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A Quarterly Newsletter, Spring 2024

Winona History Center Happenings

Billy Sunday Home Inventory Digitized

A big project is finished this spring after two years of data entry by Winona History Center workers and Grace College interns. In 1999, William Firstenberger made a detailed inventory of almost every item in the Billy Sunday Home. Although he saved the list of 2,201 items on a computer program, the data was not kept up-to-date on current software. All that was accessible were several thousand individual print-outs listing in great detail the items, telling their locations.

The workers manually typed the data; now all of the descriptions are on a Google Sheet so that with a simple search, any item in the Sunday Home can be found. In the process, fascinating items were re-discovered.

The first item on the inventory list is the Billy Sunday Home itself. It is described thus:

Object Name: House

Date Made Precise: 1911

Materials: Pine, cedar, glass, steel

Height: 20 ft., 10 in.; Width: 64 ft., 10 in.; Depth: 36 ft., 2 ½ in.

Found Location: 1111 Sunday Lane

Present Location: 1111 Sunday Lane

Description: Bungalow with front porch facing Winona Lake, away from street. Four dormers in single gabled roof. Cedar planks siding and shakes on dormers and gables.

Marks: "omer Rodeheaver," [sic] "idx Collect" marks on southwest dormer clapboards under siding.

Subject Themes: Built by William A. and Helen A. Sunday and named "Mount Hood" after Oregon property. "H" design in all windows.

Condition: Very good. Many original furnishings.

Notes: On exhibit since 1957. Sided with aluminum siding in 1970s.

Other fascinating finds include an item from each President from Teddy Roosevelt through Dwight Eisenhower. These include signed pictures of at least six Presidents, a porcelain vase given to Helen Sunday by Dwight D. Eisenhower at the Revival Reminiscence Rally in Broken Bow, Nebraska, in 1950, and a signed five-volume set of *History of the American People* by Woodrow Wilson.

Researchers and workers can use this inventory to find the provenance of each item in the Sunday Home, including even the scraps of paper that were found around the desk!



Far Above: Five signed Presidential portraits hang in the Sunday Home hallway. Above: One of the interesting items in the Sunday Home living room is the Ansonian clock, given to Billy and Helen Sunday as a wedding gift from the Pittsburgh Alleghenies (now the Pittsburgh Pirates).

Winona History Center Experiences Personnel Changes

This spring, the Winona History Center and Billy Sunday Home are experiencing some changes in personnel. As of May 1, Dr. Terry White, who has served as a docent since working with Winona Lake's centennial in 2013, is retiring from regular museum work, although he will still be available for group tours. Karen Birt, who has served as the coordinator of the Winona History Center and Billy Sunday Home since 2018, is moving to a position elsewhere.

White, the author of "Winona at 100: Third Wave Rising" along with Dr. Steve Grill, said of his time as docent, "I love visiting with people who return 'with memories' of their time here. I love introducing the town to newcomers and people whose children come here to college. And I love it when someone is cleaning family artifacts and they bring in items of historic or research interest."

Those of us who have been privileged to work with Terry or listen to his presentations have greatly benefited from his personal and extensive Winona knowledge. Besides working one afternoon a week in the History Center, White has regularly shared his music and local lectures, about which he says, "Probably the most popular is 'Bibles,

Booze and Billy,' which focuses on the Bible conference years, the temperance movement in Winona Lake, and the two Billys whose ministry roots are in this town--Billy Sunday and Billy Graham."

Birt also has enjoyed interacting with the many visitors who have come through the two buildings during the last five and a half years. "I have learned so much about Winona Lake and its many contributions, not only to the local area but to the world," she says. "Researching to answer the many questions we receive has been my favorite part of this job. I look forward to continuing to learn about Winona, just in a less formal way."

Birt also has given many school field trips and group tours. "My favorite part of taking student groups through the Sunday Home has been seeing the students' responses to some of the 'old-time' objects. The Murphy bed that was a wedding gift from the Chicago Cubs to Billy and Helen Sunday in 1888 always draws a puzzled reaction!"

The Winona History Center and Billy Sunday Home will continue with its normal services. We thank our loyal volunteers who continue to help in the

daily functions and hope to introduce you to some new workers in our next newsletter!



Dr. Terry White (far above) and Karen Birt (above) are moving on from regular work at the Winona History Center and Billy Sunday Home.

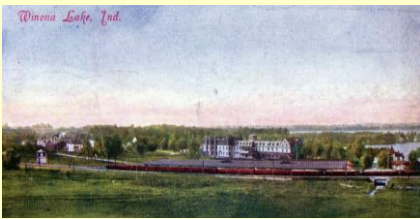
Did you know...

- 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 keeps an updated Facebook page? Recent popular posts have been about Winona Lake's Park Avenue and the Winona Lake Grace Church. You can check it out [here](#).
- that the Winona History Center is giving away Home School Take Home bags during April? Stop by to pick up these work-sheets, craft activities, and even candy in a bag that offers fun to your K-5 student and meets social studies standards about local history. (Please call ahead if you want a large number of bags.)

Winona Lake Postcards: Exhibit and Extras

Besides the main exhibits in the Winona History Center, smaller "extras" display many of the lesser-known historical aspects of Winona Lake. One of these exhibits showcases all of the Winona historical postcards that the History Center possesses. Located in the Rodeheaver offices, this postcard album is available for guest perusal. Although there may still be a few postcards in existence that the History Center does not have, this is a large and presumably complete collection, starting with postcards from the 1890s.

Another smaller exhibit includes catalogued individual photographs that show some of the minor happenings in the area over the past 130 years. This photograph album is located in the main exhibit room on a stand beside the Tabernacle display. Stop in the Winona History Center and flip through these historical pictures when you have a chance!



This early postcard of Winona Lake shows a train running on the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks in front of the entrance and Winona Hotel.

New Billy Sunday T-Shirts Available

The Winona History Center has new Billy Sunday t-shirts available. With a picture of Billy Sunday on the front, the back shows all of the major cities in which Sunday held meetings, along with the number of converts in each place. They are printed on a tan background with blue and red lettering.

The shirts come in sizes Medium through 2X and are available in the Winona History Center.



Contact Us

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(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
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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

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