Under Construction.....

Morton C. Bradley, Jr., great-grandson of Theophilus and Rebecca Wylie, had a great fondness for IU and the Wylie House. When he died in September 2004, he left his entire estate to IU, naming the Museum as one of three IU beneficiaries. The estate was settled this past summer, making it possible for us to begin construction on our new education center. The building will look like a large 19th century barn and will sit directly behind the current Annex.

The city of Bloomington has generously agreed to vacate the north/south alley located directly east of the Museum. All utilities are located in that alley, so before we can break ground, those utilities must be relocated. We will also have to cut down some trees at the back of the property to make way for the new building. We anticipate that all of that work will be done before the end of this year. Once ground is broken, the actual construction should take from 8-12 months, depending on the weather. We will maintain our offices in the current Annex until construction is completed. Once we’ve moved into the new building, the old Annex will be torn down and the site will be landscaped to resemble the old homestead.

Besides housing our offices and work space, the “barn” will provide accessible restrooms, a large multipurpose room, a small gift shop, and additional exhibit space. This additional space will allow us to greatly increase our programming. We are especially looking forward to having elementary school groups spend time here, but also expect to host more receptions, lectures, concerts, and workshops for adults.

If you are curious about our plans, we would be happy to show you drawings of the new building; just stop by our offices at 317 E. Second any weekday.

Preservation Endowment

While the Bradley bequest has made it possible to build our Education Center, we need to plan for the future preservation of both the Wylie House, the new building, and the grounds. Toward that end, we will begin a major fund raising campaign in 2007. Former first lady of Indiana Judy O’Bannon and former first lady of IU Pat Ryan have agreed to serve as our honorary campaign committee chairs. The campaign will last five years. Our campaign goal is $1.6 million, and we are very pleased to only need an additional $600,000 at this point, thanks to the Bradley bequest and other generous donors. There will be a kick-off reception next April 11, at Wylie House, hosted by Mrs. O’Bannon and Mrs. Ryan. Details will go out prior to the event.

The endowment portion of our campaign will cover yearly repair and restoration (R & R) costs as well as some programming expenses. Campus funding has been severely cut for R & R in recent years, and since class room buildings and dormitories will always be given priority, we feel it behooves us to provide for our own upkeep. This way, when the museum requires a new roof, we won’t have to get in line for funding.

For those of you who would like to help us preserve Wylie House for future generations, please contact Susan Yoon, the IU Libraries’ Executive Director of Development, at 855-4182. She will be pleased to explain the options available for donations.
From the Director……

When I wrote this column last spring, I had lots of good intentions for getting new window treatments hung and some paint on the walls in the upstairs of the museum over the course of the summer. Instead, I spent most of the summer on leave following the death of my son, Sam Burgess, in an auto accident in late May. Although I am now back at work full time, I have not yet begun to paint or hang those window treatments that I told you about. Barring any more unforeseen and unwelcome occurrences, I should be able to get to those things this winter while the museum is closed.

I was grateful to have something as positive as our new building project to return to. As anyone who has ever undertaken a building or remodeling project knows, there are a myriad details and decisions to think about: interior and exterior finishes, flooring, light fixtures, placement of electrical outlets and switches, cabinetry, and so on and so on. I began dreaming of and planning for a new education center within a year of becoming Director here, for I realized that even if we revitalized the house itself with new paint, additional furnishings, and new window treatments, we would still be very limited in our programming possibilities without a new support center. It will be exciting and extremely gratifying to see my dream become a reality over the course of the coming year.

The museum and I are fortunate to have such a marvelous support staff and volunteer corps. They all pitched in during my leave and kept the museum running efficiently. I’d like to thank them all again for their fine work, their compassion and support. I look forward to working with them as we move forward with such exciting plans for the future of the Wylie House Museum.

—Jo Burgess

From the Garden...

Once again, it was a challenging growing season in the Wylie House garden. We ordered seeds for many rare and unusual heirloom squash varieties to be grown for display at the Wylie House Fall Fest. The first round of seeds was planted when the soil was adequately warm. However, Mother Nature changed gear and provided more than a week of cold, wet weather during which nearly every squash seed rotted in the ground. Eventually, a second planting was accomplished. It produced a garden full of lush vines with little or no fruit! The one exception was a single Long of Naples, a rare Italian squash, which grew to 40 pounds, well above its normal weight range.

We had some success, at least, with a dozen or so heirloom plant varieties new to the museum garden this year. Salvia Horminum, China Aster, and Sesame were among my favorites. The Sesame seedlings grew into attractive plants with large, white flowers. The Sesame seeds were collected from pods that grew along the stem. The China Asters produced a lovely assortment of large pink, purple, or blue flowers, blooming from mid- to late-summer. There should be plenty of aster seed available at the 2007 Wylie House Seed Sale so you can enjoy growing these beauties too. The 2007 sale will be held in the Wylie House annex on Saturday, March 3, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Hope to see you there!

—Sherry Wise, Outdoor Interpreter

Outreach

From the Curator of Education……

Vibrant yellow-gold leaves float to the ground in front of Wylie House as I write this column. I am happy to share a few of our most important accomplishments since the last newsletter.

Programs

Math & the Mercantile: We are lucky to have copies of expenses made by Andrew Wylie and his family at a local general store during the 1840s. We also had the good fortune to have Suzanne Ingalsbe complete a SLIS internship with us over the summer. One fine day in June, I piled those records on Suzanne’s desk and said, “Let’s see if we can use this data to craft a math program for 4th graders. Look for a year-long snapshot of family spending and see what information we can mine from it.” Being a very talented and clever former elementary school music teacher, Suzanne sailed with the project. We developed it over 6 weeks and then floated the program to teachers at Clear Creek School in August. They loved it! Math & the Mercantile is an excellent resource for 4th grade classrooms and a superb use of Wylie family documents. It is available in hard copy and as a PDF to interested teachers.

The Wylies, Seminary Square, and Bloomington High School South: Rich and surprising connections abound between the three. Dr. Wylie originally owned the land that BHSS now occupies. Andrew incurred a serious foot injury on this land while chopping wood there in 1851. He died less than a week later from complications. His son, Redick Wylie, built a beauti-
ful brick home where the MCCSC Administration building now stands. I have begun work with two BHSS teachers (History and Language Arts) and their students to trace the links between the three sites. Shortly after an hour-long classroom presentation in early October, BHSS students came to visit Wylie House and learn more about how the Wylies may have lived. Discussions have begun to develop this program into a trimester long project. We anticipate it will result in a multi-media project presented to the entire school that will include oral histories with Bloomington area adults who attended BHS when it was still located at Seminary Square. If you are such a person and would like to participate, please do contact me!

Events
Brilliant blue warm breezy skies embraced our Family Fall Harvest Fest on Sat., Oct. 7. After a nerve-racking slow start, over 145 people attended the event, many of them children. Sherry composed the fall harvest display and seed saving demonstration tables while I scurried between the pumpkin hoop-toss and a sink-or-float physics quiz using a variety of produce and a huge tub of water. Aimee Rose organized and ran the pumpkin decorating table with her ingenious ideas and creations and playful enthusiasm. Jo and two of our docents (Rachel Kosmitis and Cindy Smith) held down the museum giving a brisk succession of house tours. Bonny Wise provided sustenance with her tasty treats made with pumpkin donating all her catering costs, labor, and profits to Wylie House. A slew of Irish and Old Time musicians donated their talents further enlivening the festivities. Very special thanks to Oliver Winery, Dillman Farm, Bloomingfoods, Musgrave Orchard and Melton’s Orchard for their donations of contest prizes, cider, and pumpkins.

Exhibits
Hot on the heels of the Fall Fest has been final production with curator Andrea Truitt on two concurrent exhibits featuring fine and general-use ceramics from our collections. Andrea is an IU senior in Art History and has been helping us research and process portions of the 2004 M.C. Bradley, Jr. bequest. She proposed the idea of a ceramics exhibit in the Fine Arts Library foyer to me last summer. When I asked if she thought we had enough in our collections to organize a second, concurrent exhibit here in the museum, she said, “yes.” Voila! Prints, Patterns & Porcelain will be on view at the FA Library foyer Oct. 30- Nov. 17. A Glimpse of Wyle Household Taste: Come to the Table! will be up in the dining room of the museum Nov. 1-30 (excluding Thanksgiving weekend). This has been a huge learning curve for me, but I am delighted to have assisted with producing these first ever student-driven exhibits. We are also pleased to have our collections exhibited on the main IUB campus, also a first! Many thanks to our colleagues at the Elizabeth Sage Historic Costume Collection and Mathers Museum for their advice, support and loan of risers!

Finally, I also want to make mention of the more routine, everyday operations of the museum. We have already had, before the end of October, nearly 300 more visitors than we had by the end of the year in 2005. I am hopeful that staff efforts will result in a 20% + increase in visitors this year. My next big project? Launching the Education and Outreach link on our website. Look for it by the beginning of December!

—Bridget Edwards, Curator of Education
Volunteering

- Do you like history, antiques and a pleasant, tranquil setting? Learn to be a docent at the Wylie House.
- Have limited time? Help with special events at the museum.
- Do you prefer to spend your time in the garden? Lend a hand in our heirloom garden.

If you live in the Bloomington area and would like to become more actively involved with the museum, please call and chat with us about the opportunities.

**DOCENTS AND VOLUNTEERS:**

Jane Clay, Mary Emison, Jane Harnett, Rachel Kosmitis, Naomi Lawlis, Sarah Noggle, Cindy Smith, Margaret Hathaway

**GARDEN VOLUNTEERS:**

Catherine Finch, Ross Hill, Lee Ridge, Floyd Richards, Barbara Roberts, Eve Schultes-Ridge

**QUILTERS:**

Marj Clayton, Diamond Mather, Virginia Miller, Ellen Pittman

Beginning on October 30 and running through November 17, *Prints, Patterns & Porcelain: A Selection of Ceramics from the Wylie House Collections*, will be on display in the IU Fine Arts Library Foyer, on campus.

**A Glimpse of Wylie Household Taste: Come to the Table!** is a special exhibit, concurrent with the above, on display in the museum. It features a dining room table setting with table service that belonged to the Wylie family. This display will be up from Wednesday, November 1 through Thursday, November 30, excluding Thanksgiving weekend.

Wylie House Museum will host its traditional December open house, *Wylie House by Candlelight*, on Saturday evening, December 9, from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. As usual, there will be live music and light refreshments in the downstairs portion of the museum.

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