

*Fort Recovery State Museum Newsletter*  
*November, 2011*

## **VFW Buys Dennis Paintings!! \$2750     Donates Them Back to Museum!!**

When Vern Mescher made the final bid of \$2750 for the Peter Dennis original watercolor paintings (illustrations for ***Wabash 1791***), and then stood and announced that he was representing the Fort Recovery VFW AND that they were donating the paintings back to the FR Historical Society/Museum, **he received a standing ovation from the 200+ guests** at the One-of-a-Kind Auction. It elevated the mood for the remainder of the evening. Stakeholders will be forever grateful to the VFW and the VFW Men's Auxiliary for this donation and the memorable moment at Auction 2011. If that weren't enough, Commander of the VFW, Ken Lamm announced that the VFW and Men's Auxiliary would also fund the framing of those paintings.

We owe SO much to the VFW organization and of course to Peter Dennis the amazing artist who created those watercolor paintings for the Winkler book. They are responsible for creating:

- 1) More attention to our museum
- 2) Excitement at the auction
- 3) Feelings of pride and ownership in our museum by local residents and organizations
- 4) Financial support for museum projects and events
- 5) A new display for our museum that will surely garner attention and bring home the significance of the 1791 battle on the banks of the Wabash!

These paintings will be on display in time for the big Winkler weekend, November 5 and 6. The museum will be open to the public from 12:00 to 5:00 on Sunday, November 6, so anyone can stop by and see them. Patrons, of course, are admitted free of charge. (Look for a picture of the new display on our website after Nov. 6!) (Also, a tip-of-the-hat to Sharon Long of Fort Recovery Hardware for working so hard to find the perfect frame and matt for the paintings and completing it all in record time!)

## **Osprey Releases *Wabash 1791: The St. Clair Defeat* in Fort Recovery! The 220<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of that Historic Defeat! Events Scheduled! YOU can meet/hear the author, John Winkler!**

Sat. Nov 5, 9:00 – 2:00 Fort Recovery State Museum – for Educators

An in-service for educators will be conducted by the author, John Winkler. Included is a 2-hour Battlefield Walk with the Author. Participants will walk the sites where approximately 600 soldiers and up to 250 women and children lost their lives. In addition to delineation of the US Army's strategic failures, Winkler will explain the overpowering effective strategies of the Indian Confederation led by Little Turtle and Blue Jacket.

Sat. Nov 5, - Patrons of the museum, Ohio Historical Society Officials and other dignitaries have received invitations for a private reception with Mr. Winkler. Available at the reception will be the first copies of ***Wabash 1791***.

Patrons receive a 10% discount. (*If you are a patron and have not received your invitation, call 419-375-4384!*)

Sun, Nov 6, Noon to 5:00 - The Fort Recovery Museum is open to the public.

Sun, Nov 6. - 25 individuals have been invited for the second two-hour *Battlefield Walk with the Author*.

Sun, Nov 6, **3:00** pm – formal presentation by author John Winkler! Community Room, State Museum, 1 Fort Site Street, Fort Recovery. The public is welcome. NO charge! Winkler's book, ***Wabash 1791***, will be available and can be signed by the author. Patrons receive 10% discount.

**4:00** - formal presentation by author John Winkler! Community Room, State Museum, 1 Fort Site Street, Fort Recovery. The public is welcome. NO charge! Winkler's book, ***Wabash 1791***, will be available and can be signed by the author. Patrons receive 10% discount.

## More Good News!

Ball State University Archaeologist (and FR Museum trustee) Chris Keller has announced that the BSU Immersive Learning Grant for which they applied earlier this year has been awarded to them! This grant will underwrite the production of *a documentary and a public archaeology volume* on the Fort Recovery American Battlefield Protection Grant Project that took place over the last year! BSU students will start in January. This new production project will continue throughout 2012. Chris tells us that the Fort Recovery – Ball State collaborative is providing many student opportunities in the Ball State University Anthropology Department.

How did we ever get so fortunate as to have Chris in the right place at the right time with the right abilities and enthusiasm to create such a remarkable series of events for Fort Recovery Museum, Historical Society, and the community itself? It speaks volumes about her and her many talents. How lucky we are to have this connection!

It's also important to note that Chris and her team of archaeology students have been speaking all over the Ohio, Michigan, Indiana area about their research and findings here at FR. And as the project is completed and the results are analyzed and reported in Washington D.C., this "speaking area" will expand. What great PR!

## Concerns About the Fort Recovery Monument

Both the local historical society and the Ohio Historical Society are aware that there are some pretty serious "cracks" in our beautiful FR Monument. We'd have some problems too, if we were about to turn 100. The construction began in 1912 and was completed and dedicated in 1913. Supposedly the designer was William B. Van Amringe. The monument has two bases between the terrace platform and the base of the granite shaft. The lower of the two bases is 18'8" and the second is 14'4". The base of the shaft is 9'4" and the base of the apex is 5'8". The overall height is 101'4".

It is estimated that the granite, concrete, bronze and other materials add up to 800 tons. There are 48 courses of granite in the shaft from its base to the base of the apex. With all of this material and height, it is no wonder that after 100 years, repairs would be needed. The cost of that original construction was \$23,700. Wonder what the repair estimate will be? Ten times that amount? And this need comes at a time when the state legislature and the Ohio Historical Society are scraping just to get by. So how much will we be willing to contribute locally to preserve this beauty?

## Sad News to Report

Tony DeRegnaucourt of Arcanum has passed away at the young age of 58. Tony is the author of many books that we carry and have carried (many out of print) in our museum bookstore. He did tons of research in the fields of archaeology and history and reported that research in books and other publications. He was a frequent speaker at our museum and throughout the area. Tony attended the Air Force Military Academy after high school graduation and later attended Ball State University majoring in the school of Anthropology. His book, *The Archaeology of Fort Recovery*, contains much information about, and many pictures of, artifacts found in and around Fort Recovery and other St. Clair and Wayne sites. His books are used frequently by students and artifact enthusiasts as they search for answers to their "What is this?" and "How was this used?" questions.

## Last Newsletter of this Season

What a year this has been for the museum! Over 150 patrons – including two at the \$1000 level; Visitors from all over the world; The National Battlefield Grant; Finding one wall of the original fort; A series of outstanding speakers including noted authors; The Third Annual Archaeology Day; Many student field trips and adult and scout tours; Significant *Cooper Foundation* donation; FR Foundation donation; The Peter Dennis donation of his original water color paintings from **Wabash 1791**; The Magnificent donation of those paintings back to the museum by the VFW/VFW Men's Auxiliary – and NOW coming this next weekend – the release HERE of the world class Osprey book by John Winkler – **Wabash 1791: St. Clair's Defeat** (3 weeks before its national release!)

Thank you faithful patrons for your generous and unwavering support. YOU make this all possible. nk