frontier Battles on the Eel and Wabash Rivers."

The History Hunters events are held on the third Thursday of every other month, starting in January each year. The events are held at noon and are free for members or with paid admission. This year's events were sponsored by Peabody Retirement Community. ☺

Email addresses!

THE MOST COST EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT way to get news to you is via e-mail!

There have recently been several changes to the names of internet providers in Wabash County. If your address changed, or if you'd like to receive updates via e-mail, please send us a message at emilyp@wabashmuseum.org with your information.

Of course, we would NEVER sell your information to anyone!

Gib Young, as President Theodore Roosevelt, and Macy

