



# Howard County Historical Society

*2017 Annual Report*



## 2017: A Year Etched In Stone

**S**eiberling Mansion finally got its new slate roof. That wasn't the only accomplishment during 2017, but it was certainly the most impressive and perhaps the most consequential. As the old slate came off, we were treated to the first good look at the "bones" of the mansion in 126 years. For months, we endured the scaffold surrounding the mansion and obscuring its beauty, but the museum remained open, our hosts gave tours, staff worked on exhibits and programs, and our visitors gracefully accepted the inconvenience as a small price to pay for the preservation of a great treasure.

Curator Stew Lauterbach and his team installed a new museum exhibit on the Indiana Gas Boom, as well as a Howard County cartography display, which illustrates the changes in Howard County through a series of historic maps. They prepared a "Mysteries of History" exhibit, examining changes in the Seiberling carriage house over the years, presented an outreach exhibit of items from World War 1 for the society's annual meeting and assisted the Howard County Sheriff's Department in designing a display for the county fairground's Pioneer Village. One of the critical but least visible accomplishments of the team was to create digital copies of the museum's accession records, which provide background information on the collections, documenting donors, provenance, and historical significance. That project was funded by the Indiana Historical Society and accomplished by Emily West, whose work will be invaluable to future staff and researchers.

The society's educational outreach included college internships, part of a long-standing relationship with Indiana University Kokomo. The students worked on research, data entry, exhibit design and fabrication, and a visitor satisfaction survey. We also worked with the Leadership Kokomo and Kokomo CEO programs and provided numerous programs and tours for younger students.



Our partnership with the Kokomo Visitors Bureau is vital to both organizations. We work together to offer great experiences to visitors, promote Howard County, and benefit the economy. HCHS is part of the East Region Tourism Marketing Cooperative for the same reasons. Other relationships that are important to our mission include those with the Greentown Historical Society, Russiaville Historical Society, Automotive Heritage Museum, Automotive Heritage Hall of Fame, Haynes Museum, Howard County Genealogical Society, Kokomo-Howard County Public Library, Kokomo Historic Review Board, the Indiana Historical Society, and Indiana Landmarks.

Among the society's programs in 2017 were two that focused on the world wars. In June, we hosted a members-only program presented by Hoosier author Kayleen Reusser, who collects and has published first-hand accounts of World War 2 veterans. In October, our annual meeting program on the county's involvement in the great war was endorsed by the Indiana World War 1 Commission.



The Howard County Hall of Legends grew to 49 members with the induction of soprano Alicia Berneche, baseball legend Circus John Byers, the founding father of IUK, Virgil Hunt, world famous genetics educator Sam Rhine, educator and community leader Marilyn Skinner, and the nationally-recognized We Care organization. Berneche graced the crowd in attendance with an operatic performance accompanied by members of the Kokomo Symphony, and we learned more about the life and legacies of all six new members.

The Halloween season brought Victorian horror classics to the Seiberling Mansion in "From The Dark Pages," a mystery tour with dramatic personae - from Jack the Ripper to Sherlock Holmes to Frankenstein.

To cap off an exciting year, Christmas at the Seiberling brought thousands, young and old, to the mansion. The roof project and scaffold made little difference as we set an all-time, one-night attendance record during the first weekend. We included an evening of candlelight tours for the first time, a romantic addition to an already stunning "Christmas Around the World."

# By the numbers....

**226** historic images  
added to the archives

.....

**26,518** historic images  
now viewable online at  
[hchistory.org](http://hchistory.org)

**207** objects added to  
the collection

.....

**55,497** items now  
preserved in the  
collections

**14,600** new roof slates added to Seiberling Mansion  
**0** leaks in the new mansion roof

**6** new members inducted in the Hall of Legends (total of 49)  
**8** history articles published in the **4** quarterly issues of Footprints

**35** states and **9** coun-  
tries represented in the  
guest registers

.....

**11** outreach programs

**2,600** volunteer hours  
worked (excluding  
Christmas)

**70** volunteers and **7**  
interns (excluding  
Christmas)

**48,921** website visitors and **2,914** Facebook followers

## **2017 Board of Trustees**

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Linda Clark, Treasurer  
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## **Save our Seiberling Campaign Committee**

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## **Staff**

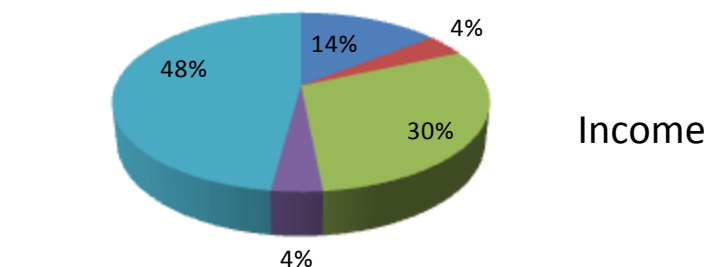
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Bill Baldwin, Maintenance  
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Emily West, Curatorial Assistant  
Jill Snyder, Volunteer and Membership  
Coordinator

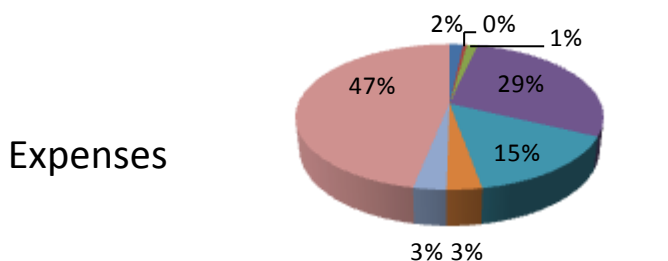
## **With gratitude, we recognize the businesses who sponsored HCHS programs in 2017 ...**

Coca-Cola Bottling Co. of Kokomo  
Community First Bank  
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- Earned income
- County support
- Roof campaign
- Donations, memberships
- Grant income



- Collections and exhibits
- Marketing
- Maintenance and utilities
- Events
- IT
- Payroll
- General admin
- Roof expense

## Community Foundation: Ensuring Our Future

HCHS is the beneficiary of these endowment funds in the Community Foundation of Howard County:

John Murray Thompson Memorial Fund  
 Madge Morrison Long and Maxine Morrison Memorial Fund  
 Ruth S. Hotchkiss Memorial Fund  
 Sesquicentennial Celebration Fund  
 Howard County Historical Society Endowment Fund  
 Beulah Marner Cobb Endowment Fund  
 Bette Bannon Endowment

Your gift through the Community Foundation endowments will provide financial resources for the society's mission in perpetuity. To learn more, contact the Community Foundation of Howard County at 765-454-7298.



# Sharing Howard County's history

Of the three pillars of the HCHS mission, sharing is the most visible, most fun, and perhaps the most important. It gives purpose to the work of collecting and preserving.

One way we share is through museum exhibits, another is through outreach programs. We host hundreds of students each year in class tours, visit schools and organizations, participate in the Koh-koh-mah reenactment, and invite the public to special programs like our observance of the World War 1 Centennial in October, the World War 2 program in June, or the Hall of Legends induction ceremony. Our archival collections are an important resource for local media as well as academic researchers, providing historical background for understanding contemporary issues.

We invite people to take advantage of our online resources. Our website at [howard-countymuseum.org](http://howard-countymuseum.org) provides access to thousands of historic images, articles, and biographies, as well as information about trip planning, membership and events. You can also sign up there for monthly email updates on activities at the Seiberling Mansion. At [Facebook.com/hchistory](https://www.facebook.com/hchistory) and on Twitter at [@HCHSociety](https://twitter.com/HCHSociety), we offer historic and recent images, interesting trivia, and updates on news and events. You'll find a variety of recent photographs at [pinterest.com/hchistory](https://www.pinterest.com/hchistory), and we can also be found on [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com), [TripAdvisor.com](https://www.tripadvisor.com), [Instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com), [Foursquare.com](https://www.foursquare.com), and [VolunteerMatch.org](https://www.volunteermatch.org).



## Hall of Legends - Class of 2017 Induction

Front row left to right: Sam Rhine, Alicia Bernneche, Becky Varnell representing We Care  
Back row left to right: Marilyn Skinner, Bill Hunt and Marjo Biddinger representing their father, Virgil Hunt

**The following supporters made grants, gifts or pledges to the  
“Save Our Seiberling” campaign**

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Howard County  
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Community Foundation of Howard County  
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***To those who supported our mission with gifts to the  
“Flamekeepers” Annual Campaign in 2017 — THANK YOU!***

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Conrad & Karen Uitts  
Christopher Wisler  
Charlotte Young



## Four buildings, hundreds of stories...

The Howard County Historical Society cares for four buildings on its history campus in Kokomo.

The Seiberling Mansion was built in 1891 and served as a residence until 1946, when it was purchased by Indiana University. In the late 1960s, after IU moved, the community began to consider what to do with the empty and dilapidated mansion, and the idea of a new home for the county museum was proposed. In 1971, Howard County took possession of the building in partnership with the society. It was added to the National Register of Historic Homes that year and became the county museum in 1972. In the years since, the historical society has led a series of renovation projects to preserve the structure, most recently the replacement of the slate roof.

The Seiberling carriage house was modified from its original form by IU and used for science classes. Today, it provides climate-controlled artifact storage and curatorial work space.

Elliott House was completed in 1890 as a Queen Anne Victorian and converted to the Tudor style in the late 1920s. It was also used for a time by Indiana University, and presently serves the society and community as a meeting and small event venue.

The Elliott carriage house, at various times a horse barn, a garage, and a classroom, now contains the society's historical archives and its management offices.



Top - Seiberling Mansion and carriage House, Bottom - Elliott House and carriage house

**Howard County  
Historical Society  
1200 W. Sycamore St.  
Kokomo, Indiana 46901**

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