Volume 1, Issue 3 Fall 2010

# Friends in Feathers

GENE STRATTON-PORTER MEMORIAL SOCIETY, INC.

## From the President

Your Board has been busy reviewing the By Laws and Expectations of members of the Board. It has been a number of years since a thorough review has taken place. Just like in business, it is always a good idea to update the way we do business. Our Property Manager, Dave Fox, has been given substantial training in operating a historical site. Now the State would like to see him put this training to use.

He has been busy guiding us on the type of things we need to review. He has explained to us the need to bring professionals from our area in to help us. Our nominating committee invited John Bry to join the board and share his wealth of knowledge regarding foundations and fund raising. You elected him to the Board at our May meeting.

It is very foolish for us to think of the State as the only funding source for the site. We need to write grants and develop a strong fundraising program.

At the present time we have five board members on our Board. We have been looking at expanding the Board. Perhaps a Board of nine to fifteen members would give us the ability to get more outside expertise. If you have suggestions, we are always ready and willing to hear what you have to say. Please contact me as soon as possible.

We have never had a written set of expectations for our Board members. The Board is in the process of preparing the appropriate document. It will serve as the guideline for our Board members. I plan to publish it in the Spring newsletter. This will make it easier for our membership to have something to use in reviewing our Board members.

Another area that we will be expanding is the committee structure. We would like more members to be involved in the things that we need to do. This means that we are asking a number of you to volunteer to serve on the expanded committee structure. It will not be an overriding burden, but a chance to have real input in the future functioning of the site.

We are still working on a revised awards program for our volunteers. Please look forward to attending our appreciation dinner for volunteers on November 14.

I hope to personally see you at some of the Fall activities at the site.

John Kessen

## The Tombstone Trail Comes to GSP

BY JOHN BRY

The nation's first historic cemetery tour that encompasses an entire state is coming to Gene Stratton-Porter. The Tombstone Trail will have its inaugural launch encompassing DeKalb and Noble Counties in October. Over 50 miles will be covered along the Trail that will utilize historic Route 6 (The Grand Army of the Republic Highway) as the connector for the two counties, and as the Trail makes its way to Chicago in the future.

Six cemeteries, plus the gravesite of Gene and her daughter, Jeannette, will be included on the Trail this year. As visitors take the Trail, they will be able to visit Gene Stratton-Porter SHS and learn of Gene and Jeannette's remarkable achievements during their lifetimes.

Other cemetery locations to be featured include Butler City Cemetery, Waterloo City Cemetery, Fairfield Center Cemetery north of Corunna, Lakeview Cemetery in Kendallville, Rose Hill Cemetery in Albion and Oak Park Cemetery in Ligonier. Sixty-one stories of interesting monuments and individuals will also be highlighted along the route. Visitors may take self-guided or guided tours. Proceeds from the Trail tours, which is celebrating National Family History Month, will in part go to historic cemetery conservation in DeKalb and Noble Counties.

For more information on tours, or the Tombstone Trail, please call the Noble County Convention and Visitors Bureau at 1-877-202-5761 or visit www.tombstonetrail.com.

## Fall Tea is an Elegant Journey

By Janet Cook

*Gene Stratton-Porter*
*Requests the pleasure of your company*
*For Afternoon Tea*
*Monday, October 4, 2010*
*Between two and four o'clock*
*To Experience Tea at Wildflower Woods*
*Rome City, Indiana*

What we love most about afternoon tea is the ritual and the journey back to a time more elegant and refined than the rushed mug of tea with a cookie that we know today. A table spread with linen cloth and tea (always in a pot) served on fine china. The perfect afternoon tea should begin with savories, bite size sandwiches and other delectable morsels.

Our entertainment is Ruth Kirk -- she will take us on a journey through Pioneer Times. The cost of the Tea is $25 per person. This includes a tour of the Cabin and Gardens. Take a leisurely walk through the grounds and see if you can find "The Twin Oaks" and tell us what is supporting them.

Tours begin at Noon and the Tea starts at 2:00 pm. Tickets are now on sale and reservations are required. We accept credit cards, check or cash to hold your reservation. The Fall Tea is always a sell-out. Don't delay!!

While you're at the Tea, be sure to visit our Gift Shop full of unique and delightful items. Please call (260) 854-3790 for reservations.

## Are You Sensible?

by Carolyn Linsenmayer

We tend to forget that we are blessed with five senses. Autumn is the perfect time to SMELL ripe apples, to HEAR the rustling of leaves, to TOUCH the crisp fallen leaves and acorns, to TASTE the last of the vine ripened cantaloupe, and to SEE the changing of colors as nature prepares for winter.

Exercise and expand your sensibility (ability to feel or perceive) by walking through Wildflower Woods. You won't find a cantaloupe there, but the rest of your senses will find a myriad of things to experience. Thank you, Gene Stratton-Porter--we continue to enjoy your legacy.

## Dream of Beauty Walk Not to Be Missed

The annual *Dream of Beauty Holiday Walk* is scheduled for Saturday, November 20, from 11 a.m. until 9 p.m. Tickets are $3 per person or included with the Rome City Holiday House Tour.

The *Dream of Beauty Holiday Walk* celebrates a special holiday spent in the Cabin at Wildflower Woods by Gene and her family. She recounts that holiday in *The Lady of the Limberlost* written by her daughter Jeannette.

Gene called the 1917 Christmas with Jeannette and her granddaughters, "a dream of beauty" and we strive to decorate the house as Gene did based on her descriptions. The chandeliers and mantles were covered in moss, a silver tree stood in the library and yellow roses graced the dining room.

Gene also describes her Christmas tree for the birds, which you'll find outside of her conservatory. We honor Gene's wishes and hang popcorn, berries and seed on the tree to feed her feathered friends.

Please join us for this special day of music, refreshments, activities and joy!

## You Can Make a Difference at GSP

By Dave W. Fox

Did you know that the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site is part of the Indiana State Museum and Department of Natural Resources?

Our operating budget comes from the State of Indiana and our friends group, the Gene Stratton-Porter Memorial Society, bring the Site to life by raising funds to support events, educational programming, garden maintenance and other supplies not covered by the State budget. The majority of the State budget is dedicated to capitol improvements, repair and maintenance of the buildings and structures, infrastructure needs and preserving historic artifacts along with staffing.

If you've ever thought that you'd like to help but weren't sure how, there are numerous ways to continue Gene's legacy. If you can spare your time and talents, we'll find the perfect volunteer spot for you to do just that! We rely heavily on our wonderful corps of volunteers for events, garden and grounds maintenance and other projects.

For just $10 a year, you can become a member of the GSP Memorial Society. The Society is a vital part of the Site and we couldn't continue without them. There are various membership levels (see membership application below).

In addition to becoming a Society member, you can make monetary donations in our donation boxes or in our gift shop as well as mailing donations directly to the GSP Memorial Society. A list of items purchased and projects supporting through these donations is posted in the Carriage House and includes such things as plants for the gardens, mulch for the trails, marker stones for the garden and trails, supplies for various events and educational materials.

What if you don't want to just donate money? Clean out your pantries, closets and garage and see if you have anything on our wish list. We need everything from craft supplies, including but not limited to paper towels, crayons and glue sticks, to bird seed and garden tools. Any donated items not listed on our wish list will be sold at next year's Site garage sale which also raises funds for us. Our wish list is also posted in the Carriage House or available by e-mailing us at genestratton-portershs@dnr.in.gov.

We hope that everyone enjoys the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site and feels a sense of ownership as it truly belongs to the people. Gene wrote to the Governor in 1923 requesting that her beloved Cabin at Wildflower Woods be made a state bird, butterfly and botany sanctuary. Nearly 100 years later, we're doing our best to honor Gene's wishes and see that it becomes that and more - something Gene would be proud of.

## Gene Stratton-Porter Memorial Society, Inc. Membership Application

| | |
|---|---|
| ☐ **Single** | **$10.00** |
| ☐ **Family** | **$15.00** |
| ☐ **Sustaining** | **$20.00** |
| ☐ **Non-Profit Org.** | **$25.00** |
| ☐ **Business** | **$25.00** |
| **Life (40 years or older)** | |
| ☐ **Single** | **$100.00** |
| ☐ **Family** | **$150.00** |

*Please make your check payable to: Gene Stratton-Porter Memorial Society, Inc. and mail, along with this form, to GSP Memorial Society, 1205 Pleasant Point, Rome City, Indiana 46784*

Name

Business or Non-Profit Organization (if applicable)

Street Address

City State Zip Phone Number

E-mail Address

**Your GSP Memorial Society membership includes 3 newsletters each year, invitations to special events and a 10% discount in the GSP gift shop. Your membership dues support educational programs, special events and help continue Gene's legacy!**

## Three Hoots for Owl-oween!

By Tracy Duncan

Have you ever heard the clear "hoot" from an owl? What about the blood-curdling shriek of a screech owl? Have you ever been asked, "who cooks for you?" and wondered who's asking?

Most of us think of a typical "hoot, hoot" call as belonging to most owls but in fact, owls have a wide range of calls and sounds. It's true, the Great Horned Owl is known for that clear, simple call heard at night but others aren't so simple.

The screech owl got it's name honestly, as you know if you've ever heard one screech. The barn owl is another call sure to send chills down your spine.

Perhaps the most fun is the call of the barred owl (not to be confused with the barn owl). The barred owl can be heard asking the same question - "who, who, who cooks for you?" and will often respond when you ask him the same.

If you've not been lucky enough to see an owl up close, Owl-oween is your chance! Local rehab group Soarin' Hawk will have live owls and will share more about these creatures of the night.

During Owl-oween you'll also have a chance to see what owls have for dinner. Explore an owl pellet and see if you can piece together a mouse, mole or maybe even a small bird! Before you get worried, owl pellets are actually owl puke (and ours are sterilized).

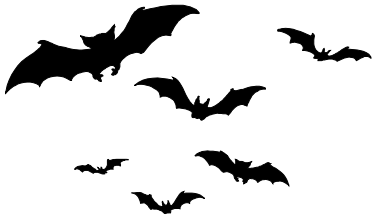
Owls eat their prey whole and have two stomachs to digest the meal. One traps the fur, bones and other non-digestible pieces while nutritious components go on to the second stomach. The owl then coughs up the bones, fur, etc. in an owl pellet.

Owl-oween is Friday, October 15 and Saturday, October 16. It runs from 6:30 to 8:30 each evening. Owl-oween is $3 per person and includes treats and take-home crafts and other activities. Please bring a flashlight. Children are encouraged to attend in costume and must be accompanied by an adult.

For more information, call the Site at (260) 854-3790.

## What Goes Bump in the Night?

By Tracy Duncan



You've heard the rumors, perhaps even wondered yourself...is the Cabin haunted? Does Gene continue to wander her beloved lakeshore property? Fort Wayne Paranormal will be on hand for our first GSP Cabin Overnight to dispel that myth.

Maybe you would love to know what the second floor looks like. What kind of view is there from Gene's sleeping porch? What secrets might lie hidden away in the attic or her wine cellar in the basement?

If any of those thoughts have crossed your mind then be sure to reserve your spot at the first ever GSP Cabin Overnight.

Guests will have a chance to explore the Cabin - all floors including the basement and attic. There will also be activities, a night hike on the grounds and plenty of refreshments to keep everyone going all night.

Tickets for this very special event are $100 per person with all proceeds staying at GSP for future events, grounds and garden maintenance and educational programming. Each guest will be assigned to a volunteer chaperone for the night but any guest under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian as well.

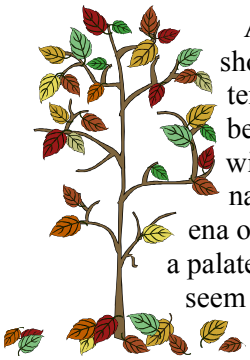
While there will be scheduled activities, guests will also have the freedom to explore the Cabin top to bottom with no areas off limits. Site staff and volunteers will be on hand to answer questions and share more information about Gene's life with you during the overnight event.

The overnight begins at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday following Owl-oween and ends at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday with breakfast available in the Carriage House.

This event is limited to the first 13 registered and paid guests so call the Site to secure your spot today. Opportunities to enjoy Gene's home as she did don't come along everyday!

**Cabin Overnight**
**$100 per person**
***Space is very limited***
**Call (260) 854-3790**
**to reserve your place!**

## Naturalist's Corner
### by Haley Samuelson-Couchman



As the days shorten and the temperatures begin to chill, a wide variety of natural phenomena occur that create a palate of colors that seem to bid farewell to our warm summers and welcome the cold winters of the Midwest. Deciduous trees are beginning to highlight yellows, reds and oranges before their leaves are shed for the winter.

The question remains: why do the trees lose their leaves each autumn? Chlorophyll, which absorbs sunlight to produce food for the tree in a process known as photosynthesis, provides the green color to the leaves. Since chlorophyll is poor at absorbing the green hue in the color spectrum, that pigment is reflected making the leaves appear green in the spring and summer months. As the days become shorter, the availability of sunlight lessens causing the last of the chlorophyll to die off. This loss allows the autumn colors to peak through and become visible to the human eye.

Without the dominant chlorophyll in the leaves, carotenoids and anthocyanins become visible. Carotenoids lend the colors yellow, orange and brown to carrots, flowers and bananas. Carotenoids are always present in the leaves and remain a consistent autumn color year after year.

Anthocyanins are the talent behind red and purple hues in strawberries, apples and blueberries. Warm sunny days and cool (not freezing) nights allow glucose to continue to be produced. During these pleasant fall days, sugars are produced in the leaf while the cool nights and the steady closing of veins going into the leaf prevent these sugars from leaving resulting in stunning reds and purples. These colors are a true autumn treat and are not visible during all fall seasons.

We hope you will join us at Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site this autumn to experience these unique colors for yourself. Don't forget to attend our Owl-oween festivities on October 15 and 16 where the fall colors are sure to be at their peak.

## Welcome New Limberlost Staff

The next time you are in Geneva, please welcome Annie McCollum as the new Interpretive Naturalist at Limberlost State Historic Site. Annie comes to us from State Parks & Reservoirs and has worked at O'Bannon Woods and Mounds State Parks. Haley Samuelson-Couchman and Annie will be working closely together to ensure that GSP and Limberlost have enjoyable and educational programming.

Annie knew the job at Limberlost was a perfect match when she saw a painting Gene had created - Annie is also an accomplished artist! She has had several shows and her work graces a number of interpretive centers.

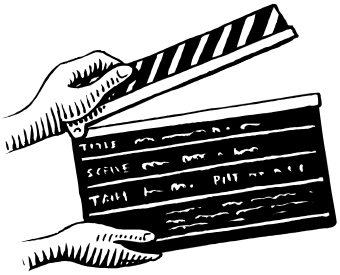
In addition to art, Annie loves animals and has all sorts of snakes, dogs, and ducks. Her fiancée, Zach Walker, is a Conservation Officer in Henry County and is a great source of information regarding wildlife law.

## Calling All Film Fans—GSP Film Festival Set for October

Eight of Gene's novels were made into films and Gene herself founded a production company to produce films that met her high standards. Thanks to film collector and historian Eric Grayson, now you can enjoy some of these films.

Join us on Saturday, October 2, at the Strand Theater in Kendallville for the Gene Stratton-Porter Film Festival. The Festival kicks off at 1 p.m. and runs until 6 p.m. with brief intermissions throughout. A complete schedule will be available soon.

Enjoy *A Girl of the Limberlost* and the world premiere of *Freckles Comes Home* as well as another of Gene's vintage films such as *Freckles* or *Laddie.* Grayson will also show the original trailer for *The Keeper of the Bees*.



Tickets are $10 per person for the entire Festival (three films) or $4 per film, available at the door the day of the Festival. Come for the entire festival or just one film, it's up to you!

GENE STRATTON-PORTER
MEMORIAL SOCIETY, INC.
1205 Pleasant Point
Rome City, IN 46784
(260) 854-3790

Visit Soon!

## Upcoming Events at the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site

***Gene Stratton-Porter Film Festival* -** Saturday, October 2, 1 - 6 p.m.
***Gene Stratton-Porter Autumn Tea* -** Monday, October 4, Noon - 4 p.m.
***Owl-oween* -** Friday & Saturday, October 15 & 16, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
***GSP Cabin Overnight* -** Saturday, October 16, 8:30 p.m. - 8:30 a.m.
***A Dream of Beauty Holiday Walk* -** Saturday, November 20, 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.

**For more information on events, please call (260) 854-3790**

***Tours are available by appointment only from December 1 through April 1.***
***The grounds are open daily, weather permitting.***

**Visit us online:**
www.genestratton-porter.com
Facebook - Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site