

www.casscountyhistory.org

Cass County HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Investor Packet 2024-2025



December 5, 2024

574-753-3866
421 E. Broadway Street, Logansport

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Executive Summary

Our Mission

The mission of Cass County Historical Society is to collect, preserve and share Cass County Indiana history.

Our Team



Heather Fouts
Executive Director



Jill Snyder
Program Manager

Our Museums

The Cass County Historical Society was organized during a meeting of the *Citizens Club* at Library Hall on Feb. 12, 1907. Exhibits featuring many items from our collection are currently on display at the Long Home Museum, a beautiful Italianate home built for Dr. George Jerolaman in 1853 by George Bevan. The house was donated to the historical society for use as a museum in 1967 by Benjamin H. Long in memory of his parents Benjamin F. Long and Lucy Nichols Long.

The Long Home Museum showcases thousands of artifacts from Cass County's past including paintings by artists George Winter and Wils Berry, river, canal & railroad artifacts, military uniforms & equipment, Native American artifacts, antique toys, housewares, quilts and much more.

The William Chick Family Log Cabin was disassembled, moved and reconstructed next to the Long House Museum by museum volunteers in 1974. Donated by his great grandchildren, Mr. Chick's cabin was originally built near Galveston, IN sometime around 1863.

The Cass County Museum was purchased in 2019 to provide more space for our library, programs and exhibits. This accessible location currently features staff offices, classrooms, vault archives and the Castaldi Family History Center. In the near future, the Cass County Museum will be the permanent exhibit home of our rare 1920 ReVere automobile, our American mastodon fossils, an expanded military exhibit and a reimagined Main Street Shops exhibit experience.

Financial Consideration

We seek investors who share interest and dedication to our mission to collect, preserve and share Cass County Indiana's history. We are currently renovating our museums to provide a more accessible and educational experience. Enclosed is documentation of our recent progress and the project challenges we face ahead. Please consider supporting our worthy mission.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours in preservation,



Contact

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421 E. Broadway Street
Logansport, IN 46947
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Cass County Museum

421 E. Broadway Street, Logansport

Pre-Pandemic

We purchased CCM in 2019 with the intention of providing accessible, centrally located access to our office and services. CCM also provides ample exhibit and storage space for material artifacts that are too big or otherwise an ill fit for public display or storage at the Long Home Museum.

2020 - 2022

In March 2020 long-standing Executive Director, Thelma Conrad retired. Our organization experienced over a year of uncertainty due to challenges presented by the pandemic and the loss of all paid staff. In December 2021 we hired Andrea Melton as Executive Director. Her leadership established our offices, classroom and a beginning phase of the Castaldi Family History Center (library) at CCM.

2023 - 2024

We hired Heather Fouts in October 2022 to serve as Executive Director following Andrea's resignation. Heather has over 20 years of arts and museum education experience in Indiana. Together with our Board of Trustees and KJG Architects, Inc., Heather has helped develop what we believe to be a reasonable path forward providing accessible, educational programs and properly preserving our artifacts and museums for the future.

Building Renovation

Included in this packet are official CCM floor plans and estimates from our architects. The floor plans identify where new exhibits will be. We have invested a substantial amount of our own money toward provision of CCM, a summary of all CCHS expenses so far is also included.

Collections Care

While renovating our museums, we are also updating our practices regarding the care, organization and accessibility of our collection. CCHS is the steward of 4 historic buildings, the ReVere auto and *thousands* of material artifacts.

Staffing

In October 2023 we hired Program Manager Jill Snyder. Jill assists between 10-20 guests each month with lengthy research projects, providing excellent guest service to all who visit. In the future, we intend to hire a Curator to help catalog and care for our collection and a Technology Manager to maintain all museum tech, our online presence and help develop exhibit interactives.

City of Logansport

The City of Logansport currently assists our organization with \$20,000 in annual support, used solely for payment of the utility bills of both museums. Their gift funds approximately half of our total annual utility costs.

We are also negotiating the potential use of a READI 2.0 grant to help fund the renovations needed to provide first floor exhibits at CCM, specifically the ReVere automobile exhibit space.

Long Home Museum

1004 E. Market Street, Logansport

1967 - 2019

Long Home served as our primary museum location for over 50 years. Most local visitors have a memory of visiting Long Home during school field trips. The Victorian Italianate home is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. Its carriage house serves as the primary location of artifact collection storage. The William Chick Family Log Cabin and corn crib structures sit adjacent to the museum.

2020 - 2022

There has been much discussion since the purchase of CCM on what CCHS will do with Long Home. It was, indeed, suggested by some that we should sell the property, consolidating our experience all under one, accessible roof. We did not approve and no longer entertain that idea. It is our intention to restore and develop new experiences for our beloved home museum. We hope after reading our packet, you will agree CCHS has enough history and material artifacts to create relevant experiences to fill and maintain both museum locations.

2023 - 2024

In 2023 we loaned the 1920 ReVere Tourer automobile to the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum for temporary public exhibition. Prior to loaning it to ACD, the car was stored in the carriage barn at Long Home. The ReVere, our American Mastodon fossil collection, our railroad artifact collection and our military artifact collection are all good examples of material artifact collections that are too large or ill-suited for proper display at Long Home. These artifacts will be moved to CCM for exhibition and Long Home will *still* have plenty of relevant displays.

Building Restoration

Uncertainty regarding Long Home's future and lack of funding promoted organizational neglect of the Long Home Museum. KJG Architects completed a structural analysis of the property. Included in this packet is a copy of the analysis and architect's estimated restoration costs.

Collections Care

The Long Home property is full of artifacts. Some are documented, some are not. Our collection is not digitized and accession records exist on a variety of old technology. We are quite overwhelmed with the collection digitization effort, but we are progressing slowly.

William Chick Log Cabin

Dormant and locked up for years, the log cabin experience at Long Home is no longer safe for the public to enjoy. Restoration efforts are long overdue. Chinking has crumbled and is falling out. The floorboards at the back door are busted out and there are holes in the roof. This damage provides access for a variety of critters who have called the cabin home and contributed to its deterioration. Time is of the essence for saving this unique experience at Long Home.

Experience Alignment

The Long Home Museum is appropriate for providing a pre-1920s, pioneer-style museum experience. Similar to Connor Prairie in Fishers, IN and other living history attractions, Long Home provides a viable backdrop to educate guests, via reenactment and exhibits, on what life may have been like for an early Cass County resident. Our vast collection of antique furnishings, quilts, toys, housewares and most stories of early county residents will remain available for enjoyment at Long Home.

State of the Collection

Accession Records

Accession records are an inventory of the artifact and archive collection. Properly managed, they make finding, identifying and learning about the items in the collection easy. Currently these records exist only on old technology: hand written or paper journals, floppy disks, CDs, slides, glass and dangerous nitrate film negatives, etc. When a guest needs assistance, artifact information must be manually retrieved from these outdated sources. It is a lengthy process that does not support preservation.

Digitization

CCHS is using Past Perfect museum software to document each and every one of the thousands of items in our collection. We clean, assess, scan, photograph, document and store the known history and donor information. This is a tedious process that our limited staff and volunteers lack the time to dedicate ourselves to fully. With investor support, we hope to hire a curator in the near future to expedite this important task. Proper collection care and digitization is the key to preserving our history for future generations.

Castaldi Family History Center

CCHS is grateful for the support of the Castaldi Family Trust, whose annual donation supports relocation and digitization of our library, archive and collection. We are the proud stewards of a massive library of reference books, county records and documents that we regularly use to assist guests with family genealogy and Cass County history research. Similar to the material artifact collection, the library and archive is also being recorded into Past Perfect.

Collections Care

There are several issues with the manner in which the CCHS collection has been physically handled in the past. Temperature, humidity, light and pest control was not upkept for proper preservation. Some items have been permanently lost due to poor storage methods and lack of physical care.

Technology

Technology will play a bigger role in our museums moving forward. With investor support, we hope to hire a Technology Manager to maintain the equipment and software required for operations, museum events, exhibit interpretation and assist collection digitization. The Technology Manager will also maintain all online and social media platforms of the organization, creating visual history content for guest enjoyment and further preservation of Cass County history.

Deaccessioning

As staff and volunteers work on the collection, we are discovering many items that were taken in via "open door" accessions. This means no provenance aligning the item to our mission was established at the time the item was accepted.

In time, items that are not from or related to Cass County Indiana history will be deaccessioned, or ethically removed from our collection.

Deaccessioned items are returned to the donor, donated to another museum where the item belongs or on the rare occasion, sold. Funds from any sold items are *explicitly* used for improving care of or adding to our collection.

We are currently working with Indiana Archives to properly deaccession and distribute surplus copies of library and archive items. For example, CCHS does not need 25 copies of the 1920 *Tattler* yearbook. We are keeping a reasonable number and ethically distributing the surplus.

Investment Opportunities

Our Mission

The mission of Cass County Historical Society is to collect, preserve and share Cass County Indiana history.

Giving Options

Please mail your donation to one of the following entities:

Cass County Historical Society

421 E. Broadway Street
Logansport, Indiana 46947

Donors who mail their donation directly to CCHS will be recognized in our quarterly newsletter *The Confluence*. Donations do not include membership. Donors giving \$5,000 or more may have the name of their choice engraved on our Vault Donor recognition wall at CCM.

CCHS is a 501(c)3 nonprofit entity.

Other CCHS Fiduciaries:

The Charles P. Schaefer Designated Endowment Fund

c/o Cass County Community Foundation
P.O. Box 441
Logansport, Indiana 46947

Cass County Historical Society Pass Through Account

c/o Cass County Community Foundation
P.O. Box 441
Logansport, Indiana 46947

Share our Opportunity

We seek investors who share interest and dedication to our mission to collect, preserve and share Cass County Indiana's history. We do not want our folder of information returned, instead we ask that you please pass it on to a friend for consideration. Thank you for taking time to read about our cause and our challenges. With donor help, we will achieve our worthy goal of providing superb history museum experiences and better historic preservation practices in Cass County Indiana.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration.



Please Visit Us! Museum Hours

Cass County Museum
Tuesday - Thursday
10 AM - 4 PM

Long Home Museum
Thursday - Friday
and First Saturday of
each month
1 PM - 4 PM