

university museum

NEWSLETTER Fall 2014

University Museum
Sutton Hall, first floor

724-357-2397

www.iup.edu/museum

Exhibition opens
September 13:
IRONS
Functional Tools
to Art Objects

Museum Gala 2014
September 26:
HOT IRON
A Victorian Industrial
Fantasy

NEH-funded
assessment of
Coffman Photograph
Collection

Art on Campus
walking tour
ready for
Governor's Arts
Awards Weekend

Museum Calendar

Totally Hot!

IRONS: Functional Tools to Art Objects showcases the museum's newest collection

by Donna Cashdollar

We'll bet you don't give much thought to ironing clothes, or to what people used before there were electric irons to get their household linens crisply pressed and their garments free of wrinkles.

An entertaining and educational exhibit at the University Museum this fall introduces the **Maureen A. Flaherty Post Collection of Irons and Iron Related Objects**, donated to IUP in 2013 by Maureen Post, a 1963 graduate of the Home Economics Department. The Post Collection includes nearly 1000 items that span two centuries and three continents. It embodies the technological and social history of a household task that many of us remember and – even in this age of permanent press fabrics and casual dress – still practice.

This family-friendly exhibition tells the story of the human quest for status demonstrated by crisp folds and smooth surfaces in household linens, and clothes with fancy ruffs and pleats, polished collars and cuffs, and few wrinkles. None of this could be achieved without using irons.

The exhibition explains how different irons evolved over time. Visitors can see a wide range of implements displayed in galleries by theme: *History of Irons and Ironing*, *Domesticity*, and *When Irons Are Not Just for Ironing*. Historic portraits of individuals dressed in pressed ruffles and pleats, from the museum's collection, indicate the iron's role as status object.



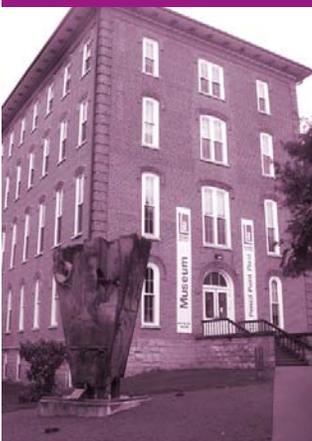
A goffering iron produced elaborate frills, one at a time, as linen fabric was stretched over the hollow, rounded iron. It was heated by inserting the wood-handled lug whose metal end had rested in a fire.

Goffering iron photo © Kaoru Tohara

Historic costumes loaned by IUP's Fashion Merchandising Program, along with original images and information from IUP's former Home Economics Program, where ironing was once taught, illustrate the use of items from the Post Collection.

But there's more to ironing than the traditional Tuesday task: Ironing can be an extreme sport. Irons are historical collectibles. Irons and ironing have inspired artists to create exciting works commenting on social and cultural history. It's all part of this unique exhibit.

Curators of the exhibition are Rhonda Yeager, collections manager for the University Museum; Dr. Janet Blood of IUP's Fashion Merchandising Program; (continued on page 4)



"A Night in Venice" – remembering last year's gala fun

by Laura Krulikowski

The University Museum's 2013 gala "Masks, Music, a Night in Venice" was a party to remember. Guests in glitzy masks and festive mood dined on Venetian delicacies and were entertained by Harry's Bar House Combo, the IUP Little Big Band, and vocalist Joe Baunoch. In these photos, vocalist Laura Ferguson serenades party-goers, Michael Charnego persuades bidders in a live auction of art, antiques, event tickets, and a gemstone ring designed by G.C. Wyant especially for the event. Enjoying the dancing music are Elaine and Jim Palmer while Gary and Stacey Wyant model their masks. Finally, the dancers of the Mahoning Valley Ballet perform a Venetian inspired number.

The annual gala supports the Museum's admission-free exhibitions and related public programs. Proceeds from the evening also are used to build and care for the permanent collection of art and cultural objects. ☺



Steampunk theme drives Gala 2014

by Becky Driscoll

The Gala, as the main fundraiser for the University Museum at IUP, could be a decorous, low-key event. But not on Elaine Palmer's watch. As chair of the Gala committee, Elaine has a goal for the event beyond raising money for the museum. It should also be "a lot of fun!"

Typically, the theme of the Gala is connected with the current exhibit in the museum, and this year is no exception. To harmonize with the exhibit of irons and related art (see "Totally Hot," page 1), the Gala theme is "Hot Iron: a Victorian Industrial Fantasy." Many of those planning to attend will sport steampunk inspired accessories, and decorations hand-made by Barbara and Larry Kubala bring steampunk style to many of the tables (for more about steampunk, see "Victorian Futurist," below).

The evening will begin in the museum with hors d'oeuvres and a chance to take in the exhibit. Then



Above, two of 14 whimsical steampunk table centerpieces created by Barbara and Larry Kubala. All of the centerpieces will be auctioned during the event.

the fun moves to the Blue Room, where a buffet dinner will be offered. Entertainment, always a key feature of the Gala, will include students and faculty, dance and music. Also featured will be an antique music box.

Throughout the evening, a variety of silent auction items will be available for bid, among them a stay at Farnsworth House B & B, and a small sculpture by John McCombie. Later in the evening, a live auction will feature such items as a ring from Wyant Fine Jewelry and dinner for six with President Driscoll at the President's Residence. Dancing will round out the evening.

Whether you sport steampunk style or traditional cocktail apparel, don't miss this event. With a sassy theme, fabulous food, great entertainment, and alluring auction items, this year's museum gala promises to be a wonderful evening, and will certainly be "a lot of fun." ∞

Victorian Futurist: a steampunk primer

by Becky Driscoll

What is steampunk, anyway? There isn't a single definition, but most aficionados agree that it involves advanced technology as it might have developed in the Victorian era – science fiction as it might have been conceived in the mid to late 19th century. It combines drawing room elegance with industrial era grit, and futurism with superseded technology. For many, H.G. Wells is the quintessential steampunk muse. Others favor Jules Verne.

Steampunk style adds industrial-inspired accessories to Victorian-inspired costume. Time is a

frequent theme. Clock parts and other hardware are frequently incorporated, as are metal tubing and distressed leather gloves, hats, and other garments. Metal goggles are a favorite starting place for a steampunk ensemble.

Some places to look for steampunk inspiration: Television series *The Wild, Wild West*; *Warehouse 13*; *Firefly*; *Dr. Who*; the movie *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, and, of course, anything based on Jules Verne or H.G. Wells. ∞

Right, one couple's steampunk style



independent scholar Dr. Julie Gomboc-Turyan; and Laura Krulikowski of the IUP Libraries. The exhibition is funded in part by Rowenta, a global company that creates technologically advanced irons and other home appliances.

Irons as art objects

The exhibition features two prints from the museum's collection by artist Willie Cole. Irons imagery in *Men of Iron* suggests scarification practiced in some African cultures, and the branding of slaves. *The Ogun Sisters* references African religious culture and domestic work by African-American women.

Also included in the exhibition are three-dimensional works that use surplus irons as an art medium, created by students of Sean Derry, sculpture professor in the Department of Art. Maureen Post initiated a challenge with her donation of old irons that the students were invited to transform into sculptures of their own design, competing for prizes awarded by the museum.

Irons: Functional Tools to Art Objects opens with a public reception on September 13 and runs through November 8. Two public events related to the exhibit are scheduled in the museum: On

October 16 at 6:00, Willie Cole will discuss the use of irons and ironing images in his work. On October 29 at 7:00, Dr. Janet Blood will present "Odd Irons: Ingenuity and Use." These events and the exhibit are admission-free. ∞



An antique gasoline iron was incorporated into this sculpture by Jim Battistelli.

Art on the IUP campus – a self-guided walking tour

by Laura Krulikowski

Celebrating the unique art that fills the buildings and grounds of IUP, a walking tour of the art on campus will be available in time for Indiana to take its place as Cultural Capital of the Commonwealth during the 2014 Governor's Awards for the Arts the weekend of September 26, 2014. Sculpture, paintings, prints, and photographs from the University Museum and other collections adorn the interiors of academic and administrative buildings and bask in the sunshine outdoors. The map, noting location and accessibility, will be available for download from www.iup.edu/museum while printed copies will be available on campus. ∞

NEH grant funds conservation assessment of the Coffman Photograph Collection at IUP

by Harrison Wick

In July, the University Museum and the IUP Special Collections and University Archives were visited by Rachel Wetzell, a photograph conservator from the Conservation Center for Art and Historical Artifacts (CCAHA) in Philadelphia. She conducted an assessment survey of the Wilbur Coffman Photograph Collection and taught a workshop on the proper care of photographic images, which was open to the public. This project was supported by a successful grant application to the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The Wilbur Coffman Photograph Collection is in the process of being re-housed using archival acid-free supplies that will help preserve this important resource for future research and scholarship.

Wilbur Coffman (1902-1982) was an American photojournalist whose career spanned more than 50 years. His career began in Pittsburgh in 1922. He was a photojournalist in Europe during World War II for the Office of War Information. From 1947-1979, Coffman was a studio photographer and part-time photojournalist for the *Indiana Evening Gazette* in Indiana, Pennsylvania. ∞

CALENDAR - FALL 2014

All events are in the museum unless specified.

Exhibition: IRONS
Functional Tools to Art Objects
September 13 - November 8

Gala: HOT IRON
A Victorian Industrial Fantasy
September 26, 6:00 p.m.
in the Museum and Blue Room

Art Educators' Happy Hour
October 7, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Artist Willie Cole
discusses ironing motifs in his art.
October 16, 6:00 p.m.

Dr. Janet Blood
"Odd Irons: Ingenuity and Use"
October 29, 7:00 p.m.

ADMISSION - FREE MUSEUM REGULAR HOURS

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
2:00 - 6:30 p.m.

Thursday noon - 7:30 p.m.

Saturday noon - 4:00 p.m.

Closed Sunday, Monday, and
all university holidays