

FRIENDS IN FEATHERS

GENE STRATTON-PORTER MEMORIAL SOCIETY, INC.



2014 Season Full of Fun for All Ages

While there may still be a chill in the air and snow on the ground when this newsletter reaches you (unless you're lucky enough to live in warmer climates), the 2014 season at the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site looks to warmer days full of laughter and learning! There's something for everyone so won't you join us for one or more events this year? Here are some of the first few events, a complete listing can be found on page 5.

Volunteer Training

March 29; 9 a.m. – noon

All volunteers, new and experienced, are encouraged to attend this training for an overview of the restoration projects and exciting changes at the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site. Meet the Memorial Society board and learn how to make the biggest impact as a volunteer then get to know other GSP volunteers during a light lunch served at the end of training.

Wildflower Walk & Brunch

Special info on page 4.



Barn Sale

*May 2, 3 and August 1, 2
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.*

Find a new treasure or perfect gift at the Memorial Society's fundraiser to support educational programming and restoration projects at the Site. Contact us about renting space or donating items.

Birding with Gene

May 17; 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

\$3 per person

Celebrate Gene's love of birds at this family-friendly event. Learn about wild birds, habitat conservation efforts at GSP and how to



attract them to your backyard. Activities include bird watching hikes through Sower's Woods, birding by kayak, tips on local birding hot spots and crafts. Birding by kayak begins at 7:30 a.m. and space is limited so reservations are required. You must provide your own kayak and personal flotation device. This event is perfect for beginning or advanced birders with hikes, talks and more! Be sure to bring your binoculars and camera if you're a nature photographer or would like to learn more.

Cabin Overnight

New Options This Year

Gather your group of family or friends and choose from one of these dates - May 24, June 28 or July 12. Your group of up to 10 people is \$1,000 for the entire overnight.

This is the chance for your group to explore all "behind the scenes" areas of the Cabin. Guests may go anywhere they wish in the Cabin from the basement to the attic for insights into one of Indiana's most famous authors. Highlights may include in-depth conversations with the Site manager and rarely seen artifacts. You may sleep anywhere in the Cabin you'd like and one lucky guest will win the right to spend the night in Gene's bedroom! Guests will enjoy snacks throughout the night as well as a wonderful catered breakfast in the morning. Reservations are required at least 14 days in advance of your selected date. Please call the Site for more information. We are happy to customize the Overnight experience for your group!

Letter from the President by Ted Hemingway

We can all take heart that we are sliding toward spring. Mark your calendars: the 2014 spring equinox is Thursday, March 20th at approximately 12:57 p.m.! The sun is shining, the temperature is fifty degrees, and robins are singing, chipmunks are racing on top of the crusted snow, skunks are out and about...but March in Indiana includes more snow. It WILL melt and at Wildflower Woods we will be looking for early spring wildflowers: Skunk Cabbage, Spring Beauties, Trout Lilies, Dutchman's breeches and Large-flowered Trillium.

The 2014 Gene Stratton-Porter Wildflower Woods Events Schedule is out! Check on the website or wait 'til April first and pick up one at the Carriage House. The big surprise for many of you will be to see the many changes going on in the Carriage House. These changes will enhance the educational experience for students and visitors alike. Other changes will provide a more efficient work space for staff and volunteers. Some things will be done soon...other changes will be completed later.

This is the 100th Anniversary for the Cabin at Wildflower Woods and promises to be a great event season. My challenge to all GSP Memorial Society members is to bring along at least one new visitor to the site in 2014. And now...Aldo!

“One swallow does not make a summer, but one skein of geese, cleaving the murk of March thaw, is the spring.”



Manager's Update by Dave Fox

68 years. That's how long the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site, dedicated to one of Indiana's earliest naturalists, has been without an indoor nature viewing room. That will be changing this year though!

Thanks to NIPSCO for starting the ball rolling on our \$15,000 campaign to outfit the Carriage House, we're off and running to create an area where visitors may view the birds, squirrels, and other critters from the comfort of a soft, leather couch.

The room will have a five foot tall by ten foot long viewing window looking out into a beautifully landscaped area with plants native to Indiana, bird feeders, and a koi pond will provide all a bird could ask for. In addition to the window, many other features in the room will enable our visitors to learn more about the natural world around them. A display case will continue to tell Gene's story of her concern of birds being used in the fashion industry, several aquariums will have amphibians like Felix, our tiger salamander and Herman, the American toad.

The sounds of nature and the babbling of the water feature will be brought in for all to hear. Field guides, binoculars, a large cabinet filled with natural curiosities and even a special touch for Charles,

Gene's husband will be in the room. Charles had quite an interest in Native Americans, so the Charles D. Porter archeology library will be started in the southeast corner. We're also researching the possibility of having an active honey bee hive in the room itself. How good the honey must taste from all of Gene's beautiful flowers!

We have already had wonderful financial support from Gene's family, friends, and area businesses, but we still have a long way to go. Would you consider donating to such a cause? We hope to have all of the work complete by August 17 to give Gene a very fitting and long overdue birthday gift. Please stop by and check in the progress – we'll have a grand-opening at this year's Chautauqua Days event.

If you'd like to donate, you can give online at our website, www.genestratton-porter.com, visit www.gofundme.com and search for GSP Nature Room, or mail a check to the Gene Stratton-Porter Memorial Society and write, "E.G.G." in the memo. Any amount truly helps bring this project to reality - thank you so much!

Why Join the Gene Stratton-Porter Memorial Society?

If you're not already a member of the Gene Stratton-Porter Memorial Society, or if you were in the past but haven't recently renewed your membership, here are some reasons we think you should reconsider! All memberships in the GSP Memorial Society are tax deductible as the Society is a 501(c)3 charitable organization. We exist to support the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site both financially and through volunteer leadership (as a Board of Directors elected by membership) and manpower.

Each membership receives a vote at the GSP Memorial Society Annual Meeting which elects your Board of Directors who work in concert with the GSP State Historic Site staff to determine the most needed projects, the best way to spend money raised and how our volunteers can best help carry on Gene's legacy at

the GSP SHS. These are great reasons to join but we have even more for you!

Every GSP Memorial Society member receives this newsletter quarterly to keep them up to date on the latest at GSP SHS as well as providing additional insight into upcoming events and projects.

Members also receive an invitation to the Annual Meeting and if you volunteer in addition to being a member, you'll be invited to the Volunteer Dinner in November.

Did you know that GSP Memorial Society members also receive 10% off every purchase in the GSP Gift Shop?

In 2014, we've added some special perks just for our GSP Memorial Society members. Check out the quarterly Members Only special in each newsletter - this quarter's special is Buy One Get One Free admission on any GSP event during 2014. That

means you can bring a friend to experience any of our wonderful events during 2014...for FREE! It's our way of saying thanks for being a GSP Memorial Society member and supporting the valuable work done here each and every day.

Simply cut out this coupon and redeem it at any event during 2014 for your first Members Only quarterly special. We'll have more Members Only specials all year long so be on the look out!

**Members Only Special
Spring 2014**

***BUY ONE,
GET ONE FREE***

**Admission to one
GSP event during 2014!**

**Valid at any event,
excluding Cabin Overnight,
may only be used once.**

Gene Stratton-Porter Memorial Society, Inc. Membership Application

- | | |
|--|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/Student | \$15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$40 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit Org. | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining | \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Membership | \$1,000 |

*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 _____

Special Offerings for Nature Lovers

If you love nature, you'll want to check out these upcoming events at GSP!

The **Wildflower Walk & Brunch** on Saturday, April 26 from 10:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. is perfect for beginning or experienced wildflower enthusiasts. For just \$20 per person (reservations required by April 21), you'll enjoy a hearty brunch at the Carriage House and take a 30-45 minute walking tour through Gene's woods and part of her formal or "Tame" garden. See why she named the property "Wildflower Woods" and learn many of the old-fashioned common names for wildflowers used in her time. This event is rain or shine so please dress appropriately.



After a full class last year and many happy graduates, the **Indiana Master Naturalist Course** returns to GSP. Classes begin June 19 and run through August 21, meeting each Thursday evening from 6 - 9. The \$80 per person fee includes the course, exam and certification as well as course materials including field guides. Space is limited so be sure to sign up early if you're interested in learning about Indiana's natural history with this nine-week course. Students will hear from experts on eight different topics such as trees, birds, ecology and wildflowers.



New this year are **Second Saturday Hikes**. Once a month, join the Site Naturalist for a leisurely hike exploring the 150 acres of GSP through the seasons. Hike topics might include trees, wildflowers, restoration or even rocks. This event is rain or shine so please dress appropriately. Suitable for all ages, it's just \$2 per person.

Naturalist's Corner

By Tiffany Conrad, GSP Interpretive Naturalist

It's that time of the year once again! We begin to dust off the Site and embark on preparations for the new season. Each season brings out visitors to enjoy Cabin tours, the Gardens and all of the wonderful events we have to offer. I've been busy planning what's going to happen this season and I'm excited for spring to get here. I have added a new monthly hike, Second Saturdays, along with our crowd favorites like Owl-Oween and "A Dream of Beauty". Speakers and entertainers are being lined up for Chautauqua Days and we will be offering our Indiana Master Naturalist course again this summer.

In addition to our small staff, our volunteers provide support by helping with events, school tours, promoting the Site at home & garden shows, working in the Gardens and helping staff the gift shop. These are just a few of the ways that our

wonderful volunteers help us out. There are plenty of opportunities for you to get involved.

One of the ways you can learn about becoming a GSP volunteer is by attending our annual volunteer training on March 29 from 9 a.m. - noon. This is a chance for you to meet other volunteers, learn a little bit more about Gene and what we do here, the many ways you can get involved at the Site, meet our Board members and then enjoy a light lunch. I am also working on revamping our volunteer program so there will be some information about what's new and exciting. I am open to suggestions for this so if you have some ideas, please bring them with you and feel free to share.

This training is for both new and returning volunteers so join us to learn about the benefits of volunteering. If you plan on attending, please contact the Site and let us know.

2014 Events—Mark Your Calendar Now!

Second Saturday Hike

May 10 – Oct. 11; 9 a.m.; \$2 per person

Join us on the second Saturday of each month for hikes exploring the 150 acres of GSP through the changing seasons. This event is rain or shine so please dress appropriately.

Moonlit Garden Tour

June 14; 8 – 10 p.m.; \$25 per person; reservations required by June 9; guests must be age 21 and older

Enjoy an elegant evening in Gene's "Tame" garden with luminaries providing atmosphere under the light of a full moon. The "Tame" garden is home to hundreds of species of plants - many planted by Gene herself! Live music, wine tasting and white chocolate-dipped strawberries add to the romance of the evening. Rain date is June 21.

Star Gazing & Night Hike

July 19; 9 – 10:30 p.m.; \$4 per person

The Site's naturalist will lead guests through Sower's Woods to introduce them to the creatures of the night! Bats, owls, moths and other critters may make an appearance. Depending upon the clarity of the sky, star gazing will be available to identify major constellations, satellites and other celestial bodies by telescope thanks to Fort Wayne Astronomical Society.

Chautauqua Days

Aug. 16, 17; noon – 4 p.m.; \$3 per person

Join us to celebrate Gene Stratton-Porter's birthday with Chautauqua Days! Festival activities include tasty food, birthday cake, live music and other entertainment.

Guests can also watch artisans at work, get an up-close look at classic automobiles and browse hand-crafted items from local vendors. Families will find crafts and games as well.

GSP Memorial Society Annual Meeting

Aug. 16; 4:30 p.m.

Join us to learn about the role the Society plays in the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site, elect officers, and enjoy tasty finger foods during the meeting.

Amazing Monarchs & The Incredible Milkweed

Sept. 6; 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.; \$3 per person

Join DNR naturalist, Jody Heaston, as she takes guests into the amazing world of monarch butterflies. Learn how these beautiful insects survive, their life cycles and what plants you can use to attract them and other butterflies to your yard.

Wild Game Cookout*

Sept. 20; 6 – 8 p.m.; \$5 per person suggested donation

Here's your chance to sample wild game while learning more about local conservation efforts. Goose, deer, dove, alligator, antelope, bluegill, rabbit, crickets and squirrel have been on past menus!

*All wild game used for the program has been donated by local hunters.

Gene Stratton-Porter Autumn Tea

Sept. 27; noon – 4 p.m.; \$25 per person

Reservations required by Sept. 19

Enjoy lovingly-baked delicacies such as savory snacks and sweets, a variety of teas and a guest speaker. Before tea time, take a guided tour of Gene's Cabin and formal gardens. If you choose to wear your "tea-time best" make sure your attire includes appropriate walking shoes. Festive hats are part of our tradition!

Owl-oween

Oct. 17, 18; 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.; \$3 per person

This annual event is suitable for all ages and is more about the fun of Halloween – treats not tricks! At this event, you'll learn about owls, bats, raccoons, snakes and other creatures of the night. Children are encouraged to attend in costume and enjoy treats at various stops along the way. Be sure to dress for the weather and bring a flashlight to guide your way! This is a rain or shine event.

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

Nov. 2; 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.; Volunteers are free, guests \$15 per person

At GSP, we love our volunteers and this dinner is held in your honor! We would like to show our appreciation for all your hard work and celebrate the past year's events.

"A Dream of Beauty" Holiday Walk

Dec. 6; 1 – 7 p.m.; \$3 per person

See the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site when it's all decked out for the holidays. Gene's Cabin will be open and decorated according to her description of the Christmas of 1917, which she called "A Dream of Beauty." Guests can enjoy live entertainment, holiday goodies, crafts, a cookie contest and horse-drawn wagon rides around the property. Santa will arrive in a very special way at 2 p.m. and will visit with children and families until 6 p.m. so bring your list!

Unless otherwise noted, event tickets do not include a Cabin tour. Normal tour prices apply.

The Gift Shop will be cozy and welcoming featuring Gene's novels, nature studies, field guides and more! We'll continue to focus on wonderful locally-made products and are adding a new line of Gene's movie posters this year. Be sure to let us know what you think when you visit!

This season will see some great changes at the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site including a brand new Nature Viewing & Education Room and a totally renovated Gift Shop. The entire Carriage House is getting a fresh coat of paint and new carpet as well. We're exciting about the Nature Viewing Room with a huge 5' x 10' window and a newly created bird and wildlife feeding area you can enjoy no matter the weather (on a big comfy couch even)! The Nature Room will also include displays, field guides and more for guests of all ages to explore. As you can imagine, this project is not inexpensive so if you would like to help, please make a donation at the Site or go online to our fundraising page - <http://www.gofundme.com/GSP-Nature-Room>. Any amount will help and we even have a wish list!

NEW NATURE VIEWING ROOM & GIFT SHOP COMING SOON



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