



Friends in Feathers

GENE STRATTON-PORTER MEMORIAL SOCIETY, INC.

SPRING 2016

YOU'RE INVITED!

This year we celebrate a very special birthday — Indiana celebrates its 200th birthday in 2016, so you're invited to our Bicentennial Celebration! Our events throughout the season will have a celebratory feel, and some, such as the Bicentennial Tea in September, will showcase Indiana's path to statehood. A full schedule of events can be found on the back cover of this newsletter.

To kick off the Bicentennial Celebration, here's a poem Gene Stratton-Porter wrote for the Centennial back in 1916. It can be confusing because Gene referred to both her Geneva and Rome City homes as "Limberlost Cabin," but she penned this poem from her Cabin at Wildflower Woods, and we think you'll recognize many of the Rome City locations Gene describes in this poem.

A LIMBERLOST INVITATION

Come where the chewink chewunketh,
Come where wild grapevines swing;
Come where the craw-dads are crawling
Over the bed of our spring.
Come where the sun in red glory
Tops Kestler's tamaracks gray,
Come where the black bass are leaping
And the red-wings are calling all day.
Come where the rattlesnake rattles
While the kingfisher rattles also.
Come where the horned owl is hooting
And it rains at the call of the crow.
Come where the hairbell is ringing
While the bluebell its worship call tolls;
Come where the vireo preaches,
And the Hermit his vesper song rolls.
Come where the polecat's perfuming
Mingles with flower-scented air.
Come to our swamp in its glory,
Its joys we invite you to share.

Gene Stratton-Porter
Limberlost Cabin,
Rome City, Indiana,
1916.

It was originally included in "An Invitation to You and Your Folks from Jim and Some More of the Home Folks," compiled by George Ade for the Indiana Historical Commission. This collection of poems, letters, and other invitations was sent to former Hoosiers inviting them to return home to celebrate the Centennial.

Along with the Governor, Vice President, James Whitcomb Riley and other famous Hoosiers, we're pleased that Gene was included, and now extend her invitation to honor our state's Bicentennial. We encourage you to explore all that Indiana has to offer, especially the rich heritage of our citizens like Gene Stratton-Porter. Plan at least one visit to her Cabin on Sylvan Lake this year!



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

The State of Indiana was not yet 50 years old when Geneva Stratton was born in 1863. As Gene entered the world, the Civil War raged on, and the Emancipation Proclamation had been issued just months before. Gene came of age as Indiana and the nation emerged from the war and forged onward into the 20th century. Her work gives us an important snapshot of this period in our Hoosier history. This year, we celebrate Indiana's Bicentennial. We'll honor her as a prominent Hoosier, and the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site will take part in commemorative projects and events. Please join us!

Winter may be a quiet time, but for the Gene Stratton-Porter Memorial Society and GSP State Historic Site, it's a time of planning and refreshing. In the coming weeks, we'll visit home and garden shows in the hopes of drawing new faces to Sylvan Lake's shores. We're thinking up new ways to thank our volunteers – we couldn't do it without you! We'll plan upcoming events, such as our Wildflower Walk and



Brunch. (I like to go every year, because, unlike Gene, I have a terrible memory for flowers. I learn something new every time I listen to Tiffany and Dave!)

We are so proud of the work being done in Rome City to honor Gene's legacy and take the site into the future. As the parent of a young child, I am especially grateful for GSP State Historic Site's dedication to ecology and education. I can't wait to shake my cabin fever and get back out in Gene's woods, which are sure to be, in the words of E. E. Cummings, "mud-luscious" and "puddle-wonderful"! Spring begins March 20. We hope spring will find you visiting the site to see the ongoing changes and improvements.

I'd love to hear what GSP means to you, and what you'd like to see from us in the future. Please get in touch: angelamapes@hotmail.com.

Think spring!
Angela Mapes Turner

CABIN OVERNIGHT OFFERS UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES FOR GSP FANS

Gene Stratton-Porter had millions of readers and devoted fans during her lifetime. Even today, there are still hundreds of thousands of devoted fans who yearn to know more about their favorite author, who could transport them to another time and place. If you're one of those fans, this unique opportunity is just for you!



The Cabin Overnight offers guests a chance to explore Gene's Cabin at Wildflower Woods from top to bottom to get a better insight into her life. For \$1,000, no more than 10 guests (so just \$100 per person), you can have your very own Cabin Overnight, with full access to the Cabin and unprecedented access to the author through rarely seen artifacts and discussions. The fee covers

snacks and a catered breakfast and all proceeds from this event are used at the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site for educational programming, maintenance and restoration of the gardens and grounds.

The event begins at 8 p.m. on Saturday evening with an orientation and reception at the Carriage House Visitor's Center. From there, guests will walk to the Cabin and have unlimited access to explore all areas, even those normally off-limits in public tours. Peek in every nook and cranny to see how Gene designed her home and how her personality is reflected in most every room. Ask questions of the Site Manager and other Gene "experts" as you wander through the 4,000+ square foot workshop.

As a special treat, the Site Manager will show the small group of guests artifacts that are rarely, if ever, displayed at the State Historic Site. These items will give fans even more insight into the amazing and complicated woman that was Gene Stratton-Porter. Fans of Gene's literary, photography or nature work won't want to miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Dates are available for the 2016 season, but reservations are required and space is limited, so call the Site at 260-854-3790 today! This is ideal for families, book clubs or other groups, so choose a date and call today for this once in a lifetime opportunity.

CELEBRATING THE BICENTENNIAL

MANAGER'S UPDATE

BY DAVE FOX

We always say that each season will be an exciting season at the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site in Rome City, but 2016 will be especially exciting as we celebrate our state's bicentennial. The GSP Memorial Society and GSP Site staff have been hard at work planning some special events for Hoosiers and visitors to enjoy this year. We're proud to announce that between the Site and the Memorial Society, we have already had seven (that's half of Noble County's projects) projects endorsed as Official Legacy Projects!

Our Official Bicentennial Legacy Projects include:

- ◆ The GSP Wetland Restoration — the prairies will be seeded in early summer and wetlands are full
- ◆ The GSP Wildlife Viewing Area — we'll be moving the fountain and making other improvements to the outdoor area this spring and summer
- ◆ The Environmental Resource Center — new exhibits will be ready for opening day in April, including a section on carnivorous plants
- ◆ A portion of land purchased recently was funded by the Bicentennial Nature Trust, making it a Bicentennial Legacy Project
- ◆ The kitchen restoration will be completed, with ice box doors and a sink installed for opening day

- ◆ After many requests, we will finally publish a cook-book with recipes from our events in honor of the Bicentennial — "A Taste of Wildflower Woods: Recipes from and inspired by the Gene Stratton-Porter Memorial Society"

- ◆ Our annual tea will take on special significance as we look back to the road leading to statehood at the Bicentennial Tea with special speakers and historic recipes

We are excited to be a part of the Bicentennial celebration with these projects and more coming! Despite frigid temperatures, we hosted members of the Bicentennial Commission in January and shared our plans with them. They are very excited and have been so supportive, sharing our events and updates

on social media.

There will be other special Bicentennial events at GSP this year as we'll strive to bring a bit of statehood celebration to everything we do in 2016. You can also join many other events in Noble County, such as the Bicentennial Torch Relay and the All-IN Block Party we're attending in Albion this summer. For more information on ours or other Bicentennial events, be sure to check out the Indiana Bicentennial Commission online or on social media.

Take Gene's invitation to heart and get out and explore your state as we celebrate 200 years of being Hoosiers!



Become a Master Naturalist to Celebrate the Bicentennial



You can become an Indiana Master Naturalist, share Gene's legacy, protect Indiana's natural heritage AND celebrate our Bicentennial all at the same time this summer! The Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site will again host an Indiana Master Naturalist Class from July 9 through September 1. Registration is \$80 per person and includes the class, exam, materials and field guides. This class requires no pre-requisite other than a love of learning and desire to know more about Indiana's natural heritage. We think Gene would be pleased to see so many adults interested in learning more about the trees, wildflowers and animals that call Indiana home.

Class meets each Thursday from 6-9 p.m. at the GSP Carriage House in Rome City. Each week features a different topic with a special guest speaker. There are volunteer hours required to become certified, but you're welcome to complete those hours at GSP! This program was created by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. Once you are certified as an Indiana Master Naturalist, you can go on to achieve an Advanced Master Naturalist certification as well.

Space is limited, so call the Site today to register for the 2016 Indiana Master Naturalist class at GSP!

Have you renewed your membership yet??

GSP Memorial Society Memberships are now January-December, so renew for 2016 today! Your membership includes this newsletter to stay up-to-date on events and projects at the Site, 10% off all gift shop purchases and other special members-only benefits. You can also enjoy the knowledge that your membership helps continue Gene's legacy of life-long learning, preserving and protecting Indiana's natural heritage and reconnecting with the natural world.

We have levels of membership for every budget, including business membership. All membership fees are used in Rome City to support the GSP State Historic Site. We encourage our life members to consider giving a membership to family or friends and share Gene's legacy you love so much! Our new membership form below includes the option to make an additional donation to help with educational programming like Owl-oween, maintenance of Gene's gardens or major projects like the GSP Wetland Restoration currently underway. If there's a special project you would like to help, please include a note, and we'll be sure to update you on how your donation is helping!

You can also join or renew your membership online at our website — www.genestratton-porter.com — where you'll find our online store. Please be sure to visit often for the latest selection and information about what's happening at the GSP Site in Rome City. You can also find us on Facebook — Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site.

The Gene Stratton-Porter Memorial Society is a registered 501c3 organization, and donations are tax deductible. Please consult with your tax professional for details.

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 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Donation \$ | _____ |

Name

Street Address

City

State

Zip

Phone Number

E-mail Address

*Please make your check payable to:
Gene Stratton-Porter Memorial Society*

2016 Events

Celebrate the Bicentennial Season

Wildflower Walk & Brunch, April 30

Enjoy a hearty brunch at the Carriage House and take a 30-45 minute interpretive walking tour through Gene's woods and part of her formal or "Tame" gardens. See why she named her 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.

Spring Tea, May 21

Experience the elegance of days gone by at our Spring Tea. 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.



An Evening in the Gardens, June 18

Enjoy an elegant evening under the moonlight at the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site. A perfect date night or girls' night out, you'll enjoy both local beers and wines expertly paired with delicious appetizers and special chocolate-covered strawberries for dessert. This event benefits the maintenance and restoration of Gene's gardens and grounds.

Star Gazing & Night Hike, July 9

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. Bring binoculars for a closer view of the stars!

GSP'S Chautauqua, August 6

Join us to celebrate Gene Stratton-Porter's birthday with Chautauqua Day! Festival activities include tasty food made with herbs from Gene's garden, 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. An afternoon filled with family fun, learning and more.

Wild Game Cookout*, September 10

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! Conservation organizations and officers will be on hand to answer any questions you may have. Stop by early in the event for the best selection of wild game. **All wild game used for the program has been donated by local hunters.*

Bicentennial Tea, September 24

Come join us as we celebrate Indiana's 200th birthday! Learn about some of the traditions, food and what was happening in Indiana 200 years ago. Guests will enjoy a guided tour of Gene's Cabin. 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, October 14 & 15

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.

"A Dream of Beauty" Holiday Walk, December 4

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, and horse-drawn wagon rides around the property. Santa will arrive in a very special way and will visit with children and families, so bring your list!



NATURALIST'S CORNER
BY TIFFANY CONRAD

“When the earliest bluebird sings, when the sap wets the maples, when the skunk cabbage flowers,
and the first striped squirrel barks, why then, it is spring!”

The Harvester

As strange as this winter has been, it's hard to believe spring is just around the corner. Watching Wildflower Woods wake up is from a long winter's nap is one of my favorite parts of the year. The woods are a completely different place here in the winter and watching it transition from

“dead, brown sticks” (as I've heard it put) to the lush, green forest that we all dream of in the dreary winter months is a wonderful show.

It's not as quiet as one might think. Of course there is the lack of visitors coming in and out of the Carriage House, kids giggling as they run along the paths and the rustle of the leaves on the trees. There are a variety of noises and activity occurring at any time out here. Once the ice comes on, the ice fishermen begin their trek down to the ice, and the noise of the power augers echoes through the woods. Squirrels can be heard skittering through the leaves and up the feeder poles. Birds are heard chattering in the tree tops at the squirrels, who are rudely stealing their lunch, and for us to fill feeders as they have been emptied. One of our loudest visitors are the resident pileated woodpeckers. Not



only are they more vocal, but their pecking tends to carry through the woods much further. Once you hear them begin to call, they can usually be spotted on one of our suet cakes. Even our resident owls get in on the noise making.



A hike through the woods is a bit chillier than normal, but it also reveals the beauty of the land. The subtle hills and valleys are easier to spot with the forest floor being uncovered, no greenery or foliage blocking it's true form.

You notice the bends in the trees, holes that are always hidden away and the interesting way the light filters through the canopy.

So if you catch yourself with some late winter's blues, don't hesitate to take a walk in your neighborhood or local park and notice the little things. Listen for the songbirds anticipating a mate, look for the crocuses and the buds on the trees beginning to expand in anticipation of the warmer weather. Spring is just about here, and you can get a front row seat to the show!

Annual Volunteer Training

Saturday, March 12 from 9 a.m. until noon including lunch.

Please RSVP to Tiffany at tconrad@indianamuseum.org so we have room and food for everyone. This is a great opportunity to meet other volunteers and learn about the upcoming season! Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend—new and experienced volunteers alike!!

SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS ARE STILL FREE!

Thanks to generous support from foundations and individuals, all school field trips to the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site are now FREE! The admission for a basic guided tour has been underwritten for the 2014-2015 school year. This is a fantastic opportunity to share Gene's legacy of life-long learning and nature conservation with a new generation.

Not just for Indiana history in 4th grade, school field trips to GSP in Rome City are a great way to explore Gene's home as well as her gardens and grounds. We can customize your class's field trip based on lesson plans, focusing on writing or biology if you'd prefer. Since the admission is now free, you can add on additional activities for just \$1 per student to expand the experience for your students.

If you are a teacher, parent or grandparent and would like to schedule a class field trip (any age K-12), please contact Tiffany Conrad at the Site at tconrad@indianamuseum.org or 260-854-3790.

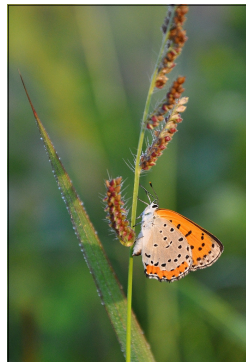
GENE STRATTON-PORTER'S WILDFLOWERS MAKE LIMBERLOST A PARADISE OF BEAUTY

Woods Surrounding Cabin is a Sanctuary for Birds, and Moths – Where Nature Rules Supreme.

By Mrs. Frank N. Wallace, Former Secretary to Mrs. Porter

Excerpts from an article reprinted from The Indianapolis Star of May 2, 1937

LIMBERLOST region, South, the scene of Gene Stratton-Porter's first twelve years of field work, was rapidly being cleared and drained for farm purposes, so after spending several years in search for a new location, she decided upon the present site of Limberlost Cabin, North, as being the most ideally located for the continuation of her nature work.



Forty acres of the 120 she had purchased here were covered with the original growth of timber. Broad open fields with deep ravines stretched back from over a mile of winding, swampy lake shore. Here, in Wildflower Woods, surrounding Limberlost Cabin, Mrs. Porter made a sanctuary for the birds, butterflies and moths and for every flower, tree, shrub, bush and vine native to northern Indiana.

Soon after this purchase became known, Mrs. Porter received numerous letters from landscape gardeners, far and near, most of them volubly certain they had the ideal plan for the formal beautification of Wildflower Woods. But nature was to have things much her own way around Limberlost Cabin. Each aspirant, in turn, was kindly but firmly informed that God had given all assistance needed to help Mrs. Porter make this place a haven of wild paradise beauty.

Segregates Colors

The only bit of beautifying done in Wildflower Woods by Mrs. Porter that had the least semblance of formal planting, was the segregation of colors into separate beds, each bed being devoted to a special color and all being laid out parallel with the old rail fence that marked the western boundary of Wildflower Woods.

Beginning at the wooded summit of the upward slope of the lake shore, where nature had already flaunted the vivid coloring of red and scarlet haw, burning bush, redbud and sumac, Mrs. Porter added the splendor of mountain ash, red alder and Northern holly. She started the scarlet trumpets of Virginia creeper and coral honeysuckle up the tree trunks, carpeting the earth beneath with the red of partridge berry, spikenard, Turk's cap lily, Indian paint brush and Oswego tea. In moist places, crimson pink, foxfire and cardinal flower showed their vivid coloring, while on a slightly higher elevation the scarlet berries of ginseng added their brilliance. Bordering the shore line of this colorful bed were waving red osiers, in front of which flamed the red of wood lily and bergamot.



Native to Spot

Many of the flowers in these beds of color, and those throughout Wildflower Woods, were native to this spot, but Mrs. Porter spent unlimited time and arduous work in the searching for and bringing in the trees, shrubs, flowers and vines that are now found in Wildflower Woods surrounding Limberlost Cabin. If flowers occasionally did not flourish in their new habitat, she would return to their original location to study the soil condition. Oftentimes she brought wagonloads of earth into Wildflower Woods to give the plants as nearly as possible their native environment.



Like her mother, who Mrs. Porter always declared possessed "flower magic," she herself seemed to have the same magic touch with flowers. Since she believed that flowers grew better when she planted them herself, the greater number of plants in Wildflower woods were set by her own hands and all under her supervision. She frequently made the assertion that she had been on her knees on almost every square inch of ground surrounding the cabin.



2016 EVENTS

Volunteer Training March 12; 9 a.m. – noon; free

Wildflower Walk & Brunch April 30;
10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.; \$20 per person

Spring Tea May 21; Noon – 4 p.m.; \$20 per person

An Evening in the Gardens June 18; 8 p.m.; \$35 per person

Indiana Master Naturalist Course July 7 – Sept. 1; 6 – 9 p.m.;
\$80 per person

Star Gazing & Night Hike July 9; 9 – 10:30 p.m.; \$4 per person

Barn Sale Aug. 5; 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.; free

GSP's Chautauqua Aug. 6; 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.; \$5 per person

Wild Game Cookout Sept. 10; 6 p.m.; \$5 per person suggested
donation

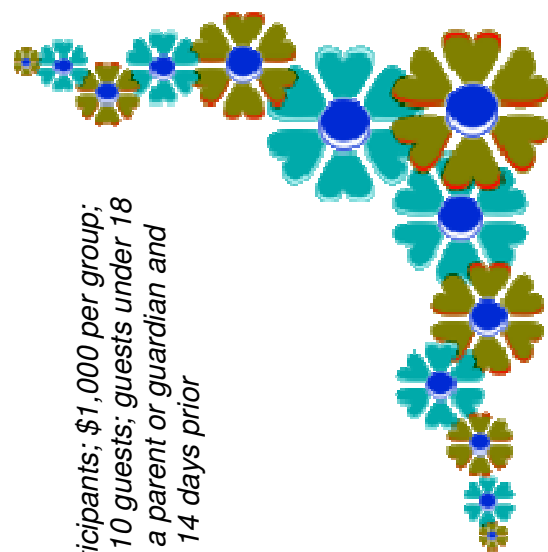
Bicentennial Tea Sept. 24; noon – 4 p.m.; \$25 per person

Owl-oween Oct. 14 & 15; 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.; \$4 per person

“A Dream of Beauty” Holiday Walk Dec. 4; 1 – 6 p.m.; \$5 per
person

Cabin Overnight

Dates determined by participants; \$1,000 per group;
limited to groups of up to 10 guests; guests under 18
must be accompanied by a parent or guardian and
reservations are required 14 days prior



FRIENDS IN FEATHERS

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