

December 2016

CHRISTMAS ISSUE

(Remember Christmas Back When)

# MUSEUM MESSENGER



### CHRISTMAS PARTY

for our Museum Board

December 8th at Museum

With Cookies Cake & Punch

**Perform a good deed for someone less fortunate than yourself this holiday season....**

**Bake cookies, share a warm hug.**

**Send a card, make a phone call.**

**Write letters to wounded veterans.**

**Share your own blessings with others.**

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*Published by the William Clark Market House Museum... founded in 1968 for the dual purpose of education and preservation, and still serving the community with pride today.*

## How much do you remember about the "good old days?"

1. If you lived in the city on frosty mornings of old, the housewife would open the kitchen door, let the cat out, lift the aluminum lid of a container on the back porch, and bring something inside, before preparing breakfast for the family. What did she bring inside?
2. If was very cold at night in draughty old farmhouses in the wintertime. What was often heated in the stove, then wrapped in flannel, and placed in the foot of a cold bed to warm your feet?
3. Early in the morning, when living on the farm, small boys had a particular, necessary chore to perform for their mothers before she cooked the family breakfast. What was this chore?
4. Going to school often didn't involve a school bus. Siblings would often walk together across the snow laden fields to the local schoolhouse. What was the hard task that the older child in the family performed for the littler ones?
5. Christmas trees were often fragrant smelling cedar trees chopped down on the family farm. Store bought decorations were not always available to country families. What sputnik shaped objects from the woods did they often 'gild' to hang on the tree?
6. There was a large cast iron stove in many farmhouse kitchens that radiated warmth throughout the house during the winter. On Saturday nights, the family took their weekly baths. What attachment on the side of the stove heated some of the water needed for those baths?
7. Boy's wool caps often sported flaps that hung over the ears, with strings that would tie on top of your head or under your chin. What were many of these wool caps lined with?
8. On Christmas Eve, you would hang your stocking by the fireside for Santa to fill. What was the large round shape usually found in the toe of the stocking?
9. Women often knitted and crocheted items of outer clothing to help keep their families warm in the winter. What were the itchy, colorful underwear children had to wear to keep their legs warm under their winter clothing?
10. When youngsters lived in town, what was one of the happiest events in the December calendar, that usually took place at the end of the town's annual Christmas Parade?

**Answers:** 1-milk; 2-a brick; 3-filled the kindling box; 4-breaking the path; 5-sweet gum balls; 6-water reservoir; 7-fur; 8-an orange; 9-red flannel under drawers; and 10-appearance of Santa Claus.

## Museum to close for season on December 15th

The Market House Museum will observe regular hours of operation through Thursday, December 15th, when the facility will close for the season.

New exhibits, cleaning, and necessary maintenance, will be performed, as well as vacation time for staff observed during the months of January and February.

The museum will reopen on the first Saturday of March, 2017. You will receive the March newsletter before we reopen! Be sure and watch for it!

## Museum is praised by many who visited during November

The Museum has received a fair share of compliments... making us feel very proud in the efforts that have been made on behalf of the Museum and its programs.

“This is a very nice set up,” said Tom Jarreau of Palisades, New Mexico. “There is so much of Paducah’s history for you to discover and enjoy. I am going to go on-line when I get home to e-mail Krispy-Kreme Donuts and tell them that they should share the Paducah end of the story with their customers, as it is such a nice town full of friendly folks!”

“Your museum is so clean! The lack of clutter is noticeable. It is also refreshing in its approach to presenting your local history. We are busy updating our policies at the museum back home and I am going to share the idea of your storyboards with the Board,” shared Anita Eckhardt of Illinois. “This has been an inspiration to both I and my husband.”

“I don’t know where you get the information necessary to round out all the exhibits, but someone has been working overtime,” laughed John DeSilver of Lenexa, Kansas. “Who

would have guessed that there was a real Little Orphan Annie, and that she once lived in Paducah?”

The Market House Museum is the only general history museum in Paducah, making us unique in our exhibits. While the area’s river heritage and beautiful quilts are an integral part of our city, let’s not lose sight that the general history of Paducah, which our museum proudly presents, is of vital importance, too!

Doesn’t that make us proud of our accomplishments?



### Top Ten Gifts For Father

1. Power tools
2. Electronics
3. Garden related items
4. Clothes
5. Hunting apparel
6. Car related items
7. Gift boxed foodstuffs
8. Gift certificates
9. Books/Videos/Games
10. Firearms, Sporting goods



### Top Ten Gifts for Mother

1. Perfumes and Cosmetics
2. Clothes/Accessories
3. Jewelry
4. House décor items
5. Bath /Pamper related items
6. Books/Videos
7. Boxed candies
8. Collectibles
9. Outer Wear/Coats
10. Utility/Appliance related items



**Helpful hint when buying for your wife or girlfriend:** You can’t go wrong when you buy her anything marked ‘Petite’ and keep the sales slip just in case.

## Magnavox was a major manufacturer in Paducah

There were more than Paducah’s fair share of industrial plants in the 1950’s through the 1960’s. Only a few are still here today, as current trends in industry and the need for more centralized locations have become necessary.

Magnavox was a large plant which was located at 1500 North Eighth Street. Its home offices were in Fort Wayne,

Indiana. Almost 400 employees were listed on their payroll at on the height of their success. They manufactured radio and television component parts. Loudspeakers were a Paducah plant ‘specialty.’

One of the most unusual devices that was manufactured by Magnavox was a twenty pound ‘brain’ of the automatic copilot for the aviation industry.

Hammond, Conn, and Wur-litzer organs featured Magnavox loudspeakers, as well as juke-boxes which were made by the latter.

Its payroll was recorded at more than a million dollars in 1956. But in 1962, Magnavox sold the plant to Chicago Telephone Supply, (locally known as CTS) who closed its own doors sixteen years later, in 1978.

## Department stores exuded a sense of holiday expectation

Sparkling snow crunched underfoot. Bright red, yellow, and green tinsel candles were attached to the streetlights. And nickels were fed into silver parking meters every hour. This was Christmas in downtown Paducah, in the late 1950’s and early 1960’s!

Many holiday bargains were to be found at Kresge’s. Their notion counter, with afghan kits and patterns for embroidered pillowcases was a mecca for the ladies. The lunch counter did a brisk business as folks ate

a quick club sandwich, or a hot bowl of soup before hurrying on to their next destination.

Walgreen’s was also must-visit store. Holiday decorations and novelties could be purchased at truly discount prices.

JC Penney, a downtown landmark, had a wonderful sporting goods department, and items such as hunting jackets, or fur lined caps with earlaps, were always a desired item to place under the tree for the more active men of the family. Their

toy selection was second to none.

The ladies fashion stores of choice were Weille’s, Watkin’s, Jean’s, and Bright’s.

And who could ever forget Sears? Their tempting aisles of toys and tools made every kid under the age of ninety wish they had an inside track with Santa.

Christmas music floated overhead from speakers, and folks said hello as they passed. These are some of the happiest holiday memories for many Paducahans.

## Mile long Owen's Island separates Paducah's two rivers

Owen's Island, which lies at the foot of Broadway, seems at first to not be that large. But in fact, it is over a mile long. The downstream end of the island is pointed, giving it the illusion of not being very big. The widest part of the island is on the upstream end.

The island also separates the Ohio from the Tennessee River at the confluence of the two.

Captain Valentine Owen, who was born in 1803, (the same year Lewis and Clark began their wonderful journey) began his own voyage on the

Ohio River at the age of 19. He came from Louisville to Paducah alone in a canoe, a small feat for a youth at that time. The journey was a very dangerous undertaking in 1822!

A ferry was soon started to enable folks to travel from Paducah to Illinois. Owen began to operate a fleet of ferryboats that each had a capacity of four horse drawn wagons. Stops were made at Golconda, Brookport, and Smithland. His favorite boat, the Bluebird, had a capacity of 72 tons, quite a good sized vessel for the river

trade!

Owen started out by leasing the island from William Clark in 1829. His descendants were to purchase the land over 100 years later, and it was known as Owen Island from that time forward.

Valentine also went on to acquire more than 2000 acres in Illinois, before his death in 1874.

Later, the Paducah Ferry Company was owned by sons James, Robert, and Henry. They operated a number of boats, including the Bettie Owen, which made ten trips daily between Paducah and Brookport.



### A Christmas Tradition

Christmas cards are a holiday tradition.

The first card was designed by John Alcott Horsley (1817-1903) at the request of the first director of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

The card was designed in 1840, going on sale in 1843, with one thousand cards offered at just one shilling each! And what was the verse within?

"Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to You."

## Books to read during the cold months of winter

Winter is a cozy time, with lots of long evenings to snuggle up under a warm afghan with an entertaining book or two. Why not consider one of these?

***The Greatest Stories Never Told***, by Rick Beyer is a collection of 100 true and astounding stories from history, inspired by the History Channel series *Timelab 2000*. Investigate the startling, the bizarre, and the downright unbelievable in this 224 page book.

***Inside the Victorian Home***, by Judith Flanders is a fascinating look into English domestic life in the latter half of the 19th century, complete with bed-bugs, obsessive cleaning, and much, much more! This book is a real eye opener as to how the prim and proper Victorians thought every house should be managed.

***Man of the People***, by Alonzo L. Hamby, is a gripping account of the man behind

those owlish, thick spectacles. It traces Harry Truman's rise from a marginal dirt farmer to one of the Senate's most respected members, and later, to the highest office of the United States. While Truman was often scathing in his criticisms, he was honest with praise when praise was deserved. This is a wonderful book, and one that should be read by anyone who loves history. Happy reading!

## Nostalgic Christmases reside as memories of long ago

I remember the Christmas season when I was a child, with so much nostalgia. The schools would have homeroom door decorating contests...and there would be PTA programs performed by the youth for the benefit of the parents...most involved a nativity with the children singing "Silent Night." A large Christmas tree always dominated the program.

The children would fidget and

squirm until the last day of school in December, when one would exchange presents with a classmate whose name had been drawn, and give the teacher your own personal gift...a paperweight, an apple, or the like.

And then it was time to experience the season at home and with the neighborhood kids. An early snowfall would prompt stocking caps and knee high quilted vinyl show boots to

emerge from closets. Sleighing and tobogganing were the rule of the day. Snowball fights were a must. Numb fingers were the norm. And the innocent television shows of the fifties and sixties...on black and white screens, at that...Frosty, Rudolph, Charley Brown, and How the Grinch Stole Christmas! Oh, what joy it imparted to a child's heart, those last two weeks before Christmas.

Oh, what wonderful memories!

### Dogs and Cats

"On the subject of pets... Dogs come when they are called. A cat will take a message and get back to you."

—Mary Bly

"Whoever said you can't buy happiness forgot about those cute little puppies at the pet store."

—Gene Hill

"Cats are smarter than dogs. You'd never catch eight cats pulling a sled through mushy wet snow."

—Jeff Valdez

"Dogs have owners, cats have staff."

—unknown



### Please Make Note:

The Museum will close on Thursday, Dec 15th for the winter season.

We will reopen to the public on Saturday, March 4th, 2017.

The Executive Director and staff will be working within the Museum on a sporadic basis during January and February, cleaning and forming exhibits.

To pre-schedule tours for spring, or if you have an emergency with the Museum, call Penny Baucum Fields at 270-217-2913.

Have a lovely holiday season!

## Message from the Executive Director

Another year has passed, causing some of us to wonder, how do twelve months fly by so fast?

Many changes can take place in a year. Some are enjoyable, such as the birth of a new grandchild or great-grandchild. Or perhaps you attended the marriage of a starry-eyed young couple, which made your heart ache with hopes for their happiness. And other events can invite serious reflection and even more serious consideration.

In analyzing how that time was spent by the Museum, we must first ask ourselves a few questions. As a local history museum, did we fulfill our mission statement to the best of our ability? Was education and preservation our primary focus? And is our commitment to the community and its school-children still as strong as it was when we were founded in 1968? Are our core values consistent?

And how about our personal vision? Are our **own individual commitments** to the Museum still as strong as ever? Or do we need a wake up call to remind us that goals are not achieved by good intentions alone? Our commitment to the Museum is a gift we give to the facility every year!

We all become tired of being so committed from time to time. But if everyone stayed home in order to rest, where would that leave the Museum? Why not make an effort to strengthen our individual resolve to make the Museum a more successful endeavor in 2017? I'll be the first in line to say, I intend to do just that! Have a lovely holiday, and remember, I appreciate what each one of you do, or can continue to do, for the Market House Museum. Let's redouble our efforts to promote this truly worthy endeavor. —*Penny Baucum Fields*

For History Fun and Games, go to our website!

[www.markethousemuseum.com](http://www.markethousemuseum.com)

## Take this Christmas mini-quiz...are you ready for the holidays?

The holidays are filled with the sights and sounds of Christmas. See how well you do with these trivia questions associated with well known holiday songs, poems, or movies. Good luck!

- Who were the two well known male stars who appeared in the movie "White Christmas?"
- In "A Christmas Story" Ralphie cannot have the Christmas present he wants as his mother is sure he will — — — —.
- A little known Gene Autry Christmas song lyric was "thirty two feet and eight little tails of white, gallop-in,' gallop-in,' —through the night."
- An old carol shares the sentimental thought, "I heard the bells on Christmas day, their old, familiar — — —."
- In the classic animated feature, "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" what was the name of the little girl that caught the Grinch stealing the Christmas cheer?
- What was the 1942 song which became the best selling Christmas melody of all time?
- In the song, "Home for the Holidays," a man was said to be traveling to Pennsylvania for some — — — —."
- Dudley Moore played a small character in "Santa Claus, the Movie." What character was he?
- In the song, "We wish you a Merry Christmas" what kind of dessert do the singers request?
- In the movie, "It's a Wonderful Life," who accidentally falls in the swimming pool with Jimmy Stewart?
- A popular Christmas lyric describes a star, with a tail as big as a kite. What is the title of this song?
- In Laura Ingalls Wilder's book, "The Long Winter" what tasty delicacy actually was delivered frozen in a barrel in the spring?
- Do You Hear what I Hear? 12: the Christmas turkey.

The Market House Museum would like to thank its Museum Board for the hard work they devote on behalf of the facility.

**Have a lovely holiday... Season's Greetings!**



**DON'T FORGET!**  
**MUSEUM BOARD PARTY**  
**DEC 8th at Museum!**

**Answers:** 1: Bing Crosby and Danny Kaye; 2: shoot his eye out; 3: gallop-in; 4: carols play; 5: little Cindy Lou Who; 6: White Christmas; 7: home-made pumpkin pie; 8: an elf; 9: