From the Director:
The Morton C. Bradley, Jr. Education Center is Now Open!!

We did it! The Morton C. Bradley, Jr. Education Center, affectionately know as "the barn," is finally a reality! The furniture was moved from the old Annex to the barn on Friday, October 22. Staff, student volunteers, and Jim Champion, IU Libraries Facilities Manager, then moved the small items and boxes and boxes of books and paper files. We spent the week of October 25 unpacking, arranging, and settling in. It will probably take us all winter to really feel settled, to get to the place where we can lay our hands quickly on any given item or file, but we already can tell that we’re going to love working in this new space!

Larry Neidigh, Neidigh Construction, and Kirkwood Design Studio are to be congratulated on the fine job they did of melding a 19th century structure with the modern conveniences necessary to a public building in the 21st century. I’d also like to say a special thanks to all the many men who worked on the barn, from the crew who dismantled it to the carpenters, electricians, plumbers, painters, and others who completed the reassembly. I talked with many of them every day they were on-site and know that most of them took ownership of the structure and tried to make it the very best they could for us. They all can be proud of the work they did here and we will forever be grateful for their care and attention to detail.

Everyone who has toured the building so far has been extremely impressed with it. I can’t tell you how many times I’ve heard, “Wow! May I come hang out here?” or “Oh...I wish I could work in a building/office like this,” and even, “I’d like to live here.” Folks love the juxtaposition of the old with the new and don’t find it the least bit jarring. It’s a warm, inviting structure.

Continued on page 2
The basement of the barn will be used mostly for our seed saving program. Sherry has a large, bright office with windows that look out onto the garden and toward the new garden shed where she will store garden tools. There's plenty of space for her and several volunteers to sit at a table to clean and package seed. She also has a nice built-in cupboard that was salvaged from the old annex for storage and display. Another sizeable room will be used for drying and storing seeds and other materials. The last room on that level is a storage/work area that has a utility sink in it so that garden volunteers can wash up after a stint in the garden.

The main floor, with glass doors that face 2nd Street, will be the public area where we will hold classes, workshops, lectures, or receptions and where our quilters can work (they recently finished a log cabin quilt). We had our first event there, our annual volunteer appreciation luncheon, on Nov. 1. The small kitchen area served the caterer quite handily. I hope by spring to have some photographic collages hung on the walls, composed of images of the barn, the house, and the Wylie family. Eventually, I would like to acquire a small glass-topped exhibit table so that we can mount special exhibits in the lobby area. There are two public, accessible restrooms on this level. This floor feels the most like a barn. The original exterior siding of the barn is now on the inside, visible from the main and second floors. The original barn flooring was used on the main floor, the posts and beams are exposed, and when looking up it’s as though you were looking at the underside of the hay mow. In fact, when standing in the lobby area, you can look all the way up to the ridge pole of the structure.

The second floor is composed of four offices all of which have wooden flooring that came out of the old annex. The first has been furnished as the Wylie library and is a lovely cozy room that visitors say as they walk in, "makes you want to curl up with a good book and stay awhile." On display in that room are the more than 1200 Wylie family books that we own, a lovely antique desk that Theophilus A. Wylie inherited from his father, Samuel Brown Wylie of Philadelphia, and other Wylie furniture. I hope someday the library will be open to researchers now that we have a place for them to work. The second office will serve as a student/staff office. Bridget has a cozy, small office on the southeast corner of the second floor. My office is on the west side of the building with windows that look out on the house and garden. It's open to the rafters of the barn and there is a half wall that overlooks the lobby area on the main floor. There is also a sort of lobby or landing outside the offices that we’ve furnished as a sitting area. Much of the furniture on this floor is from the Wylie and Bradley families.

The old annex building has been demolished and the site was graded, seeded with rye and rye grass, and covered with straw for the winter. Come Spring, we will plant a few trees and shrubs and add other grass seed to the lawn. The area immediately surrounding the barn will be planted in a native grass that won’t have to be mown; the rest of the area will be kept fairly open so that in future events could be held on the lawn. We’ll also put out the two wooden rain barrels that were donated by Oliver Wintery (special thanks to them!) to catch rain water that will be used to water our garden. I know readers will be pleased to hear that all of the brick, windows, wooden trim, wooden flooring, ceramic tile, banisters, built-in cabinets, limestone foundation stones, and so forth were salvaged for re-use before demolition.

Many people have asked about parking. Please note that the former alley off 2nd Street is no longer there! To gain access to all current museum parking places, visitors should turn into the alley that runs east to west directly behind the house and barn between...
Events, Exhibits, and Other News

Wylie House is collaborating with the Monroe County History Center on an exhibit at the History Center entitled “Developed: Photography in the 1800s,” that explores the methods and people involved in the local photography scene during the 1800s. Prof. Theophilus A. Wylie is purported to have produced the first daguerreotype in Indiana in his chemistry lab at Indiana University in 1841. Items selected from our collections and those of the IU Archives include early photographic techniques such as the daguerreotype, tintype, crystoleum, and albumen prints used for cartes de visite and cabinet cards. Images depict family and community members, the old college campus buildings on E. 2nd Street, a page from the literary and science journal, *The Extra Equator* that mentions Wylie’s “apparatus,” and a unique photo of the Monroe County Courthouse. The exhibit will be up through February 19, 2011. The History Center, located at 202 E. 6th Street in Bloomington, is open Tues. – Sat. from 10:00 - 4:00. Adult admission is $2; admission for children 5 – 17 is $1, no admission for children 4 & under. For more information, contact Lisa Simmons at the History Center or Bridget Edwards at Wylie House (855-1858).

We hosted a concert in the museum on Friday, December 3, given by students of Michael McCraw of the Early Music Institute, “A Serenade of Classical Wind Chamber Music; Music of Mozart and Beethoven.” Oboes, bassoons, clarinets, and horns filled the house with beautiful music for the enjoyment of the public. This was not the first time Professor McCraw has brought his students here for a concert and we hope it will not be the last. The house is a lovely venue for these small recitals.

Our annual December evening open house was held again this year on Saturday, December 4. We apologize for not getting the newsletter out in time to announce this event before the fact.

The annual spring Seed Sale will be held in the barn on Saturday, March 5, 2011, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.

During the entire month of March 2011, visitors to the museum will see an exhibit of antique quilts. As in years past, this popular exhibit will coincide with the Indiana Heritage Quilt Convention which is held at the Convention Center the first weekend in March each year.

Curator of Education, Bridget Edwards, has been busy with presentations given to area clubs and organizations and with scheduling and giving special group tours of the museum. If your local club or organization would like to schedule a tour or invite Bridget to one of your meetings to give a presentation, call her at 855-1858 to discuss the possibilities.

As part of our continuing efforts to stay current with the 21st century while educating the public about life here in Monroe County during the 19th century, we launched a Facebook page in July. Since it’s a “business page,” you needn’t have a Facebook account to view our posts. There’s a link on our own website that will take you directly there. You’ll see a few short videos, photographs, and posts about what’s going on here week to week. If you like what you see, and if you have your own account, you can become a fan or friend. We hope that this will provide yet another way to reach a broader audience and stay in touch with friends of the museum who do not live in the area. We called on our student volunteers to help educate us about how this new social networking phenomenon works, and we’re still learning!

In October, we launched a redesigned website, again with much help from one of our local volunteers who is a web whiz. Our old site had been up for about eight years and we felt it needed a fresh look. We’ve included several photo galleries so that visitors to the site will be able to get a better idea of what they might see here. We’re still adding to the website, so check back occasionally: www.indiana.edu/~libwylie

Handmade antique rocker and quilt top, main floor of barn
Last spring a local couple called to ask if we could use a wooden barrel in the barn. The request had been made two years ago and at that time I had to say no because we had no place to display it. But with the barn going up, I gladly said Yes! The donors reminded me that the barrel had come out of the attic of their house on Long Island, New York many years ago, and that the only way it could be removed was to dismantle it. They carefully did that, numbering the pieces, then moved it to Bloomington. I had to search for a cooperage that was within driving distance and that would agree to reassemble the barrel for me. Luckily, I stumbled upon Kelvin Cooperage in Louisville, KY (www.kelvincooperage.com). When I called and explained what I had, they readily agreed to put the old barrel back together for me, so I loaded it up, staves and wooden hoops, and made the drive south.

When I arrived, they were at first rather disdainful of our barrel because it was not a barrel that was ever meant to hold liquid! Seeing as how they make barrels for the whiskey and wine industry, I could understand their lack of interest in a humble shipping barrel. I eventually persuaded them to have a go at putting the pieces back together, declining to have them “improve” it with the addition of metal hoops, explaining that it was going into a 19th century barn on a historic site. They sent me off with instructions to call back in a couple of hours. When I returned, they brought the barrel out, whole again, put it into my vehicle, and sent me north again without charging me for their efforts! So a big thanks to Kelvin Cooperage as well as to the donors!

We put the barrel on the platform over the entrance where it looks right at home with the “self-adjusting, self-sustaining, self-preserving horse hay fork” that came out of my family’s 19th century barn. Patented in 1868, it was manufactured by Alexander Bowers of Dubuque, Iowa and exhibited at agricultural fairs in Iowa, Illinois, and Indiana where it took blue ribbons. Presumably, my ancestors, who were stock breeders in Piatt County, IL, saw the fork at one of these exhibitions and purchased one for their own use.

An extremely important and exciting acquisition this year was the donation of about 100 letters from the Andrew Wylie family. Donated by Peter Lawrence, a great-great-grandson of Andrew Wylie, the letters date from 1821 through 1887, and came down to Mr. Lawrence through Andrew’s son, Andrew Wylie, Jr. who moved from Bloomington to Alexandria, VA. I have transcribed all of these letters and our graduate assistant scanned them. There are quite a few from the Civil War years that are particularly interesting. These, along with a few others in our possession we shared digitally with the Monroe County Library for their grant project (funded by the Indiana State Library) entitled ‘At War and At Home: Monroe County Timeline (1855-1875).” Discussions are underway with the IU Libraries Digital Library Program about the possibility of making this entire collection accessible on the world-wide web. We are indebted to Mr. Lawrence for his generous gift of these valuable family artifacts.

As I was busy transcribing the letters mentioned above, I received an email from Russ Ryle, who lives in the area, alerting me to the fact that there was an Andrew Wylie letter up for auction on E-Bay. After we verified that it was a letter we would be interested in acquiring, Mr. Ryle kindly bid on the letter for us and won the auction! Thus, thanks to Mr. Ryle’s assistance, we now have a letter that Andrew Wylie wrote to his wife Margaret from Cincinnati, OH, in Dec. 1850 as their son Samuel lay dying.

Another donor gave us a beautiful and delicate bone and wood yarn swift last summer. Pictured here, to the right, the swift (used to wind skeins of yarn into balls) is a great addition to our women’s workroom. And most recently, two nice antique quilts were donated to the museum by a local donor. Heartfelt thanks to all donors!
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, volunteers, and interns

Susan Baker, Molly Biehn, Jane Clay, Roseann Dodds, Anthony Eller, Ann Fierst, Catherine Haralovich, Jane Harnett, Amy Jankowski, Mary Anne Miller, Kylene Parobek, Cindy Smith, Mary Strow, Carla Williams

Garden volunteers

Kay Cunningham, Ross Hill, Barbara Lechner, Amy Luxenburger, Lee Ridge, Betty Sawyer, Eve Schultes-Ridge, Barbara Seal, Martha Tarbah, Kathie Wallskog

Quilters

Marjorie Clayton, Diamond Mather, Virginia Miller, Ellen Pittman

Note: Because of the lateness of this issue, the usual articles written by Bridget and Sherry were omitted, but they will be back in the spring issue. JB
Student projects

We are pleased to welcome Esther Roth-Katz as our Graduate Assistant for the academic year, now half over! Esther, who hails from the East Coast, is in her first year at IU’s School of Library and Information Science. She brings museum experience with her to the Wylie House, having worked at the Emily Dickinson Museum in Amherst, MA while an undergraduate student at Hampshire College. She was a tremendous help during the move and has worked on a variety of other projects, from organizing files to putting 19th century pamphlets into acid-free envelopes prior to shelving.

Arrika E. Dedmond will join us for the spring semester as a SLIS intern. This is Arrika’s second year at IU where she pursues a master’s degree in Library Science with a specialization in Archives and Records Management. She will work on a variety of projects as do all our interns.

We are fortunate and grateful to have such good help from interns and GAs, and are happy to say that some, like Molly Biehn and Amy Jankowski, return as volunteers. Thank you all!