



Museum

of Madison County History

Update 2024

The year 2024 has been a double celebration for the Madison County Historical Society. This is the 140th year that the MCHS has been in continuous operation preserving our local heritage. Coincidentally, it is also the 20th year* that we've owned and operated the same building at the corner of 11th and Meridian, which is the museum. We began celebrations on March 3rd by honoring Max Howard who gave us the facility in 2004. Several days later, we received from the Madison County Chamber of Commerce a beautiful crystal-like plaque commemorating our service to regional residents since 1884. Happy **BIRTHDAYS** to US!!



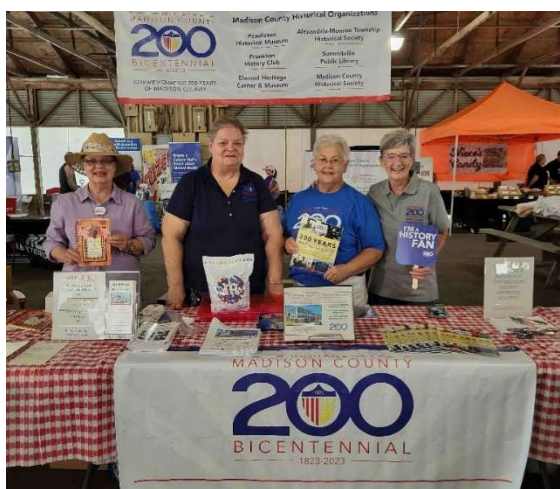
It's been two years since we sent you a "Museum Update," and lately we have discovered something else of which to be proud: The Museum of Madison County History has become a **destination site!!** Listed on the internet at places like TripAdvisor, we are designated as one of the must-see venues in the area. **Your financial support has made this possible. THANK YOU !!** We are featuring the country's (yes, **country's**) largest collection of Wright Cut Glass, one of the nation's most comprehensive displays of Aladdin lamps, 100+ years of automotive industry, and the many other products in our 2000 sq. ft. Made in Madison County room.





We have had **more guests**, more tours, more out-of-town visitors than ever before. We've learned that most first-timers come because they have learned about us on the internet, and without exception they leave impressed. Our upgraded advertising and media presence is working!

For the county's bicentennial celebrations throughout 2023, every inch of our 23,000 sq. ft. museum was ready, and our officers and volunteers were involved in the many events. This active participation proved our **lasting importance** to the community at large and helped reinforce public awareness of who we are, where we are, and what we offer.



In the last 24 months, we also had some wonderful **surprises**! Steve Jackson and Melody Hull were given the opportunity to participate in Ball State University's PBS series "Now Entering..." shown on the internet's free YouTube platform. The hour+ episode "**Now Entering Anderson**" highlights the



many innovations, programs, businesses, and opportunities of our county seat, and the Museum of Madison County History was included among the cultural attractions. A seven minute time slot for advertising the museum with over 60 pictures and narration going out on the world wide web—this could be nothing but extremely advantageous. Positive comments have been received from all over central Indiana, our target area. Here is the web address:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGYH4GK5TI0>

While our annual Little 500 Festival Hot Rod & Classic Car Show in May continues to be well attended, our first **open house, Family Day at the Museum**, in December 2023, was something of a shocker. We had far more visitors than expected so much so that we had to ask several on site visiting members to lead overflow tours through the exhibits. This is a good problem to have! This year's Family Day will be December 28th, Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.



The biggest surprise of all, however, was the public's overwhelming enthusiasm for the MCHS Players' presentation of **"A Night on the Titanic."** In order to meet the demand for reservations, we had to schedule four additional performances after the opening in July 2023. Based on the interactive program's popularity, we have decided to present every year a memorial show on the closest Sunday to April 15th (the date the Titanic sank) in memory of that historic event and the Anderson man who survived the tragedy. This year's presentation will be Sunday, April 13th at 2 p.m. Make your reservations early.

In the fall of 2024, MCHS representatives began working with Signature Web Creations, a local company, **designing an updated website** with easy access, navigation options, new pictures and text. Nancy Lawler has for 18 years provided the MCHS with our present site, and she has decided to retire. We thank her for all of her hard work and dedication and wish her the very best. Our new website has the same IP address: <https://andersonmchs.com>. MCHS officers and volunteers are thrilled to have this updated site as we continue to move forward.



These last two years have been the society's best in terms of our progress, outreach, involvement, and diversity, and **we could not have achieved any of this without your support.** The museum building, itself, is bulging with collections, artifacts, pictures, documents, and all things related to Madison County's people, places, things, and events. As you can see, the MCHS is also blessed with many volunteers who possess talent, enthusiasm, and dedication. One further accomplishment in 2024 was the installation on the sidewalk of an original **1915 gas street lamp** that once stood on W. 8th Street. It now illuminates with a modern LED system the entrances into the museum. This lamp symbolizes the knowledge of and appreciation for our local heritage which we want to impart to residents and visitors. Your assistance helps us achieve this goal as well. We trust that you wish to continue in financial partnership with us and that you will *consider remembering the Madison County Historical Society, a 501-c-3*

non-profit, in your estate planning.

****The museum building is a merger done in the 1960s of 2 early 1900s structures, each of which are 100+ years old. After receiving what was then known as "the old Citizens Bank" from Max Howard in 2004, the MCHS has completed in the last 20 years, these major changes, repairs, and improvements to the structure, gradually turning the former bank into a functioning museum:***

- Replaced the roof on the west side; replaced the roof on the east side
- Redesigned area on 1st floor into the Bowman Meeting Room
- Retiled floor in the Accessions Room
- Put foam insulation in west side of basement & in Mechanical Room
- Tore out offices on west side of 2nd floor, making an open floor plan for the Made in Madison County room
- Had built 14 glass door display cases for the Made in Madison County room
- Converted 2nd floor work area into Aladdin Storage room
- Replaced, so far, 3 dark green glass panels out of the 100 on exterior of building
- Added security system with monitoring; eventually replaced with "state of the art" system
- Remodeled basement area which became Dollhouse Room
- Installed "state of the art" fire alarm system
- Installed "state of the art" fire suppression system in main collection vault & Aladdin storage
- Replaced west main entrance door
- Replaced 2 east exterior doors
- Replaced 2nd floor guttering
- Reroofed 1st floor rear extension
- Insulated and sided 2nd floor south wall of building
- Took down original steam furnace chimney
- Added UV protecting film to interior of windows on 2nd floor and in 1st floor lobby
- In the process of replacing the 9 furnaces, each of which is 25+ year old.

For the MCHS and its Museum of Madison County History,
Melody Hull