

May, 2010 Newsletter Fort Recovery State Museum

Just When You Think Life Can't Get Better –

Chris Keller just got word that the *National Battlefield Grant* we (Fort Recovery/Ball State University) submitted last winter has made the top 25 finalists in the nation! Some additional budget information must be submitted, and then in July we will find out if we are one of those finalists actually awarded the grant! Yeah! (Chris is a staff archaeologist at Ball State and has been instrumental in bringing good things to FR!)

RENOVATION EXCITEMENT GROWS

Military Museum

Wow, we are excited for you to see the changes being made in the museum and every other part of our properties! So much has already been accomplished! The *main part of the museum has been gutted* and the new displays and exhibits are beginning to appear. Dan Schoen, Home Idea Center, has done a masterful job of creating authentic-type backgrounds for the displays. They have also installed new carpet. Willie Ranly has repainted all the main floor walls, and Fort Electric LLC (Bruce Scott & Ben Osterholt) has installed attractive lighting and fans. OHS people, particularly Bill Mahon, have come weekly to oversee the project and do the actual work on the displays/exhibits. Much more information will be available through text and pictures than there was in our “old” museum displays.

Tool Cabin & Blockhouses

Jack Hemmelgarn, Ken Lamm and Chris Keller have redone the exhibits in the tool cabin – putting small tools in lighted cases and moving larger tools out into the open. All labels have been redone as well. Bob Hart and Jerry Kramer are putting up informative displays (that had been in the museum) in the North blockhouse, and they are installing a handrail so that blockhouse can not only be available and useful but educational as well.

Walk By Museum

Helen LeFevre and Chris Keller have created some fascinating new displays - a *Civil War* display; the *Gene Noggler artifact* display; and *Bob VanTrees* display! The Civil War display has a chart listing every Fort Recovery area young man who served in the Civil War. It really makes the war “real” when you see which of “our” young men served, were injured, were killed in this war serving as part of Regiment K! (see also the names of the particular battles in which they fought.) In the VanTrees display are not only Bob’s paintings and books, but also models of the planes he flew in WWII. When you’re in town take a stroll past the new displays.

Franke Walkway Signs

The Franke Family is underwriting the cost of replacing the framework and posts for the 8 signs that line the walkway. Certainly their generosity is appreciated. The work in constructing the signs is being done by high school ag students under Michael Gower’s direction and supervision. Finally, the whole project, from beginning to end - when the signs are once again in place along the walkway- is being handled by Ken Lamm. (Thanks also to Ken for replacing the huge bronze plaque on the front of the monument!)

How Lucky We Are

The three of us facilitating this renovation (Helen, Chris and I) constantly marvel at the support and cooperation of this community. Literally dozens of people have come forward to help with various phases of this big project – from the first stages of gathering public input, to demolition, researching exhibit information, cleaning, arranging new displays, etc. And of course, we depend on the financial support as well. What a community we have – one that not only supports the efforts for the common good, but pitches in and helps when help is needed!

A Special Tip of the Hat to -

Randy Diller - for all he has done for our museum through his position as city manager!

Ralph Nieberding – for pouring through old Fort Recovery Journals in our quest for information!

Linda Zehringer – for vacuuming, scrubbing bathrooms, hallways, etc!

Fort Recovery Historical Society members who have been a big help in lots of ways.

And Regular Museum Business Continues!

1. We open on May 1 and 2 and then will be open every weekend in May (12:00-5:00) – HOWEVER we are cautioning visitors that the main floor exhibits will not be completed. These May visitors will be readmitted to the museum free at a time of their choosing when the museum IS completed. We are not advertising our May Opening – this is a *soft* opening. A **Grand Re-Opening** will be held in June.
2. A group from Finland was scheduled to visit the museum April 27, but had to cancel their US tour because of the havoc the Icelandic volcano ushered upon airports in Finland. Who would have thought a volcano in Iceland could affect a museum in Fort Recovery, Ohio?? ☺
3. Representatives will be attending the annual Auglaize Mercer Convention and Visitors Bureau Luncheon and will share with other sites the changes that are taking place in the Fort Recovery Museum. We work together to promote each other's sites, so it is important for them to know the great changes taking place here.
4. Tours are scheduled:
 - a. May 12 – St. Marys Fifth Grade
 - b. May 14 – Fort Recovery Third Grade
 - c. May 17 and 18 – Coldwater Fourth Grade
 - d. May 20 – IC (Celina) Third and Fourth Grades

(Thanks to Pat Hull, Helen LeFevre, Bob Hart and Jack Hemmelgarn for helping with the tours.)
5. New Books – we have two companion books – ***They Called Him Leatherlips*** and ***Remembering Leatherlips***. The first is a children/student book – either for him/her to read or be read to. The second is more for an adult/teacher to read to a child/class. The author, Linda Stephens, has included great photography and reproductions of wonderful paintings – especially by “friend of Fort Recovery” – Hal Sherman. Included in the books are scenes from Fort Recovery. (Oh by the way, Leatherlips was a chief of the Wyandots. He signed the treaty of Greenville and then later refused to join with Tecumseh and the Prophet to once again fight the “invading” settlers. His home was in the area of Dublin/Columbus.) I expect these softback books to sell well as visitors often look for books for children and/or teachers.

Note!

The following was written by Connie Bodner of the Ohio Historical Society. (Connie has been a regular in Fort Recovery over the past two years and has become a real friend to Fort Recovery.) This is an excerpt from a panel that will be part of our new exhibit. I found this so interesting and thought-provoking. I hope you do too. This is a sample of what is to come! ☺

Two Worldviews

Europeans and Americans were used to government, laws, courts, jails, churches, farms, factories, rich and poor people, and in many cases, masters and slaves. Individual ownership of property and individual success were important to them. A person's status was determined by the job they performed, their possessions, and the clothes they wore.

While Europeans and Americans felt strong connections to their homelands, they had no such attachment to the land here. To them, acreage in the Ohio country was something to be bought and sold for money.

Indian societies were based on family and clan relationships. A person's age was more important than their job or what they owned. Custom and the opinions of others guided a person's behavior—not laws.

Indians measured wealth by the gifts they gave to others, not by the things they owned, and they valued sharing as a way of living. To the Indians, tribal homelands included earth, sky, rivers, lakes, mountains, and meadows. Everything belonged to all the people of a particular Indian nation, and none of it could be sold or given away.

(Wow, could you see how trouble would be brewing in the 1790's, considering these very divergent views? NK)

Calling all Patrons!

We need YOU! Thank you to the over 50% who have become patrons again this year! You don't know how much we appreciate your support! We couldn't keep this museum open – let alone thriving - if it weren't for YOU! Thank you so much!

It's going to be a great Museum Season 2010 – Join Us! Nancy Knapke