

Old Independence



Regional Museum

Spring/Summer
2011
Newsletter

New Exhibit On View

In our last newsletter, we gave you a detailed description of our plans for an exhibit titled “Looking Back: How Toys, Tools and Togs Have Changed.” Without repeating that description, we want to let you know that we were able to do everything that we hoped to do in it. A large introduction sign beckons visitors to enter the Barnes-Simmons Gallery to experience this walk back in time.

After we opened the exhibit in March, many visitors expressed real delight in it. Jimmy Hughes and Bill Hoskins both enthusiastically stated that it is the best exhibit we have ever put in place!

Children and adults are having fun playing magnetic paper dolls and picking up homemade toys from the “Touch Table” to play tin-can telephone or spin the button. Also in the Toys exhibit section, visitors reminisce about playing marbles and jacks when they look at the child-mannequins at play in a raised bed of dirt. Many displayed toys are on loan from local people, along with artifacts from our own collections.

The star of this new exhibit is probably our lady mannequin sitting under an electric permanent machine with her hair in curls attached to it in the “Beautician’s Tools” segment. Our thanks go to Bertha Hughes for fixing her hair!

An historic 1900 blacksmith forge with its Buffalo blower is ready to have a visitor turn its handle and see how it blows the air to feed the imitation “fire” on the hearth. Thanks to Lucy Yeager for the “fire”! Beside it are a number of blacksmith tools and anvil. The stitching horse stands ready for making leather bridles. Maxfield store merchant tools and its large safe, take us back to the early 1900s.

Remember those poodle skirts and mini-skirts and double knit polyester leisure suits? You’ll see them, along with a whole array of early purses, hats, formal wear and underwear in the Togs exhibit room.

The exhibit curatorial team — Nelson Barnett, Linda Wann, and Twyla Wright— had a grand time putting things together with the able assistance of Kay Longenbach, Dennis Wright, and Frances Mathis. Thanks also goes to Frank Tripp for donating his time and equipment to lift the 700 pound forge and the heavy safe into place.



The Beautician’s Tools area in the new exhibit “Looking Back: How Toys Tools and Togs Have Changed.”

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Day Camp in June

- The annual Museum Day Camp for rising 3rd and 4th graders is scheduled for June 14-17 and for rising 5th and 6th graders June 21-24.
- Registration is \$40
- In honor of the Civil War Sesquicentennial the theme this year is “Civil War in Arkansas”
- Reserve your space today 870-793-2121

Fine Art in Our Galleries

For six weeks, from February through mid-March, we hosted our first fine art traveling exhibit. "Draw Me a Story: A Century of Children's Book Illustrations" arrived from Exhibits U.S.A. (a national traveling exhibit source). They offered it to us rent-free, which would normally cost about \$10,000.

We paid the shipping costs with a wonderful grant from WalMart. Forty-three framed pieces of art graced both the Barnes-Simmons Gallery and the First Community Bank Gallery. We were thrilled to be able to bring this experience to our visitors.

We held two outstanding programs to accompany this exhibit. Barbara Satterfield, director of Baum Fine Arts Museum at the University of Central Arkansas came to present some of her favorite children's book experiences. Then Alyson Low traveled from Fayetteville to do special book readings as part of Spring Family Day.



Alyson Low presenting a program on books to children visiting the Museum for the Spring Family Day.

Our New and Improved Website

We invite you to take a look at our refreshed website by accessing the internet and typing in www.oirm.org. Scott Blackwell has been experimenting with a program to make regular updating of our website easier. He has done a splendid job of redesigning our site and even adding action and a virtual tour of our building and exhibits, plus adding a way to inform viewers on how to become a museum member. Check it out and let us know what you think!

From Rotting Wood to Fresh Paint

Have you noticed that all the windows and doors now have a fresh coat of paint? M & A Jones completed their work of first removing all the rotten wood at the base of most of the windows and replacing it with new wood, then doing other wood repair to the front doors. They also replaced weather stripping and then did a fine job of painting. All of this was done through a grant from the state for capitol improvement.

A new door, with proper framing around it, was also installed at the south side of the Barnes-Simmons Gallery. We have wanted this for some time because the area leading from the gallery down the stairs to the staff side entrance door had been open. This left visitors unsure whether they could go down there, and we lost heat or cooling down into the lower level. All of us who work at the museum are proud to have this new door!

We still have more building maintenance needs, but hope to receive a grant to have water leakage damage to the library and the women's restroom repaired. The Board is looking at a method to prevent more roof leaks.



Making Hats and Knives Programs

This spring two of our programs focused on tools of the trade, a segment of our new exhibit. On March 27, Bob and Kay Burton showed film clips and displayed many of the hats they have made for films, which included among others "The Patriot" and "3:10 to Yuma." They also made and donated a top hat especially for our museum through their company Clearwater Hats.

On April 16 Dennis Riley, a journeyman knife maker from Cushman, Arkansas, answered numerous questions from the crowd as he explained how he makes knives, several of which Gov. Huckabee purchased as gifts for other southern governors. David Boone assisted by displaying a number of knives that Riley made.

Curator's Column

Already this year we have had 47 donors bring their collections to us. Some of them have multiple items, and range from objects to photographs to documents to bound books.

After items are donated, they are placed on shelves waiting their turn to be numbered (accessioned in the computer), cleaned, photographed, labeled, and preserved in proper locations. All volunteers who worked with collections last year remain committed – a total of 7!

A few of the new collections are:

- Additional artifacts and documents from the estate of Kathleen Barnes, including certificates, diplomas, letters, programs and even fancy hankerchiefs.—**from Terrie Lewallen.**
- Linoleum pieces from Maxfield Store from the 1950s—**from Brianne Reed**
- Original National Guard enlistment forms for the 1920s and 1930s for Company L, 153rd Infantry kept by Sgt. Hale Coop—**from Myra Kendall, Dennis and Steve Coop**
- Blacksmith forge constructed by Willis Brooks Jeffrey, and Buffalo Blower and tools used by Jeffrey to forge metal used in Lock 2 & 3 on the White River—**from Lloyd Brown**
- Forty-seven photos of local people and events, including politicians, historic buildings and occasions, and the tearing down of the burned Earnheart Building—**from Jack Helm**
- Cave City high school yearbooks 1947-1985 (with a few missing)—**from Dr. and Mrs. Harvey E. Matheny**
- Ruby commemorative cup from Hot Springs, 1917, that belonged to Charlotte Barnett Grace—**from Kenny Gerhardt**
- Set of engineering instruments used by Jack Stevenson while a student at U of Illinois, 1941—**from Jack Stevenson**
- Crouch Funeral Home Register of Burials, 1899-1962, in print and on CD—**from Jim and Jean Crouch** (furnished by Roller Funeral Homes)
- Fallis family photos and Oak Bluff school, spinning wheel used by Sarah Fallis, large gathering basket—**from Jim Barnett**

Free Field Trip Grant Program

As the 2010-2011 school year winds down Old Independence Regional Museum is pleased to report that we have experienced a successful school tour season. We have had 30 schools and over 1,200 students visit the museum this year.

School group visitation continues to grow under the Admission Grant program. This program has been funded the past two years by a private donor. Several of the schools had never visited the museum before. A few that are in economically disadvantaged areas stated that they would never have been able to make a trip like this if it wasn't for the grant program. We are so thrilled to be able to offer this program to the schools in our 12-county region.

New offerings in 2010-2011 were hands-on or demonstration programs that teachers could choose to add to the standard tour. Some of the programs include: candle dipping, butter churning, spy secrets, our museum developed rationing game, Native American storage vessels, and mistakes that worked (featuring silly putty). These have become hugely popular.



The rolling hoops game is part of the historic games and toys program offered to school groups.

Museum Awarded Heritage Month Grant

Old Independence Regional Museum was awarded an Arkansas Heritage Month grant by the Department of Arkansas Heritage in 2011. The theme for this year's Heritage Month is *Conflict and Consequence: Commemorating the Civil War*.

The heritage month grant allowed the museum to produce a card game, *Conflict*, which highlights the Civil War in our 12-county region. A copy of the game will be given to the teachers accompanying each school group that comes to the museum over the course of the next year. Copies are also being given to the historical societies of the 12 counties the museum serves, and to those who assisted with the game.

We want to give a special thanks to all those who helped with the research and production of the game. Especially museum volunteer Mary Miller who spent countless hours doing research. Lyon College interns Abigail Senn and Nicole Inderrieden who worked with the available photos and helped compile research. A huge thanks to Mark Rorie at Batesville Printing for all his contributions; the artwork he provided is fantastic!

This program was made possible in part by a grant from the Department of Arkansas Heritage, funded by your 1/8 cent conservation tax, Amendment 75.

Home School Day Program

Home School Day was developed by the museum to target the underserved community of home schooled students. On these days home school students are invited to participate in an especially themed program with lots of hands-on and demonstration activities.

This spring we experienced another successful event with our Laura Ingalls Wilder themed Home School Day. A very small traveling exhibit from the Laura Ingalls Wilder Museum in Mansfield, MO was on display for the month of April, so we took this opportunity to explore Laura Ingalls Wilder and her books. We placed on exhibit articles that related to the Ingalls stories. We had over 100 home school students register for Home School Days. All seemed to really enjoy the program and some of the comments left by parents and students were:

“Your volunteers are one of your best assets!”

“The hands-on activities were age appropriate intriguing, and well organized.”

“The visuals and the excerpts from the books made things come alive.”

“You improve with each program. Just keep on doing the same.”

“Love everything you do!”

“Wonderful presenters and volunteers!”

“Enjoyed all the activities. Your programs are always great! Thank you.”

New Items in Gift Shop

The gift shop has added some new locally made items including pottery from Hardy Pottery, beautiful cutting boards by Dave Timko, embroidered tea towels by Sandra Sproles, aprons by Beverly Grigsby and much more. Continuing favorites are the locally made wooden birdhouses, McCoy Knives made in Mt. Ida, and books of local interest. We encourage you to come in and see all the new items available.



Gift Shop Manager, Claudia Nobles displays some of the new items featured in the gift shop.



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We're on the web
www.oirm.org

Volunteers!

We have the most wonderful group of volunteers at the museum! Each year we celebrate and honor our volunteers at our Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon in December. Again in 2010 we participated in the Presidential Volunteer Service Award program. We had 28 of our volunteers complete at least 100 service hours or more over the course of the year and earn a service pin! Thank you to all of our volunteers:

Up to 99 Hours

June Armstrong
 Sydney Brown
 Alice Clark
 Jean Crouch
 Kayla Griffis
 Janet Gray
 Jimmy Hughes
 Ron Karg

Jason Lee
 Steve Massey
 Randolph Mathis
 Fern McMahan
 Ann Mobley
 Glenn Mosenthin
 Abby Senn
 Mary Slayden
 Phyllis Terhune
 David Pittser
 Dianne Taylor

100 hours to 249 hours

Presidential Service Bronze Award

Scott Blackwell
 Marilyn Chlebak
 Nona Floyd
 Beverly Grigsby

Bill Hoskins
 Bertha Hughes
 Evelyn Hunt
 Kay Longenbach
 Mary Ann Marshall
 Cheryl Matthews
 Mary Miller
 Claudia Nobles
 Limuel Parks
 Dody Pouliot
 Ann Rhodes
 Barbara Stevenson
 Esther Thomas
 Linda Wann

250 hours to 499 hours

Presidential Service Silver Award

Sylvia Crosby

Frances Mathis
 George Pouliot
 Sharan Pittser
 Dennis Wright
500+ Hours
Presidential Service Gold Award
 Twyla Gill Wright

Junior Volunteers

Greta McCann – Presidential Service Gold Award
 Josie McCann – Presidential Service Bronze Award
 Clara Nikkel
 Brianne Reed – Presidential Service Gold Award
 Cheyenne Reed – Presidential Service Gold Award

Total hours for 2010 = 6,650