

Why MY Museum Matters: The Children's Museum of Indianapolis

▪ Submitted by Jennifer Noffze ▪

The Children's Museum of Indianapolis is the fourth oldest children's museum in the United States and the largest in the world. The Museum celebrated its 85th birthday in 2010 and I could list hundreds of reasons why I think My Museum Matters, but the one that means the most to me is our collection. We are in a unique position amongst children's museums as we are one of a few that actually have a collection, and we use it to teach, inspire, and spark imagination in our visitors.

Our collection was established through the efforts of Indianapolis schoolchildren. In



*Dentzel Carousel (#70.1.5)
Children's Museum of Indianapolis*



*Chihuly Fireworks of
Glass Tower
(#2006.1.1)
Children's Museum
of Indianapolis*

1928, the Museum appealed to local children asking them to donate objects for the collection. The children were very enthusiastic in their support. Many of the items were family heirlooms and represented various ethnic groups. These objects created the nucleus of what would become the Museum's strong social culture collection. Over the years, thousands of generous donations poured in and they have expanded the depth and breadth of our collection.

We have 130,000 objects in the collection representing natural science specimens, toys and dolls, material culture, textiles, and ethnographic objects. The objects are displayed in eleven permanent galleries. The perennial gallery favorite, *Dinosphere*, features one of the largest displays in the United States of real dinosaur fossils, including the first juvenile T.rex, aka “Bucky”, ever displayed. Children can also view some of our wonderful dinosaur toys featured in fun and creative displays. For budding artists, we have the largest permanent sculpture of blown glass created by Dale Chihuly called *Fireworks of Glass*. Children can gaze up at the sculpture under the *Pergola Ceiling* while sitting on a revolving platform. Some of our other large objects on display include a 1917 Dentzel carousel (which visitors can ride!) and the Reuben Wells steam engine, one of the most powerful steam engines ever built.



Reuben Wells Steam Engine (#85.4.1)
Children's Museum of Indianapolis

One of my favorite galleries is *The Power of Children* gallery which focuses on the stories of Anne Frank, Ruby Bridges, and Ryan White. As a child growing up in Indiana dur-



Children in front of chalkboard
Children's Museum of Indianapolis

ing the 1980s, I was very familiar with Ryan's story. In 2001, the Museum acquired the entire contents of Ryan's bedroom that had been left nearly intact by his mother since his death. One of my first projects upon arriving at the Museum was to catalog the entire contents of his room. While cataloging the collection, I felt like I was stepping back in time as I held Ryan's Huey Lewis records, Max Headroom gear, and GI Joe toys. One of the most poignant objects is Ryan's speakerphone which he used to “attend” class after being banned from going to school in person. Seeing real objects like this one has the power to deeply impact, enlighten, and enrich the lives of children who visit the Museum.

Of course, not everything is on display, and many of our treasures are safely tucked away in storage. Our Museum prides itself on being a leader in family learning and we try to foster intergenerational experiences throughout the Museum. I've encountered this firsthand while touring people through our storage areas. I love to see people's faces light up when they see toys they owned as a child. During my first tour, I couldn't contain my excitement when I saw the Tomy Fashion Plates on a shelf. I spent hours as a child creating new designs with my fashion plates! When I toured my step-mother through the collection, she

nearly cried when she saw the Fred Flintstone & Dino riding toy. When my grandfather visited, I had to drag him away from the steam engine toys with an admonishment of “no touching!”

Our collection is so varied, containing everything from Mariano Fortuny gowns to Chinese children’s hats; Kiowa cradleboards to Oaxacan masks; a stuffed hyena mount to a large piece of calcite; and an 1803 Conestoga wagon to a Star Wars light saber toy. We are able to share our treasures with thousands of children each year and hopefully inspire and teach them about his-



*Kiowa Cradleboard (#49.299.62)
Children's Museum of Indianapolis*

tory, science, and other cultures. While walking into the Museum on a recent morning, I overheard a conversation between a little boy and his grandfather. The boy excitedly said, “Pappy, when I get big, I’m going to work *here!*” I smiled as I remembered my many wonderful and inspiring visits to the Museum as a child. I wanted to tell that little boy, “Guess what? You just might!”



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FROM THE CHAIR

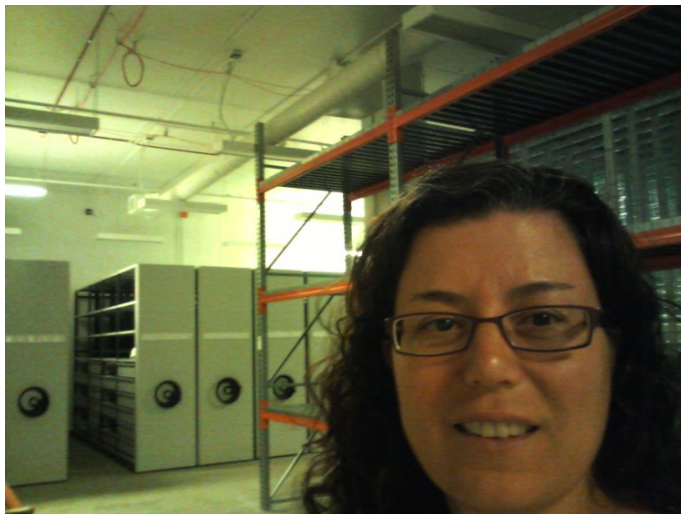
▪Submitted by Ann Sinfield ▪

It's December and I'm still functioning. Why should this be surprising? It's only been a few weeks since the Chazen opened its 86,000 square foot expansion. The building doubled our gallery space, provides new art storage areas, a loading dock, a few weeks since the Chazen opened its 86,000 square foot expansion. The building doubled our gallery space, provides new art storage areas, a loading dock, freight elevator, auditorium, and a gorgeous lobby. The building is beautiful, surprisingly functional, yet completely overwhelming (still). I don't think I've ever been more ready for a holiday break!

This has been quite a year, not only here in Madison, but for the MRC, too. The Courier has a new editor/designer dynamic duo who are reinvigorating our newsletter; the Chicago conference saw inspiring sponsor support for travel, the breakfast meeting, a cocktail hour, and the Mighty Rescue Crew; and in October the MRC provided stipends for two members to attend workshops from the Midwest Art Conservation Center (read more about the workshops later in this issue).

As this year closes we can take the opportunity to look forward, and activities in 2012 promise to be just as plentiful. We have at least two conferences in the Midwest: AAM is in Minneapolis from April 29–May 2, and AMM goes to Indianapolis on July 23–26. Proposal deadlines for both conferences have already passed, but there are still opportunities to get involved. Please watch for travel stipend announcements early in the new year.

Our annual membership drive will start again in January. Make sure to help out your state



Ann enjoying the new art storage area

representative and renew your membership early. Tasty chocolate prizes await the representative with the highest percentage increase in total members. Renew, refer, get chocolate for your rep!

2012 is also an election year for the MRC. Most of the Board—Devon as treasurer, Laura as secretary, and me as chair—have reached our term limits so we are unable to serve again in our current positions. As a result, sometime in the spring you will hear from our nominations chair, Cristin Waterbury, as she searches for members who are interested in serving on the board. I encourage you to consider running for a position. Serving on the board is an invaluable opportunity to work with peers from different institutions, improve your organizational and networking skills, and learn more about the museum field through your interactions with colleagues and vendors from across the region. Plus it's just a fun group of people. Feel free to contact any of the current board members for more info, we are all happy to talk about what we do. I hope you will volunteer!

One change to report: Craig Hadley, our Wisconsin state representative, has taken a new job in Indiana. Please join me in congratulating Craig, and thanking him for his service to the MRC. We are lucky to have a motivated membership, as Elizabeth Frozena of the Racine Art Museum has already agreed to take on Craig's responsibilities as our new Wisconsin state representative. Welcome Elizabeth, and thank you for volunteering.

In Missouri, Kate Keil has resigned as State Representative, so we are again recruiting. If you are interested in volunteering to fill the vacant spot, please contact me. You can also call any of our other state reps to get an idea of the time commitment and duties.

Enjoy the holidays. I look forward to working with you in 2012.

SPNHC 2012 Annual Meeting

The 2012 annual meeting of the Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC) will be held at Yale University and is hosted by Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History.

Date: June 11-16th, 2012

Location: Yale University, Newhaven, Connecticut

Host: Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History

Theme: Emerging Technology and Innovation in Natural History Collections Management

Co-chairs: Tim White and Greg Watkins Colwell

For more information go to: <http://peabody.yale.edu/collections/spnhc2012>

FROM THE EDITOR

▪Submitted by Jamie Merkel ▪

It's been a busy fall for me, both personally and professionally. In the Ethnobotanical Lab at the University of Michigan Museum of Anthropology we finally completed the rehousing of our seed collections -all four cabinets worth! Countless vials and custom-made boxes later, all of our seeds are now organized in a linear and orderly fashion. Instead of having our seeds organized by "domesticated" and "undomesticated" seeds (because the cultivated and unknowns go where?) they are now fully reorganized in cabinets and drawers first by the region they came from, and then by their family, genus, and species. So essentially if you are looking for a particular plant and you know where it is from and its scientific name, you could easily find it without even consulting the



database or a catalog card. I think it's awesome. I guess that's why I'm a collections manager!

On a personal note I started my own hand-made craft business. Maybe it was all of those custom-made boxes that got the idea started, but I've been crafty in one way or another

since I was a small child and the post-graduation exhaustion has faded away and left me a new burst of energy and desire to try something new. As with most things in my life I hit the ground running, and within a month of my new adventure I had opened an online shop and got accepted as a vendor at a local craft fair! There's been a learning curve that was to be expected, but it's been a lot of fun and it's given me yet another outlet in which to be organized and to help others do the same via their new makeup bags, knitting needle organizers, and pencil rolls.

In continuing with our new tradition, this issue of the MRC Courier has a great and very fun to read article entitled *Why My Museum Matters: The Children's Museum of Indianapolis* by Jennifer Noffze. If you enjoy reading this type of article as much as I do, please consider writing one of your own for the upcoming spring issue. The column topics I am currently seeking entries for are *What I Love About My Museum*, and *Why MY Museum Matters*. If your idea or take of what you love about your job or institution falls within these parameters; start writing! I am also hoping to reinvigorate Conservation Corner, so look for that column again in the spring.

After much hemming and hawing we decided to not include the annual reports in this issue of the MRC Courier. There has been some confusion and discussion regarding this topic because when Tamara Lange and I took over as the new designing and editing duo, we talked it over with MRC Chair Ann Sinfield and decided to change the seasonal designations to reflect the season ahead rather than the one just passed. MRC bylaws specify the annual reports to be published in the *winter issue*, so initially we were going to include the annual reports in this issue instead, but with the late notice and the holidays coming up, it soon became apparent that this was not a viable option. This time around the annual reports will thus be included in the spring issue.

And for the moment, the first snow is on the ground and I find it peaceful to look out and see the fresh blanket of white over the tree branches and across my yard. I know the long winter is yet to come and by March I'll be cursing the cold and the snow, but for now I am enjoying the winding down of the season and am looking forward to the holidays to come.

IT'S A BOY!!

Super Congratulations

to Nicolette Meister and Kevin Larson on the birth of their son, Mason Oliver. Mason was born on September 24, 2011 at 6:16 PM, weighing 7 lbs 8 oz, and was 20 inches tall. At two months old, he has nearly doubled his birth weight and is as cute and sweet as ever!



Welcome to the world
Mason!

WHAT I LOVE ABOUT MY MUSEUM

▪ Submitted by
Katie Nelson ▪

The people!

I know, I know, as a collections manager I should say the artifacts... And it is true that our collection is the foundation for my Museum and its programs, and I do enjoy caring for them. I am the type of person, however, who needs her love reciprocated and the stuffed animals, arrow heads, and dinosaur poop are simply lacking in that department.

I love my chosen profession and what I get to do every day. I love the days that I can just close myself off from everything going on around me and just focus on the collection. During these economic times though, those days are fading into the past. Working in a small museum means I am doing a lot more than collections management. I find myself organizing fundraising events when I should be sifting through PastPerfect records. It is



during these stressful times that I turn to my favorite thing about my Museum, my peeps!

The staff, volunteers, and visitors are the reason why I come in every-

day. I was working in the temporary exhibition gallery one day and a little girl came downstairs and I heard her proclaim, "O-M-G! There's a dinosaur leg!" It's experiences like this that make me proud of what I do.

I love that when I'm having "one of those days" where you just want to scream, I can go into the education office and talk about *How I Met Your Mother* or other guilty pleasures. I love that I have the best volunteers! The ones that have been with me since the beginning, have seen me in all my moods, and love me anyway. Can the cougar do that? I didn't think so. That's why it's the people I love most about my Museum.

AMM SESSION REVIEW

The AMM Conference of 2011 was held in Chicago, Illinois. The MRC awarded travel stipends of \$750 each for the attendance of seven MRC members at the conference. Several sessions were already reviewed by stipend recipients in the Fall 2011 issue, while this issue features James Wall-Wild's favorite.

▪ Submitted by James Wall-Wild ▪

At the 2011 AAM conference I attended a session entitled "Caring for Historic Photograph Collections in Small Museums." For me, the most useful part of the very informative ses-

sion was the overview and thorough explanation of the different types of antique photographs and how to identify them. A brief synopsis of what I learned regarding the different types of photographs is highlighted in the rest of this article.

Daguerreotypes are a type of image named after Louis Daguerre, a Frenchman who practiced the technique of creating a photographic image on a silver-coated copper plate. Daguerreotypes can be identified as such when you see your own reflection in their mirror-like backgrounds. Dating from 1839, daguerreotypes are the earliest photographic images. They are usually found housed in book-style cases that protect the image from air exposure and from silver tarnishing.

Ambrotypes are negative photographic images that have been produced on glass plates; they are considered a "positive" image because black paint has been applied to the back of the glass allowing them to be viewed properly. Invented by Frederick Archer of England, ambrotypes were first introduced in 1854.

Tin types or ferrotypes are images produced on thin sheets of metal, usually iron, that have been given a coat of black varnish. The varnish allows the image to be viewed as a "positive". Tintypes were introduced in 1856 but they never gained the high level of popularity that daguerreotypes enjoyed and by 1900 or so tin types had been almost entirely replaced. While they were current, however, tintypes were most often found in small display cases. Each of the earliest kinds of photographs (daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, and tin types) is usually found housed in small, hinged-book type cases, and as such are called "cased images".

Another type of very popular early photograph was the Cartes de visite, French for "visiting card". Because of increasing popularity and the lower cost of photographs, many people could afford Cartes de visites who could never before have afford to sit for a photographer. Considered very cheap and inexpensive, Cartes de visites were most often

exchanged between friends and relatives.

Many photographs produced in the 1800s were created using glass plates to produce a negative image. In the early days of glass plate negatives, the glass had to be coated with a solution before use, and so they came to be known as "wet-plate" negatives. Even though "dry plate" negatives were known since 1864, the emulsion was not very good.

Later improvements made dry plate negatives more popular. Wet and dry glass plates can be classified as albumen or gelatin glass plates. Another early type of photograph is the Calotype, which used a paper negative. Albumen was often the emulsion used, generally placed on thin paper, and the paper was adhered to a stiff, cardboard backing.

Stereotypes or stereo cards are photographs that have been mounted on cardboard and have two nearly identical images mounted next to one another. When viewed through a stereo viewer stereo cards resolve to an apparent three-dimensional image. They were popular from about 1854 to around 1936.

Once they have been properly identified, antique photographs still present their own special challenges to the conservator and preservationist. Temperature and humidity levels are factors to consider, as well as utilizing proper handling techniques, achieving correct light levels, maintaining proper storage, and implementing preservation techniques that utilize the proper materials.

Coming soon!!

Watch for info in early 2012 on Travel Stipends for the 2012 AMM Meeting, July 23-26 at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Indianapolis, Indiana.

MACC WORKSHOP REVIEW

▪ *Submitted by Cristin J. Waterbury* ▪

Thanks to the generous support of the MRC, I had the good fortune to attend the Midwest Art Conservation Center's workshop The Research and Writing of a Long Range Conservation Plan at the Chazen Museum of Art in Madison, WI in November.

During the two-day workshop I had the opportunity to learn more about a process for which I previously only had informal knowledge. The instructor, Elisa Redman, Associate Director of Preservation Services at MACC, provided attendees with an arsenal of resources and materials, including copies of her formal presentation, examples of plans from other institutions, and a voluminous array of worksheets to work from in actually writing the plan itself.

A unique aspect of this workshop was that it included information on funding strategies. Not only did we learn the what, why, and how of developing a long range conservation plan, but we learned a great deal about how to secure the funding necessary to actually carry out the plan. What a revolutionary idea! And an effective one, at that. I know I piqued my boss's interest when I told him the workshop would include this component (I had to sell him on the idea of sending me away from the office for two days, and besides, I needed his letter of support for the stipend application).

Possibly the most useful tidbit of knowledge I walked away with was regarding general conservation assessments, such as those available through the IMLS CAP program. Did you know your general assessment is only considered "valid" by federal funders for 7-10 years before you need to invest in a new one? I certainly didn't! So guess what's at the top of my

to-do list coming away from the workshop – seeking funding to do a new general conservation assessment ASAP, as this is the building block from which both the conservation plan and its further funding is built from.

As always, when I have the luxury of attending such events I come away refreshed and excited by networking, meeting new colleagues, and visiting with old friends. I returned home with several new business cards to add to my rolodex and our friend Ann Sinfeld, registrar at the host museum, gave us a dazzling and envy-inducing behind-the-scenes tour of the Chazen's new facility, along with her colleague Maria Saffiotti Dale, Curator of Paintings, Sculpture and Decorative Arts at the Chazen. It's a dream facility they should be proud of, and the rest of us likely jealous of!

Thank you again to the MRC for the opportunity to attend this wonderful MACC workshop, and to the Chazen for hosting it. I look forward to incorporating what I've learned and forging ahead on long range conservation planning activities (and getting them funded, hopefully!).

Keep up-to-date
between newsletters!!



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NEWS FROM ALL OVER

Indiana

▪ *Submitted by Lana Newhart-Kellen* ▪

Association of Indiana Museums Conference, Richmond

News:

The Association of Indiana Museums Conference was held September 18 and 19, 2011. The consensus: Wonderful conference!

We had a great time in Richmond on September 18-19 with the networking, learning, sharing of great information, seeing museums all around Wayne County, and meeting some of our Ohio museum colleagues. Our newest addition, the "Ask A Conservator" table, was very popular! Thanks to Ramona Duncan-Huse, Senior Conservator with the Indiana Historical Society, for coordinating the service and for her great advice!

AIM is extremely grateful to sponsors and local conference arrangements members: Reid Hospital, RMD Patti Insurance, Richmond Art Museum, Midwest Registrars Committee, and the Wayne County Cultural Alliance.

For the AIM 2012 Conference, we will cross the National Road from Richmond to Terre Haute!

Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Museum, Auburn

News:

On October 5, 2011 John Martin Smith and his wife Barbara were killed in an automobile wreck on I-69 south of Fort Wayne, Indiana.

An antique cars buff, John Smith helped found the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Museum in Auburn, Indiana. He had been president of the Museum and the National Automotive & Truck Museum of the United States in Auburn. He also published two books about DeKalb County history and had served on the board of trustees of the Indiana Historical Society. Our condolences to the Smith family and the community of Auburn, Indiana.

Marshall County Museum, Plymouth

News:

The Marshall County Museum opened the Historic Crossroads Center to focus on the Lincoln Highway, Michigan Road, Dixie Highway, Yellowstone Trail, and Grand Army of the Republic Highway and their historical importance to Marshall County. The main feature is an interactive map with LED lighting and audio stories with various other exhibition areas.

Red Skelton Museum and Education Center, Vincennes

News:

The Red Skelton Foundation Board of Directors has announced the hiring of its first staff, to advance its goal of opening a Red Skelton Museum and Education Center in 2013. Anne Pratt is the Foundation's Director of Marketing and Development, and Shirley Jean Ray will help with the administrative functions and organization of the Museum in addition to her work as an adjunct professor of museum studies.



Dinner and networking at the AIM 2011 Conference

Iowa

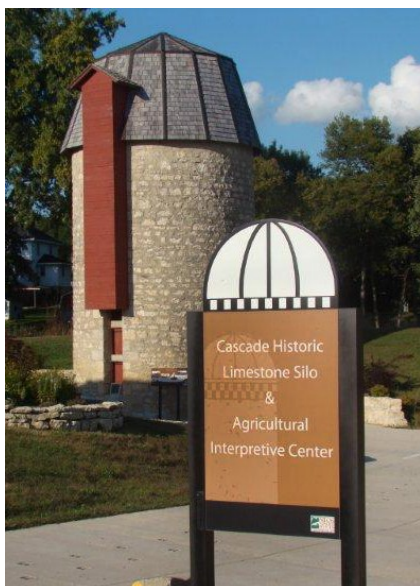
▪ Submitted by Jennifer Kovarik ▪

Alliance of National Heritage Areas, Waterloo

News:

ANHA: Signs Serve as Connecting Thread for the Heritage Area

Many visitors and residents have been welcomed to the National Heritage Area in Waterloo by the words "Entering Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area." These Gateway Signs can be found in five locations along the major highway corridors near the borders of the 37-county region in Northeast Iowa. The new signs serve as a connecting thread for the Heritage Area's network of sites, while letting visitors know they can discover a piece of America's agricultural story being preserved at the site. The signs also complement current outdoor interpretive signs found at sites and along trails throughout the Heritage Area that share the region's unique story with visitors. This is a huge milestone for the Heritage Area and would not have been possible without the support of the Iowa Department of Transportation and the John Deere Foundation.



Ribbon cutting featuring one of the new signs for the Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area



Broach demonstrating Yngve Olsson's work

Danish Immigrant Museum, Elk Horn Exhibitions:

Danish American Artist Series: Yngve Olsson
Now through January 8, 2012

Yngve Olsson (1896-1970) emigrated from Denmark in 1918. By 1920, he was working for the Kalo Shop in Chicago -an Arts and Crafts style workshop that designed and created silver jewelry, tableware, and house wares. He was a master craftsman, known especially for his chased and engraved decoration that often took the form of flowers and leaves. For 50 years he was a leading member of the Kalo Shop team, in addition to working out of his home workshop. This exhibition presents several original pieces made by Yngve Olsson, as well as his tools, design drawings, and photographs of other works.

Face of Copenhagen: Photographs by Itzick Lev

Now through February 25, 2012

On loan from the Nordic Heritage Museum in Seattle, Washington, this collection of over 40 portraits reveals modern Copenhagen as a diverse and cosmopolitan city.



*Faces of Copenhagen Exhibit
At the Danish Immigrant Museum*

Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum, Decorah

News:

Returning the Favor: Norwegians Study their Folk Art at Vesterheim Museum

When Norwegians immigrated to America in the nineteenth century, their folk-art traditions took root here and flourished. Now Norwegians like Ingve and Kjersti Holm from Stavanger travel all the way to the Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum in Decorah, Iowa, to study the Scandinavian flat-plane figure carving that used to be an active part of their own country's folk art. In fact, according to the Holms, American practitioners of Norwegian folk art have been instrumental in reawakening Norway's interest in its native folk culture.

Ingve Holm recalls that before he retired he was always in a hurry. He ran his own business and "time was money" -something many

Americans can identify with as well. Then a friend suggested he take a class in acanthus carving, a very intricate and formal type of traditional Norwegian woodcarving. Initially he was hesitant. He explained that as individuals get older it is common for them to keep to the things they already do well, and for this reason he was uncomfortable with the idea of being imperfect at something once again; adding with a laugh "At first it took so many hours, I could have tiled a bathroom in that time!"

Initially he felt like was wasting his time, but he stuck to it and eventually saw that "time was coming, not leaving," and that he was learning patience and gaining clarity in the process. That acanthus class was just the beginning for the Holms.

Ingve and Kjersti Holm discuss some of the details of Norwegian carving



Ingve signed up for another acanthus carving class at the renowned Rauland Academy in Telemark, Norway. Kjersti, a tailor, signed up for a course, too, but hers was cancelled. Not willing to be idle while Ingve was in class, she enrolled in a course in Scandinavian flat-plane carving class taught by Harley Refsal, a master carver and retired professor

of Scandinavian studies and folk art at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. It was a perfect example of American practitioners reconnecting Norwegians with their own traditions.

Kjersti was a little apprehensive about trying her hand at figure carving, but Refsal reassured her. "If you can peel a potato, you can carve," he said. And carve she did! She loved it. Ingve stopped by Kjersti's class when he could and was fascinated by how much of a complicated art the simpler-looking flat-plane figure carving really is, conveying personalities and emotions with a few well-chosen cuts. "It's hard to say more with less," Harley Refsal says, "but in flat-plane carving, less really is more."

Ingve hasn't abandoned acanthus carving by any means, but he has embraced figure carving as well and has joined Kjersti in several of the classes Refsal has taught throughout Norway. He has also been asked to teach the technique himself and at the beginning of September the couple traveled to Decorah to study with Refsal again—this time at Vesterheim Museum—which has been so instru-

mental in reviving and preserving an interest in Norwegian folk art in both the United States and in Norway.

Holms and Refsal explain the revival of interest in the folk art by citing something they call Hansen's Law, after Marcus Lee Hansen who coined the idea that "the third generation tries to remember what the second generation tries to forget." This phrase refers to the frequent pattern of second generation immigrants striving to forget their native culture and customs so they can blend into their newly adopted country, while the third generation of immigrants often wants or tries to reclaim past cultural knowledge.

Refsal explains that because language is often lost in the cultural assimilation of the generations, folk art is an excellent avenue for subsequent generations to recapture the past because it isn't dependent on language. He states, "You don't need to know a syllable of Norwegian to carve in the Norwegian style. The folk arts are a tangible, non-verbal connection to our past."

Michigan

▪ *Submitted by Robin Goodman* ▪

State Rep Mini Bio

Name: Robin Goodman

Where you work: Kalamazoo Institute of Arts

Favorite pastime: Reading on my Kindle

Something you are looking forward to: Vacationing in Sicily in the spring

Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit Exhibitions:

"Rembrandt and the Face of Jesus" will be at the Detroit Institute of Arts, November 20,

2011-February 12, 2012. This is the last venue for the show which was a collaborative project between the Louvre, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the DIA. The exhibition brings together many of Rembrandt's finest works that portray Jesus and demonstrates how the artist broke from traditional 17th-century images to show a more human and compassionate face of Jesus, using models from the Jewish community in Amsterdam. This marks the first time that "Supper at Emmaus," one of Rembrandt's most famous masterpieces, has been in the United States in the last 75 years. The DIA Registrars Office played host to a large group of couriers from around the US and Europe. The European couriers (hailing from France, Poland, Ger-

many, Sweden, the UK, and the Netherlands), as well as most of the US couriers, had not been to Detroit before and were very impressed by the DIA collection.

Mackinac State Historic Parks, Mackinaw City
News:

This fall, we broke ground and started construction on the South Southwest Rowhouse at Colonial Michilimackinac. The archaeological excavation of this structure was completed in 2007. The building will be completed in 2013 and feature exhibitions and a theatre/classroom. We are also working on new exhibitions for the East Blockhouse and Quartermaster's Storehouse at Fort Mackinac. The blockhouse will feature a War of 1812 exhibition and the storehouse will have an updated period setting and audio visual exhibitions. In 2012, the Richard and Jane Manoogian Mackinac Art Museum will have an exhibition and art contest focusing on Grand Hotel. The hotel turns 125 years old and hotel patrons will have free admission to the Museum. Currently, we are working on photographing and creating a list of all the objects that were removed from the old Quartermaster's Storehouse exhibition. Some will continue to be housed in the collection while others will be deaccessioned. In December, we have Hillary Pine starting as our winter intern. She will be working in the Petersen Center Library and helping the registrar with collections storage.

Do you have exhibitions, events, acquisitions, or other news to share? Please let your State Representative or Jamie know! See the listing of MRC Board Members and State Representatives for contact information.

Sindecuse Museum of Dentistry, Ann Arbor
News:

In preparation for an upcoming exhibition at the Sindecuse Museum due to open next fall, the Museum is seeking photographs, equipment, stories, historical documents, advertising ephemera, and personal artifacts related to American women dentists from the 1860s to the present. Exhibition curator, Shannon O'Dell, says, "It is difficult to find photographs showing women dentists in their practices or with their staff and many of these images have not been digitized and placed into web accessible databases yet. Please consider helping us by checking your collections; informing your board, staff and volunteers; or by keeping an eye out for us if you are conducting research on other women's history related topics. If your institution has photos or collections related to a female dentist, please let the Museum know." All inquiries and information can be sent to O'Dell directly at shannono@umich.edu as soon as possible.

In other news, Kathy Daniels was hired on October 3, 2011 to fill the new position of Collections Coordinator at the Sindecuse Museum. Prior to joining the Sindecuse Museum, Kathy was employed for eleven years by the Johnson County Museum in Shawnee, Kansas as their Curator of Collections and Exhibits. Kathy holds a BA in History and Sociology and an MA in Historical Administration and Museum Studies. Kathy will be involved in collection stewardship projects, including arranging storage and moving large artifacts to a better offsite storage facility, developing web access to the collection, creating or improving collections policies and procedure manuals, as well as supervising student assistants who catalog and handle the collection.

Minnesota

▪ Submitted by Jackie Hoff ▪

Scott County Historical Society, Sha-
kopee

Exhibitions:

Under Where? Unmentionables Ex-
posed

The new exhibition, *Under Where? Un-*
mentionables Exposed, takes an inti-
mate look at the underclothing women
and men have worn throughout the years to
alter, contort, and transform their bodies for
status, class, and fashion. The exhibition
opens with a frank talk about the history of
knickers, bustles, and what-nots by Scott
County Historical Society Executive Director
Kathleen Klehr at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, No-
vember 17, 2011.

Under Where?



Unmentionables Exposed!

Admission is \$4 for adults, \$2 for students,
and is FREE for SCHS Members. Scott
County Historical Society is located at 235
Fuller Street South, Shakopee, MN 55379,
three blocks south of the intersection of Co.
Rd. 101 and Fuller Street. All inquiries are
welcome 952-445-0378 or
info@scottcountyhistory.org. Visit us online
at www.scottcountyhistory.org.

Missouri

▪ Submitted by Kate Keil ▪

Missouri State Museum, Jefferson City

Exhibitions:

The Missouri State Museum just installed
phase two of our current exhibition, Civil War
Missouri: A House Dividing. This phase re-
quired rotating in eight different Civil War
battle flags from Missouri Regiments, includ-
ing the 7th Missouri (Irish) Infantry, which
was considered one of the seven most famous
Civil War Battle flags during the war. Sev-
eral other artifacts—weapons, quilts, and

dresses—were also put on exhibit to tell the
stories of individual Missouri soldiers and ci-
vilians.

The Missouri State Museum also just acquired
a 5,000 + piece collection of objects related to
the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. Museum
staff members are in the midst of processing
the collection and anticipate it will take a cou-
ple of years to fully complete the accessioning
process. At this time, the Museum has tenta-
tively scheduled an exhibition of this collec-
tion for 2014, the 110th anniversary of the
fair. It's Your History!

Ohio

▪ Submitted by Laura Henderson ▪

Miami University Art Museum, Oxford
The Christmas Crunch—and I don't mean peanut brittle!

November and December are crunch times at all museums, but especially at a small university museum. The holidays are welcomed breaks, but work has to be organized around them in order to accomplish everything—not just from the registrar's point of view, either. There is a last-minute rush from students to view artwork as part of their research for papers and projects, and there are digital presentations at the Museum, using artifacts as study objects. This involves pulling objects out—and then putting them back, of course. The artwork has to be monitored and handled during the viewings and presentations, which also takes time.

The Visual Arts Calendar is prepared now for the spring 2012 exhibitions and programs, involving reports from the director and collections manager/registrar (plus I do all the editing), program planning from the curator of education, descriptions from the curator of exhibitions. Images are needed, so photography has to be scheduled, and two or three proofs are edited before it goes to print.

The fall exhibitions are de-installed and objects put away, but first condition reports have to be done, and arrangements have to be made for loan returns. Then the spring semester exhibitions are installed, involving paperwork for loan agreements and receipts, and more condition reports! Labels and gallery guides and press releases and posters and flyers need to be formatted and edited. The opening receptions are planned and invitations are de-

signed and mailed out. Sound familiar?

And then there are the new acquisitions. Objects are researched, examined, reported and presented formally to the Collections Development Committee so it can make its recommendations. Gift letters are sent out for accepted objects, files are made, data is entered, numbers are applied, locations are assigned. One of our more fascinating recent acquisitions is featured in the image of Rondle West's, *Someone Has a Napoleon Complex*. The end-of-year tax deadline drives this, but the holidays move the process forward by two weeks because the University is closed, and therefore the Museum is closed, for Christmas and New Year's.

Rondle West, Someone Has a Napoleon Complex, 2010; mixed media assemblage; Miami University Art Museum purchase and partial gift of the artist, 2011



On top of the crunch at work is the personal side of seasonal preparations! Gifts to buy and send to family and friends, the annual holiday letter and cards, the decorations, the house winterizing, leaf raking, gardening, outdoor furniture storage. But also there are the PARTIES, with good food and wine, eggnog, sweets—maybe some peanut brittle!—and gift exchanges, followed by that richly deserved Winter Break that is “forced” upon us by the University!

Wisconsin

▪ Submitted by Craig Hadley ▪

Chazen Museum of Art, Madison

News:

Construction of the new Chazen Museum of Art is complete!

The new Chazen Museum of Art building—an 86,000-square-foot addition—opened in October 2011. The new building is joined to the Elvehjem building by a third-floor bridge that creates a contiguous façade as well as a unified interior gallery plan. It includes a two-story, glass-walled lobby to welcome visitors, 6,500 square feet of new temporary exhibition spaces, a 160-seat auditorium equipped for film and video screenings, as well as an art studio classroom. The Museum Shop and the Works on Paper Study room both have larger, newly designed spaces, and an Object Study room provides access to art works via visible storage. Art handling facilities have been vastly improved with a loading dock, freight elevator, on-site crate storage, and new art storage.

Additional building features include copper-clad north-facing light monitors that allow controlled natural light in the galleries, a limestone "carpet" that runs from the pedes-

trian mall into the lobby and up the back wall, and a magnificent lobby curtain designed by textile artist Petra Blaisse. If you haven't yet seen the new building you need to make a trip to Madison!

Wright Museum of Art, Beloit

Exhibitions:

Russian Icons



The Wright Museum curates a modest collection of icons from both Europe and Asia. This collection recently saw the addition of two Russian icons, generously donated to the Museum by Danielle and Muriel Clifton. These important Eastern Orthodox represen-



tations provide excellent comparative examples to the Wright's collection of Western Madonna and Child images. Students studying Russian language and literature, religion, and art history will benefit by the addition of these panels. Both works are Tikhvin Mother of God icons, which replicate one of a handful of images that were believed to have been painted by the Apostle Luke. The Clifton family gift will be on exhibit in the Hollensteiner Gallery during the 2011-12 academic year.

Lecture:

Professor Stephen Eisenman of Northwestern University will present a lecture on Toulouse-Lautrec and the Wright's recently conserved poster at Beloit on February 8th at 7:00 pm. The print will be exhibited in the Wright Museum's Hollensteiner Gallery from February through March 2012. The lecture is free and open to the public.

The Woodson Art Museum, Wausau

News:

The Woodson Art Museum is ending 2011 with two exciting announcements!

The first is a gift from BMO Harris Bank of 43 oil paintings by famed Wisconsin artist Owen J. Gromme. M&I Bank, now part of BMO Financial Group, commissioned this extraordinary collection of paintings in the mid-1960s for its corporate office in downtown Milwaukee. These works, considered among the best created by Gromme, feature birds and other wildlife subjects specific to Wisconsin.

Highlights include *Artist's Studies* (1968), a trompe l'oeil still life of feathers, eggs, and sketches; *Sandhill Cranes – Central Wisconsin* (1967), a composition of two cranes in flight against a brilliant sunset; *Wood Ducks* (1966), highly colored birds resplendent on branches

and in the water; and *Cedar Waxwings* (1968), depicted in winter on red-berry-laden branches. The quality of these paintings speaks to Gromme's importance as an artist, as do his longtime curatorial service at the Milwaukee Public Museum and his seminal volume, *Birds of Wisconsin*, first published by the University of Wisconsin Press in 1963. Gromme is recognized as a pioneer in conservation; he painted the 1945 Federal Duck Stamp and the first Wisconsin Duck Stamp in 1978.



Owen Gromme, Artist's Studies, 1968, oil on canvas

Our second and very exciting announcement is the Woodson Art Museum will undertake a building project designed to add gallery and storage space, which the Museum Board of Directors

and staff have been considering for some time.

In the wake of the generous gift of the M&I Bank Collection of the Owen Gromme paintings, the need for additional space has become urgent. Three foundations are funding a two-story, approximately 8,400-square-foot addition to be located south and west of the main entrance. The addition will comprise galleries and storage as well as visitor amenities, including enhanced restroom facilities and a passenger elevator.

To enable the debut of the Gromme Collection to coincide with the 2012 Birds in Art exhibition in September, construction will begin as soon as possible. While the building

footprint has been established, all other details



Owen Gromme, *Pileated Woodpeckers*, 1967,
oil on canvas

in
process.

Kenosha Public Museum, Kenosha News:

The Kenosha Public Museums Board of Trustees has announced that Daniel J. Joyce will be the next director of the Kenosha Public Museums effective December 1, 2011.

Joyce has served the Kenosha Public Museums for 25 years as Senior Curator of Exhibits and Collections. He previously worked as a Preparator for the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago and as Curator of Exhibits at the Blackwater Draw Museum in New Mexico.

Joyce was a member of the team who designed and implemented the new facilities and exhibits for the Kenosha Public Museum, Civil War Museum, and the Dinosaur Discovery Museum. He earned a Master of Arts degree in Anthropology from Eastern New Mex-

ico University and a Bachelor of Arts in American Military History and Museology from Southern Illinois University.

In making the announcement, Alan Goldsmith, President of the Kenosha Public Museums Board of Trustees, stated, "We are extremely happy that he has accepted the position of Director and we look forward to working with him as the Museums move forward."

Obituary for Anton "Tony" Rajer

Anton (Tony) William Rajer, art conservator, teacher, and humanitarian, from Green Bay and Madison, Wis., passed away suddenly of a heart attack on Friday, Nov. 18, 2011, at 2:30 p.m. in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where he was restoring a 4'8" x 22' WPA mural for Harrison Elementary School. Tony was born in Sheboygan, Wis., in 1952 to Mr. and Mrs. Anton Rajer (both now deceased).

Tony's numerous accomplishments and contributions include being an Associate Conservator for the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Mo., an Art Conservator for the Texas Conservation Center in West Texas, Project Conservator to the restoration of the Wisconsin State Capitol, Madison, Wis., and Project Director for SOS! (Save Outdoor Sculpture) Wisconsin Chapter, a grant program supported by the Smithsonian Institution. The SOS! position resulted in Tony co-authoring the book, "Public Sculpture in Wisconsin: An Atlas of Outdoor Monuments, Memorials, and Masterpieces in the Badger State" in 1999. In 1987, Tony began his own art conservation business for museums and private clients and he managed Fine Arts Conservation for 24 years. Tony also taught throughout his career at UW-Madison in Continuing Education, teaching Introduction Art Conservation, The Business of Art, and Latin American History.

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