The mission of the Red Skelton Museum of American Comedy is to continue the Legacy of Red Skelton through inspiration and education.
Many new and wonderful happenings have occurred in 2014 at the Red Skelton Museum. It has been an extremely exciting and busy year for our volunteers, the Kadiddle Hoppers, our board members, and our creative staff. April was the month for two major activities—our annual “Run for the Roses” Gala, a fund raising event, and the annual international conference for the Association of Applied and Therapeutic Humor (AATH), April 2–6. This organization brought over two hundred people from nine different countries besides the USA. The week was filled with organizational meetings, educational classes, and presentations on the healthy benefits of humor.

June was filled with the Red Skelton Festival, June 6–8, which included a parade and a downtown festival with food and craft vendors, bathtub races, musical entertainment, a film festival and a carnival. It was also the inaugural year for the Red Skelton Comedy Camp for children. Old National Bank sponsored a hilarious performance by Brad Zinn in the theater to culminate the 2014 Festival.

In July, we were very proud to open the final phase of permanent displays in the Museum with even more interactive exhibits for all ages. The weekend began with an “Intimate Evening with Mrs. Skelton” and ended with a performance by Red Skelton impersonator, Tom Mullica. People traveled from all over the country to be here for this special event.

August saw the introduction of the Red Skelton Entertainment Series and exciting acts including: Sandy Anderson as Dolly Parton, The Amazing Kreskin and the Diamonds.

Since we opened our doors in July of 2013, over 12,000 visitors have enjoyed the museum including 125 group tours. The Vincennes Tourism Bureau has noted a marked increase in tourism to Knox County since our opening.

We are proud of all that has been accomplished thus far and look forward to even more success in the future as we expand not only our outreach to tour groups, but also our educational programs.

All men make mistakes, but married men find out about them sooner.
~R.S.
Red’s Kadiddlehoppers

Join us in volunteering at the Museum

The Red Skelton Museum of American Comedy means many different things to our visitors. Some love the paintings, others enjoy Red’s silly performances. Our interactive activities and sound effects booth are popular attractions for families and individuals alike. We laugh when you laugh.

A highlighted group of people who shine with enthusiasm and good humor are our Red Skelton volunteers. Our volunteer program continues to be an important support system for the museum. Our open door policy allows volunteers to do what they enjoy including assisting in our museum store, acting as tour guides, helping with mailings, ushering at events, and special projects. Each month, a calendar is emailed to our volunteers with sign-up times for the month. Volunteers commit to biweekly, weekly, one day a month, and “call me anytime” status. Hours donated by volunteers are recorded and used for annual reports and grant funding applications and so, every minute that you give counts!

Since July 2014, we have become known as the Kadiddlehoppers, and have welcomed new faces to our program. In addition to volunteer appreciation receptions, our new volunteer recognition program converts volunteer hours to museum store credit. We appreciate all volunteers and their willingness to help. A heartfelt welcome is extended to anyone who might wish to join the Kadiddlehoppers and become part of our family. Call the museum at 888-4184 for information regarding signing-up.

We are excited to announce our new spring fundraiser, a 1950’s era dance called Clem’s Kadiddle Hop. This will be the time for our volunteers to be our shining stars and prepare the way for a delightful evening of 50’s and 60’s themed entertainment. A silent auction, live music, a dance competition, dinner, soda shop, and photo booth, along with other activities are being planned. A meeting will be held in which all volunteers will be able to share their ideas and assist in an area of interest. Notification will be emailed in the near future. Please plan to attend this meeting and help us bring back a bit of Red Skelton’s era of fame and entertainment.

VOLUNTEER Spotlight

Bob and Helen Maze are our couple in the spotlight for volunteer recognition at the Red Skelton Museum of American Comedy. Bob and Helen have been married for 48 years and feel blessed to have met each other, as Bob’s home is Indiana and Helen came from California. They reside in Freelandville, Indiana. Bob and Helen enjoy sharing time with their grandsons.

Helen has a special connection to Red Skelton, since her father, Marvin Bolinger, was a male quartet singer in “Three Little Words” a popular movie from 1947 that starred Red Skelton.

Bob and Helen are regulars at the museum, as they enjoy working with the archives and entering data into the museum’s collection database. They also assist in the museum store and exhibit gallery.

Any kid will run any errand for you, if you ask at bedtime. ~R.S.

Bob and Helen Maze

If you are interested in being a museum volunteer, please contact Jerri Johanningsmeier at 812-888-4184 or jjohanningsmeier@vinu.edu.
Phase 2 Grand Opening July 2014

A Look Back...

Guest enjoying Red's physical comedy with the silly footsteps.

Avid Red Skelton fans and supporters, Addie Roger and Dick Wagner enjoying the festivities.

Mrs. Lothian Skelton and Red Skelton Board Chairman, Pat Summers.

Red’s easel, used when he painted many of his original artworks displayed in our gallery.

Inset sound effects into one of Red’s radio shows and see how sound effects were produced.

LEGACY OF LAUGHTER
Remembering Red
By Grady Dixon

As a part time employee, on weekends, at the Red Skelton Museum of American Comedy, I have the pleasure of listening to many stories that people tell me about a time when they met Red. This one comes from a retired Evansville City police officer in the fall of 2013. He was on the night shift downtown Evansville when at around 3:00am he saw a man walking alone toward the river from the Executive Inn. He told me that he thought it was Red so he stopped, rolled down his window and said “Red, is that you?” Red had earlier that evening appeared at the Exec and was, of course staying there. The officer then saw this tall man come up to his squad car and proceed to say, “Well father, I did not recognize you in your new fancy car and new suit”. From this point on for about twenty minutes Red continued to crack up the officer all alone on the corner of downtown Evansville at around 3:00 in the morning. The officer, who was unable to attend the show that previous evening, got a free show from America’s Clown, master himself, and a memory that he will take to his grave, laughing all the way.

If you have a story to tell about a time you met Red or a special memory from watching one of his many performances, please send it to us at apratt@vinu.edu. We would love to use it in an upcoming newsletter or on our facebook page. Like us on facebook, Red Skelton Museum of American Comedy.

Educational Programs

We are happy to announce that we have received a $1,000 grant from Psi Iota Xi which will help us launch our educational programs next year. Our initial focus will be on Red Skelton artistic endeavors: art, performance and music. Researchers at Johns Hopkins University School of Education solidify the importance of the arts in children’s lives. A study shared at the 2009 Learning, Arts, and the Brain Summit reported that children showed more motivation, paid closer attention, and remembered what they learned more easily when the arts were integrated into the curriculum.

Red’s art works are well suited to creative play activities due to his bold color scheme, strong use of geometric shapes, and relatable subject matter. Caricature portraits are awash with these features. Children will explore form, line, color, and shape. Red’s comedic performances showed his mastery of physicality. A choreographed approach will be used to explain how Red conveyed character foibles and emotion with his face and body. Red also used props to heighten his silliness, especially those that were oversized or faux. Red’s cheerful musical scores set the scene for many of his pantomimes.

Our educational programs will explore Red’s clean comedy, his colorful art, enthusiastic physical talent and patriotic music while introducing Red’s legacy of laughter to a whole new generation.
Red Skelton Museum Annual Appeal

If you have not already participated, please visit our website and download the annual appeal form from the DONATE NOW button.

Your contributions are VITAL to our continued success.

Help keep Red’s Legacy alive…

Corporate Partners 2015

Platinum
Old National Bank
First Vincennes Savings Bank
German American Bank
Niehaus Lumber
Vincennes University

Gold
Benefits 7 Insurance
Bestway Express
Indiana Farm Bureau Insurance
McCormick Family Foundation
Vincennes Tourism & Visitors Bureau

Silver
Apple Farms, LLC
Camahan Grain, Inc.
Goodwin Family Funeral Home, Inc.
Good Samaritan Hospital
Hacker Plumbing & Drilling Inc.
JMR Farms, Inc
Lemon Concrete Finishing
Villwock Farms
Wolfe Construction

Bronze
Burkhart Insurance Agency
Dumes, Inc.
Ewing Printing
Rusch’s Southside Pharmacy
Westport Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram

A huge THANK YOU to these area businesses who are supporting the Red Skelton Museum in our inaugural Corporate Partner Campaign!

I personally believe we were put here to build and not to destroy. ~R.S.

Help us embrace the digital age by sharing your email address with us!

In order to maximize your generous donations, starting in 2015, we will print one full color newsletter annually and provide digital newsletters the rest of the year. You may plan to read our newsletter on our website at RedSkeltonMuseum.org or join our email list and receive a copy sent directly to you.

Email Anne Pratt at apratt@vinu.edu to join our digital contact list.

If you choose to share your e-mail address with the Red Skelton Museum, we may contact you periodically with special offers, updated information and new services. We will never rent, sell, share or otherwise disclose your personal information to third parties.
Welcome to the Big Top!

Of all the possible choices one has for live entertainment, the circus truly personifies the spectacle, majesty and beauty of the art of distraction. Circus clowns held a very special place in Red’s heart as evidenced by the hundreds of sketches, paintings, figurines, reference books, and photographs in our artifact collections.

Red also exalted the circus as an institution by producing a unique television tribute called Clown Alley which originally aired on November 9, 1966. Clown Alley featured an all-star cast who joined Red Skelton’s Freddie the Freeloader in a lavish 60-minute salute to circus clowns. Guest stars on the program included Billy Barty, Vincent Price, Robert Merrill, Martha Raye, Audrey Meadows, Jackie Coogan, Amanda Blake, Cesar Romero, Bobby Rydell, tightrope walker Tony Fossett, and Sabu the Elephant. Highlights include Martha Raye’s rendition of “Be a Clown”, Robert Merrill’s performance of “Vesti la Giubba” from the opera I Pagliacci, and the ensemble slapstick routine “Fireman Save My Child.” The program also featured the Alan Copeland Singers and announcer Art Gilmore.

We will commemorate Red’s love of the circus this year during the Red Skelton festival in June and with special exhibits in conjunction with the Circus City Festival Museum and Peru Community Schools Fine Art Gallery. Artifacts from the Circus City collection will be featured in our gallery including amazing miniatures, elaborate costume pieces, advertising posters and banners. We will also loan original Red Skelton artworks to the Peru Fine Art Gallery in celebration of the Circus City festival in July in Peru, Indiana.

We hope you will plan to join us this year as we celebrate the Big Top!

No matter what your heartache may be, laughing helps you forget it for a few seconds. ~R.S.
Upcoming Events

• **April 11, 2015 — Clem’s Kadiddle Hop**
  The annual spring fundraiser for the Red Skelton Museum has a new “TWIST” this year!
  • Appetizers, dinner and dancing!
  • Join the fifties fun with a hula hoop contest, jitter bug lessons, photo booth and more
  • Watch our website for ticket sales and more information

• **June 12-13, 2015 — Red Skelton Festival**
  • This one-of-a-kind festival includes craft and food vendors, stage entertainment, carnival rides, a parade and much more!
  • Parade is Saturday, June 12th at 11:00 am
  • Visit our website for more details and registration forms

• **June 2015 — Red Skelton Exhibit Exchange with Peru Circus Festival**
  • Peru Circus Museum exhibits will be on display in the Red Skelton Museum throughout the month of June
  • Red Skelton paintings will hang in the Peru Art Museum from June-July

• **August-December 2015 — Red Skelton Entertainment Showcase**
  • Five exciting and different shows, including music, comedy and dance
  • Season tickets $100 for all five shows
  • Single show ticket prices vary based on seating and show
  • Visit our website for more information as shows are booked

Archival images courtesy of The Indiana Historical Society, collection #M1030.