

in this issue >>>

- *Grace College Exhibit*
- *Local Legend: Jerry the Lion*
- *Recent Acquisitions*



A Quarterly Newsletter, Winter 2023-4

Winona History Center Happenings

New Digital Exhibit: Grace College Display Added

On October 6, 2023, the Winona History Center presented its new interactive exhibit on the history of Grace College to the public. Completed for the 75th anniversary of the college and created with funds given in memory of former Grace professor R. Wayne Snider, this digital exhibit is located in the hallway outside of the Winona History Center.

During Grace's Homecoming festivities, guests participated in a brief presentation ceremony by Dr. Nathan Harris, Vice-President of Advancement, and Dr. Andrew Flamm, Grace College president. Visitors then enjoyed refreshments and were able to watch the new display. A highlight of the time was perusing some of the Snider memorabilia of class notes and articles that were laid out.

Since the display is located outside of the Winona History Center itself, guests can view the exhibit even when the History Center is closed.

There, viewers can interact with the touch screen to learn of Grace College history in the categories of Timeline, Athletics, Academics, College Life, and Impact on the World.

A recorded narrative of about five minutes per section gives an overview of each topic, complete with names and interesting tidbits throughout the years, while accompanying pictures scroll through the background. Intermixed are several original audio clips of Grace College's first president, Alva J. McClain, and musician Jerry Franks, along with video from a past basketball game. Other highlights include features of Grace presidents and a catalog of Grace alumni who have influenced the world.

Above Right: Grace alumni watch the new display during Homecoming festivities. Center Right: Dr. Flamm addresses the crowd at the opening of the Grace College history exhibit. Bottom Right: One of the sections of the new exhibit highlights Grace's past presidents.



Local Legend: Jerry, the Waterskiing Lion

Winona Lake holds its share of interesting legends, some true and some...perhaps embellished? But one that continues to hold the interest of Winona History Center visitors—especially children from the local schools—is Jerry, the Waterskiing Lion. The book *Winona at 100: Third Day Rising* by Terry White with Steve Grill tells the following story. (The excerpt is used with permission.)

One of the more startling sights in Winona Lake in 1935 or 1936 was a sleek Chris-Craft speedboat towing a water ski board carrying a full-grown lion and its owner, who clasped the tow-rope and straddled the beast's shoulders and back.

Paul Lowman, a Winona Lake man "who had a penchant for doing the unusual," was the owner of the lion, whose name was Jerry. Jerry (named Jerry I because there was a second one named Jerry II) was old when he arrived in Winona Lake, and he died after only a year or so.

Lowman and Jerry I would zip around the lake on a wide board, pulled by the speedboat, with Lowman straddling the lion's shoulders. Winona Lake resident Bruce Howe claimed to have ridden the board with Jerry, as well. Lowman often put Jerry on a leash and took him for long walks around Rainbow

Point and the canal.

When Jerry I died, Lowman obtained a second lion in 1938, named Jerry II, but this Jerry wouldn't behave. He never learned to water ski. He several times got loose in the town and terrorized local residents by crawling under their porches, by extending himself to look in their windows, and by prowling about their lawns and gardens.

One time Jerry II got loose and rambled through the Eagle Arcade, which included a souvenir shop, small grocery, and several other establishments. He thoroughly trashed the building and then hid on the second floor, stubbornly refusing to emerge until he was finally coaxed out by his owner. Jerry II attacked Lowman one time, causing several serious injuries. Jerry II ended his career somewhere in the south, allegedly at an animal park near Cypress Gardens in Florida.

The third lion, Congo, was obtained in 1939 when he was a cub. He, too, never learned to water ski, but he was often seen around town with his owner and eventually grew to be about 500 pounds. All three lions were likely acquired from the Clyde Beatty Circus.

The 1939 Winona Schools Reunion newsletter carries this summary: "Paul Lowman's lion got us in the papers this summer. His surf board riding old lion, Jerry I, died of pneumonia in the winter, so Jerry II was bought. But he feared the water, and refused to be trained.

"At the first attempt he shook off his chain, scampered along the lakeshore, taking refuge under a house, from which he was lured back into his cage. Next time, he brought his big paw down, severely clawing Paul. When Paul recovered, Jerry was put under an anesthetic and his claws were clipped. But, it was six days before he came out, and meantime he had to be fed.

(continued on Page 3)



Above: This still shot from the live footage shows Jerry on his special water carrier.

Did you know...

- that the Winona History Center and Billy Sunday Home can always use volunteers? We are in need of volunteers who will give tours, clean the Sunday Home, and work in the flower beds at the Sunday Home. If you are interested, contact winonamuseum@grace.edu. Training will be provided.
- that the Winona History Center is currently scheduling our spring student field trips and group tours? We can also have a docent come speak to your church or social group! Contact birtks@grace.edu to set up your tour or for a docent to come to you.
- that the Winona History Center is sponsoring a scavenger hunt in the History Center and Sunday Home from January 16 through February 20? Pick up your sheet at the History Center and return it by February 20 to be entered in a drawing for some fun prizes!

Recent Acquisitions Memorialize Cliff Barrows's Music and Billy Sunday's Death

The Winona History Center receives donations and purchases items to augment its archives. One new item, recently re-discovered on a shelf, is the manuscript for the studio score of the song "There Is More to Life." The song was written by Ralph Carmichael for the Billy Graham film *For Pete's Sake* in 1966.

Cliff Barrows's name appears at the top of the manuscript along with several director's notations. Barrows, Billy Graham's music director, likely used this score when he directed the chorus. The manuscript itself was penned by the music engraver that Carmichael hired, as he wrote in pencil.

Songs from the film soundtrack were later released as a youth musical and an LP album titled *For Pete's Sake* by Ralph Carmichael and the Young People. This LP album has been purchased for the

Winona History Center and will be displayed along with the musical score. Thanks to author/researcher Kevin Mungons who supplied the WHC with the information about this piece!

Another recent acquisition is the November 16, 1935 issue of *Time* magazine, which includes an article about the death of Billy Sunday nine days previous. Titled "Sunday into Heaven," the article begins by saying, "Probably the first people in Heaven who recognized the stocky man in the morning coat and pin-striped trousers were some onetime residents of Kansas City who were singing 'Brighten the Corner Where You Are.'"

You can see any of these items when you stop in at the Winona History Center.

Jerry, The Waterskiing Lion (cont. from Page 2)

"His final escapade came during Bible Conference, when he broke loose, dragging his rope, ran towards the park, and as a crowd gathered, dashed into the Arcade, jumped thro' the screen to a table loaded with china. Policemen brought guns, the cage was drawn up, and finally Jerry pulled in. Then the order went out. No more surfboard training in the county."

When Lowman wanted to move away from Winona Lake, he couldn't take Congo with him, and he could find no one to whom to sell or give the lion. So Congo was put down in November of 1940 with a shot from a high-powered rifle.

You can watch Jerry the Water Skiing Lion play in the water in recorded footage by going to efootage.com and searching for "water skiing lion."



Contact Us

winonamuseum@grace.edu

Karen Birt, Coordinator birtks@grace.edu

Museum Reception: 574-372-5193

(To be added to the email list for future editions of this newsletter, please send your email to

winonamuseum@grace.edu.)

VISIT US

Winona History Center
Westminster Hall
105 9th Street
Winona Lake, IN 46590

HOURS

Sunday – Closed
Monday – Closed
Tuesday – 2:00-5:00
Wednesday – 2:00-5:00
Thursday – 2:00-5:00
Friday – 2:00-5:00
Saturday – 2:00-5:00

MAILING ADDRESS

Winona History Center
Grace College
1 Lancer Way
Winona Lake, IN 46590