



## MUSEUM MESSAGE

Ohio's Oldest Museum    December 2017  
[www.firelandsmuseum.com](http://www.firelandsmuseum.com)

### BENEFACTORS VISIT FIRELANDS MUSEUM TO VIEW NEW DISPLAY

One of the finest collections of prehistoric Native American artifacts in Ohio is housed in the Archaeological Research Room of the Firelands Historical Society, located in their Laning-Young Building at 9 Case Street, Norwalk. A major portion of these artifacts were collected by Berwell Thomas in the early 1900's, and continued by his son, Elmslie Thomas. By the mid 1950's, the entire Thomas collection numbered nearly 30,000 pieces, and were stored in an old building once used as a doctor's office east of Norwalk.

After Elmslie's death, the collection passed to his two nephews and a niece. One of those nephews, Capt. Richard Black, along with his wife, Midge, donated his portion of the collection to the Firelands Historical Society to be preserved and used for educational purposes.



Photo: Richard and Midge Black with Matt Burr, Firelands Historical Society trustee, who worked with Life Formations in Bowling Green to create the Archaic Period Native American life form.



Along with this, an endowment fund was established to fund and promote the new Archaeological Research Room.

As part of its ongoing program to grow and expand the Archaeological Research Room experience, Beth Sage, a local artist noted for her realistic mural paintings in area schools and institutions, was hired to create a mural on one wall of the Research Room

*continued on page 2:*

Please remember to send us your change of mailing address and E-mail. Also, if you would like to have your newsletter sent by E-mail, please let us know.  
 Send information of change to [curator@firelandsmuseum.com](mailto:curator@firelandsmuseum.com).

*Continued from page 1:*

depicting an Archaic Period Native American village scene of approximately 5,000 years ago. This mural was completed in early 2017. Shortly after, the Black Family gave approval to contract with Life Formations in Bowling Green, Ohio to create a realistic life form representing an Archaic Period Native American hunter. The life form was completed in August of 2017 and was put on display with the mural, making a strikingly realistic display.

On October 19<sup>th</sup>, Capt. and Mrs. Black made their annual visit to Norwalk from their retirement home in Florida. Members of the board of the Firelands Historical Society were on hand to greet the Blacks at the Research Room as they were shown the display that they so generously funded, for the first time. They were pleased with the new display and approved the addition of another life form, most likely a female Native American of the Archaic Period along with a child or infant. Recently, local 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes have toured the Archaeological Research Room and have come away amazed at how realistic the display is. The Black Family's wish to promote education of prehistoric Native American people is coming true. It is a great educational experience for anyone.

### Student Tour

In late October, the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students from St. Paul Catholic School visited the museum to learn about Native Americans in Ohio and the United States. Board Members, Matt Burr and John Schumm presented instructive information about these Native Americans and how the items they used correlate with those found in our museum collection. While visiting the students were given the

opportunity to touch and examine some of the artifacts.





## **New Addition to our Military Collection**

A small section of the first National Flag of the 25<sup>th</sup> Ohio Volunteer Infantry was recently donated to the Firelands Museum by David Trumble, a descendant of Edward C. Culp, a Civil War Veteran. The National Colors were carried through 13 engagements including the Battle of Gettysburg. Seven color bearers were shot under the flag. The flag piece was owned by Edward C. Culp, who participated in these engagements, and later served as Huron County Sheriff. Mr. Culp eventually



left Norwalk and settled in Salina, Kansas where he remained active in various activities, and in 1893 served as secretary for the Chicago's World's Fair. In the collection received was a letter of special interest written to his friend and later wife, Lucy Preston, the granddaughter of Samuel Preston (builder of our museum house). In the letter Edward gives details concerning the Battle of Gettysburg. Another letter was written by a Confederate soldier to Lucy. She had written the letter to her cousin, Fred Wickham, and apparently in his haste to move on had left the letter behind.

This flag joins a section of another flag in our collection believed to have been issued in 1864 when the 25<sup>th</sup> Veteran Volunteer Infantry re-enlisted. That flag piece was given several years ago by descendants of Samuel Wildman. They can both be viewed together on the wall in our museum gun room.



## **Bicentennial Scavenger Hunt**

First-place winners of the Bicentennial Architectural Scavenger Hunt were Gregg and Nita Kromer, of Norwalk. They received a check for \$200 and a one-year free membership to the Firelands Historical Society. Other winners were Marcia Smith (\$75) and Larry Lepard (\$50), of Norwalk; Alysha Oliver (\$25), of New London; Jessica Davis (\$25), of Bellevue; Jeremy Draper, (\$25) of Willard; and Jean Marin (\$25), of Norwalk. The scavenger hunt, with help from Chris Hipp, captured pictures of various buildings and features of downtown Norwalk which participants had to identify and was one of a number of activities sponsored by the Firelands Historical Society during Norwalk's 2017 bicentennial year.

## **FIRELANDS MUSEUM**

Firelands Historical Society  
4 Case Ave.  
P.O. Box 572  
Norwalk, OH 44857-0572

### Firelands Historical Society Officers:

Pat Mak, President  
Dan Rood, 1st Vice President  
Chris Hipp, 2nd Vice President  
Mary Carabin, Secretary  
John Elmlinger, Treasurer

### The Firelands Historical is proud to be a member of these fine organizations:

Firelands Council of Historical Societies  
Huron County Chamber of Commerce  
Lake Erie Firelands Tourist Council  
Ohio Association of Historical Societies & Museums  
Ohio Genealogical Society  
Ohio Historical Society

### Membership dues:

Individual - \$20  
Husband and Wife - \$35  
Business - \$100

### Life Membership dues:

Individual - \$500 (or \$50 annually for 10 years)  
Business - \$1000 (or \$100 annually for 10 years)

### Send Correspondence to:

The Firelands Historical Society  
P.O. Box 572  
Norwalk, OH 44857-0572  
Museum phone: 419.668.6038

Research Center phone: 419.663.0392

E-mail: [curator@firelandsmuseum.com](mailto:curator@firelandsmuseum.com)

## **Museum Hours**

### Annual

**May, September and October - Saturday 10-3 and Sunday 12-4.  
June thru August - Tuesday thru Saturday 10-3 and Sunday 12-4.  
Closed on Mondays.**

**For group tours and other special arrangements call 419-668-6038  
or E-mail: [curator@firelandsmuseum.com](mailto:curator@firelandsmuseum.com).**