

The Ruthmere Record

THE RUTHMERE FOUNDATION, INC. • 302 E. BEARDSLEY AVENUE • ELKHART, INDIANA 46514

FALL 2006

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THE RUTHMERE FOUNDATION, INC. TO ACQUIRE THE 1848 DR. HAVILAH BEARDSLEY HOUSE



As this edition of The Record goes to press, The Board of Directors of The Ruthmere Foundation, Inc., is taking final steps to acquire the Havilah Beardsley House. One of Elkhart's earliest landmarks, the 1848 Dr. Havilah Beardsley House stands north of the Main Street bridge at the heart of the Beardsley Avenue Historic District at 102 W. Beardsley Avenue. Its prominent location draws attention, as does its handsome architectural style. For more than twenty five years, current homeowners George and Darlene Adkins have given care to properly restoring the house. They have generously opened the house to students and to those with an interest in community history. This spring, when they decided to sell their home, the Board of Directors of The Ruthmere Foundation, Inc. recognized the opportunity to bring this important landmark into the public dimension. The Foundation plans to continue the restoration of this local landmark and to open it as a museum to interpret the founding of the city and its early entrepreneurial roots.

When Havilah Beardsley bought a parcel of land from Chief Pierre Moran in 1830, he

undoubtedly had no idea how large an enterprise he was beginning. As the first doctor in the area, he brought medical attention to the community at the confluence of the Elkhart and St. Joseph Rivers; and as an entrepreneur, he could see the potential for the water power the same rivers would provide. Both attributes contributed to the growth of Elkhart, and both attracted other Beardsleys to the area. One of the first to arrive was Albert Raper Beardsley. He came to Elkhart in 1856, after Havilah died, to live with his aunt, Rachel, in the house they had built on the St. Joseph River just north of what is now the Main Street Bridge.

After Albert married Elizabeth Baldwin in 1872, they moved into a house on East High Street (now the Four Arts Building). At the turn of the century they started planning a new house just a short distance east of Havilah's house, and in 1910 they moved into that house, the beautiful Beaux Arts mansion they named Ruthmere.

Both Ruthmere and the Havilah Beardsley House are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and are a part of the Beardsley Avenue Historic District, which stretches from Montessori St. to Edwardsburg Avenue. Just steps west of the Havilah Beardsley House, also on Beardsley Avenue, stands the Havilah Beardsley Memorial, which is also a feature of the historic district. The memorial was funded by A.R. Beardsley and designed by Ruthmere's architect, E. Hill Turnock. Together with Ruthmere, the mill race, the site of the Beardsley Mills, and Island Park, the Havilah Beardsley House links the story of the city's origins with its early twentieth

century history. The relevance of this history to all of the community's students and citizens is significant. As a museum, the house will make a compelling new destination for those who visit the city. The Board of Directors of The Ruthmere Foundation, Inc. invites you to celebrate with us this important new addition to the community's cultural and historical assets.

A DESCENDANT'S POINT OF VIEW

How exciting to add a very opportune and important piece of Elkhart's founding family history to the cultural and educational

stewardship of the Ruthmere Foundation: the home of Elkhart's founder, Havilah Beardsley, reported to be the first house built in Elkhart, Indiana. Our family can look back along the migratory trail to glimpse again the strong entrepreneurial roots of those early family members that have influenced and supported our life choices. I believe that, metaphorically speaking, we are the Havilah Beardsleys of our generation, creating value and amenities for the communities that we call home, making us a link in a special lineage that we trust will be carried on by our kids and grandkids.

-Joan Beardsley Norris

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Contributions to the Havilah Beardsley House fund will go toward the acquisition and restoration of this significant local landmark. Donations may be made to The Ruthmere Foundation, Inc. Your contribution will be acknowledged, with your permission, in the Ruthmere Record. Major donors to the project will receive special recognition. 🌸

FALL EDUCATION SERIES AND DOCENT TRAINING

Reservations requested; admission is free

Monday, October 9 at 10 am

A Visit to Elizabeth and Albert Beardsley's First Home (the Four Arts Club)

Meet at First Presbyterian Church parking lot to carpool and/or caravan.

Monday, October 16 at 10 am

Discovering Elkhart's Early History: Dr. Havilah Beardsley

Monday, October 23 at 10 am

A Visit to Grace Lawn and Rice Cemeteries: Exploring the Beardsley Mausoleum and Belvedere

Additional points of interest will include the cemetery gates, the grave of Dr.

Franklin Miles, and the memorial to Dr. Havilah Beardsley.

Meet at First Presbyterian Church parking lot to carpool and/or caravan.

Monday, October 30 at 10 am

The Architecture of E. Hill Turnock:

a slide and walking tour
(weather permitting; wear comfortable shoes)

Monday, November 6 at 10 am

Highlights of the Fine Arts Collection

Slides and a tour of the collection to include paintings and sculpture

Monday, November 13 at 10 am

The Stained Glass Art of Louis Comfort Tiffany

A slide presentation and focused tour of the museum's Tiffany collection 🌸

SAVE THE DATE FOR THE GREENLEAF NEIGHBORHOOD HOLIDAY HOUSE WALK!

This year's Holiday House Walk promises to be one of the most exciting ever. On Saturday, December 2 from noon to 4 pm, we will visit six lovely homes on Greenleaf Boulevard that once belonged to executives and entrepreneurs of Miles Laboratories and are an integral part of Elkhart's history. Included are the former home of Walter and Midge Beardsley at

2233 Greenleaf, now the home of John and Nancy Banks; the former home of Walter and Phoebe Compton at 2225 Greenleaf, now the home of Tom and Liz Borger; the former home of Maurice and Muriel Treener at 1805 Greenleaf, now the home of Steve and Carol Eldridge; the former home of Ed and Olive Beardsley at 1841 Greenleaf, now the home of

Brad and Micki Miller; and the former home of Richard and Roberta Nicholls at 2525 Greenleaf, now the home of Martha Peterson and Tony Warning. Make sure to plan to join this year's Holiday House Walk! Tickets are \$20 and may be purchased by calling Ruthmere at (574) 264-0330. 🌸

ROBERT RECALLS

ROBERT B. BEARDSLEY, PRESIDENT, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BLUEBERRY PIE

When Ruthmere first opened in 1973 as a House Museum (33 years ago), all tours started in the Game Room. One of our docents first welcomed our visitors and then gave a brief talk about the house and its restoration. This was followed by a ten-minute slideshow projected on the giant roll-down silver screen from the 1920s that hangs over the fireplace. Several images were of Ruthmere and old Elkhart, all were black and white. Most were local landmarks, like the 1914 construction of the Johnson Street dam over the St. Joseph River, the Dr. Miles Medical Company Building on Franklin Street, and early downtown Elkhart when trolley tracks still ran the length of Main Street as the automobile started coming in.

Early formal photos of Elizabeth and A. R. Beardsley then flashed on the screen. The best showed Elizabeth in “full court dress” from about 1900 where she is decked out in an elaborate full-length gown and wears a pearl choker, an ibis feather headdress, and her celebrated fleur-de-lis diamond broach. She is seated in a gold chair and holds a fan. (Incidentally, thanks to 4th generation relatives, two lovely ladies who inherited this sparkler, the fleur-de-lis pin is now part of the Ruthmere collection.) An equally dramatic photo of A.R. followed, showing him to be the serious man of business he was. One uncharitable visitor seeing the image for the first time remarked that Senator Beardsley, as he liked to be called (from his days in the Indiana Senate), looked like he had just cornered the pig market in Chicago.

The most charming of these historic images was an informal portrait of Elizabeth and A.R. in their later years on the front steps of Ruthmere with their little dog Wang. They doted on this dog (not

popular in the neighborhood for some reason) and often put a red bow around his neck. One can imagine that it was something of a family portrait for them, since they were childless.

Suddenly from the back of the Game Room a little old lady with a pronounced midwestern twang shrilled: “I remember that dawg. It had a purple tongue!” “Well, yes” said the docent. “Wang was a chow, and I believe chows have purple tongues, don’t they?” “No, no”, the old girl persisted, determined to make her point: “But do you know WHY it had a purple tongue? It’s because they fed him blueberry pie every morning for breakfast!”

A SUMMER HEIST FOILED

One hot humid summer day in the early 1920s my Grandmother Helen (Mrs. Andrew H. “Hub” Beardsley) was having two ladies for “luncheon” at her house at 226 East Beardsley directly across the street from Ruthmere (“lunch” apparently was a thing of the future.) Despite the heat, they ate in the dining room, under the L.C. Tiffany “Waterlily” shade at the 60” round mahogany table covered with a white embroidered cloth with matching monogrammed napkins. Ruthmere’s dining room table is almost identical.


Having dispatched the asparagus on buttered toast with grated parmesan cheese along with the first of their iced-teas, the ladies waited patiently for second-maid Nancy Morningstar to arrive with cook Goldie Mae Mills’ celebrated Floating Island for dessert. When Nancy appeared, however, she was empty-handed, her face as white as a sheet. “Mrs. Beardsley, there’s a man in the kitchen with a gun. He and his accomplice got Albert from the garage and he’s in there,

too, along with Goldie.” Albert was the gardener and chauffeur who had been with the family for many years and would live to be 99. “Oh, oh, here he is.”

With that the swinging door from the pantry opened. A masked man dressed in black with a pistol at his side entered the room. “Good afternoon, Mrs. Beardsley. I must ask you and your ladies to get up and go into the living room for your dessert where your staff will join you. But first, please remove your rings and personal jewelry and place them on the table. My associate will remain with you while I go upstairs. Under no circumstances are you to leave the living room to telephone the police, or it will go very hard with you. After we leave you are to wait ten minutes before trying to contact the authorities. Please do as I say.”

“Very well,” said Grandmother, a really calm and unflappable lady (somebody you would want on your side in a war). She removed her diamond wedding ring and one gold bangle, all the jewelry she was wearing, and placed them on the table. Her niece, Lillian Burwell, and her other guest did the same. “Ladies, shall we?” They rose in unison, Grandmother leading the way, a Helen Hokinson grand dame if ever there was one. Full-figured and corseted, she swayed slightly as she walked with natural dignity into the living room, a fine lace handkerchief tucked into one sleeve of her light summer dress. The ladies followed. Nancy, Goldie, and Albert were already there. “Oh, Mrs. Beardsley!” Nancy and Goldie wailed. “Now, girls, sit down. All this will all be over in a few minutes.” And then, with her dry sense of humor to put them at ease, she said: “I think the gentleman upstairs will be disappointed when he doesn’t find anything very much up there to interest him!”

Within five minutes the "gentleman" came down to the living room and motioned his accomplice to follow him. They fled wordlessly through the house and out the back door to their waiting get-away Model T flivver parked on Grove Street, their driver waiting nervously, the engine running. They vaulted in and peeled rubber half a block to Beardsley Avenue, where they turned west, heading, no doubt, for the county line. Albert and the ladies jumped from their chairs when they heard the kitchen door slam (I am sure Grandmother "arose"). Albert immediately went to the only phone in the house those days, a wall phone in the kitchen hall with a hand crank, to call the police. "Hello, Hello, Operator? Give me the police! There has been a robbery at the Beardsley home!"

From there it was a Hollywood cops-and-robbers chase. Grandmother heard sirens all over town as the constabulary piled into their open squad cars in hot pursuit. Half an hour later at the county line, the calculating but inept robbers (an unfortunate combination) were caught with their stolen loot, not that there was much of it for all their trouble. Both went to jail for a year and the driver, I believe, was put on probation. After all, all he did was drive and none too well at that. The ladies got their jewelry back and Grandmother her silver letter opener and two picture frames from her sitting room (the extent of the second floor haul). Peace restored, the ladies returned to the dining room for Goldie's Floating Island. The robbery made headlines for days! 



Dean Hupp, volunteer Curator of the Antique Automobile collection, drove his vintage Huppmobile to Ruthmere recently. On July 8, Mr. Hupp started Ruthmere's 1917 Cadillac and brought it into the driveway, where more than 400 participants on the Michiana Master's Gardeners' Walk admired its sleek lines. He is currently working on the 1916 Milburn Electric and hopes to get it started this summer.

Membership Levels

Individual - \$25

3 issues of The Ruthmere Record, one free tour for 2, and information regarding all upcoming Ruthmere events.

Family - \$50

3 issues of The Ruthmere Record, one complimentary family tour, and invitation to the children's summer party.

Patron - \$100

3 issues of The Ruthmere Record, listing in newsletters, one complimentary tour for 4 plus information regarding all upcoming Ruthmere events.

Bronze Patron - \$250

3 issues of The Ruthmere Record, listing in newsletters, one complimentary tour for 8 plus information regarding all upcoming events.

Silver Patron - \$500

Same as Bronze Patron above plus one complimentary tour for 12.

Special membership opportunities are available at higher levels. Please contact Laurel Spencer Forsythe at (574) 264-0330.

**All memberships include a
10% discount in the Museum Shop.**

Ruthmere

DISCOVER THE REWARDS OF MEMBERSHIP

Please fill out this form and mail or fax it to:
Ruthmere Museum Membership
302 East Beardsley Avenue
Elkhart, IN 46514
Telephone: (574) 264-0330
Fax: (574) 266-0474

☐ Individual (\$25) ☐ Family (\$50) ☐ Patron (\$100)

☐ Bronze Patron (\$250) ☐ Silver Patron (\$500)

☐ Gold Patron (\$1,000)

Name(s) as you would like to be listed in publications

Address

City/State/Zip

Home Phone

Business Phone

Enclosed is a check for \$

Please make check payable to Ruthmere Museum

Please charge \$ to my:

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ DiscoverCard

Account Number

Expiration Date

Signature (Required for Credit Card)

☐ This is a gift membership for:

Name(s) as you would like to be listed in publications

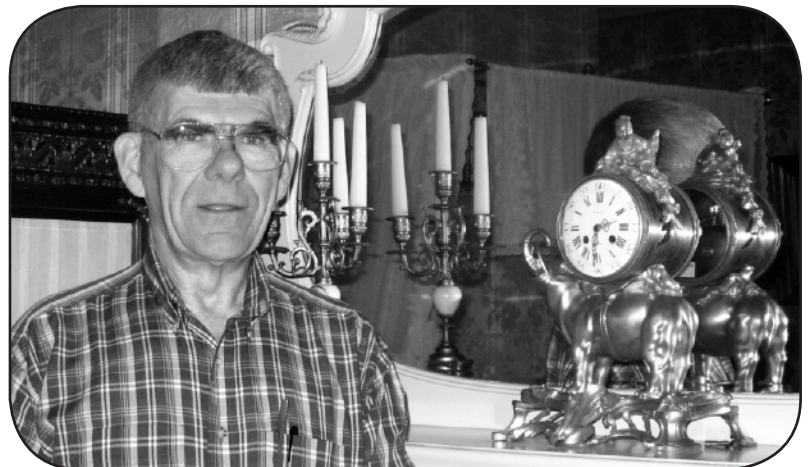
Address

City/State/Zip

Daytime Phone

☐ Matching gift form enclosed. Membership contributions to Ruthmere Museum may be matched by your employer. Ask if your company participates in the matching gift program.

☐ Memorial In memory of
Memorials are available anytime at Ruthmere.



Mr. Hosea Jump, Curator of Ruthmere's Clock Collection, recently attended to all of the museum's clocks, thanks to Board President Robert Beardsley. Mr. Beardsley, who believes that clocks are the "heartbeat" of a house, is generously sponsoring Mr. Jump's ongoing care for these unique timepieces.

NOTES FROM AN OAKEN AERIE...

MARILOU RITCHIE, ARCHIVIST/LIBRARIAN

The Book Arts Festival celebrating the 26th birthday of The Robert B. Beardsley Arts Reference Library has come and gone. It was great fun, and I recommend that you watch for the 27th celebration next year.

One of the greatest joys for me was working with Supervolunteers Paula Barb and Kathy Freese. I was not prepared for the efficiency and enthusiasm that they brought to the task of initiating

a program for which we had no blueprint. They were full of ideas, diagrams, schedules, and checklists—everything we needed—and they martialed the other volunteers to work at the event. My thanks to them have no end.

Another joy at Ruthmere is the advent of our new website. Click onto Ruthmere.org and see the remarkable improvement: it really is beautiful. Director Laurel Spencer Forsythe provided creative

input, along with designer Dave DuFour, who also provided the technical expertise.

This is short, but the days are getting shorter too. Fall means that the maple will turn red before another newsletter comes out. Plan on spending a sunny October afternoon here in the Beardsley Library. We're open on Wednesday from 10 to 3 and on Thursday from 1 to 3.



MY RUTHMERE INTERNSHIP

RUSTY HECKAMAN



Rusty Heckaman, now a senior at IU-South Bend, has completed cataloguing archival materials received from Bayer several years ago. In connection with this project, Rusty developed a display of Miles Laboratory artifacts, which can be seen in Ruthmere's Baldwin room on the third floor.

While interning at Ruthmere Museum I have participated in several projects. My involvement at Ruthmere has increased my interest in local history, museums, and in pursuing a career in the museum field. My experience at Ruthmere has been enhanced by a friendly and extremely helpful staff that has welcomed my input while also providing guidance, which has increased my knowledge and understanding of museum projects.

Participating in the variety of events that Ruthmere hosts, working with cataloguing the museum's collection and participating in the docent program have given me a strong introduction to museum work.

My major project was to catalogue archival material received from the Dr. Miles Medical Company. The Beardsley family's contributions throughout the company's history made Ruthmere a good place for housing a portion of the Miles Company archives when Bayer Corporation discontinued the company archives based in Elkhart several years ago. The Miles archives include documents, papers, and large numbers of ledgers and other financial records. Meeting journals and correspondence revealed the company's involvement in a wide range of activities. The company's products and advertisements were among the most interesting discoveries. I used them, along with some possessions of Dr. Franklin Miles, to put together a display celebrating highlights of the company's history. This display is on the third floor in the Baldwin Room at Ruthmere.

Developing the Miles display is the culmination of a semester's worth of work with the archival collection. Cataloguing the materials has given me valuable experience

in working with a museum's collection. This, along with participation in the museum's other activities, has reinforced my interest in pursuing a master's degree after I receive my Bachelor's Degree in History from Indiana University of South Bend in December.



Ruthmere's Development Director Gail Martin recently accepted the challenge of managing WNIT Public Television's capital campaign. Ruthmere staff celebrated her new position with mixed feelings. We know she will do a fantastic job for WNIT, as she has done for Ruthmere, but we insisted that she come back to visit with us often. We will miss having her as a part of the staff!



GARDEN UPDATE



Ruthmere Collections Care Coordinator Joy Olsen and summer intern Rowenna Miller donned Edwardian-style costumes for the recent Michiana Master Gardeners Walk. The walk brought many garden enthusiasts to Ruthmere's grounds to view a new 1910 style garden bed and the traditional blue and white garden.

Over 400 people visited Ruthmere July 8 when the gardens were featured on the Michiana Master Gardeners'

Walk which took them through many of Elkhart's beautiful gardens. Beds at the front gates feature geraniums, dusty miller, and coleus, all popular at the time Ruthmere was built in 1910. Central to the Ruthmere's garden was the "carpet garden" on the front lawn where circles of alyssum, petunias, coleus, and other period plants surround the raised center of golden yellow cannas, a typical turn-of-the-century bed. Before the visitors left they had an opportunity to study the garden Master Plan which was prepared by Buettner and Associates.

As a part of the Master Plan process, a new Garden Committee has been established to include staff and volunteers. One feature that the Garden Committee has decided to develop is a Tiffany Garden. Research in the Beardsley Arts Reference Library led to a list of plants used in Louis Comfort Tiffany's stained glass

lamp shades. Some of these are the plants that will be used in the garden which will be planted on the Beardsley Avenue side of the greenhouse in a design that reflects the windows that are found in the Dining Room and the Library of Ruthmere. In addition, Mrs. Beardsley's rose garden will be expanded to include several more heirloom varieties. Work will start on the gardens soon with plans to show it next summer, although it can take several years for such gardens to reach their full potential.

Advanced Master Gardener Pam McIntire has been joined by her sister Carla Riley. Together they make a marvelous gardening team. Their work is most evident in the blue and white garden and the greenhouse, but healthy plants and delightful blossoms may be found throughout the grounds. ♣

VOLUNTEERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE AT RUTHMERE

Ruthmere volunteers have logged more than 700 hours this year in a wide range of activities, from accounting, to gardening, to assisting with Coffee on the Piazza. The value of these volunteer hours is in excess of \$10,500. This in-kind donation of service demonstrates significant community support of Ruthmere. Thanks to all of our valuable volunteers! We could not do what we do without your generous gifts of time and talent.

Other volunteer activities have included antique car care, help with special events such as the Children's Summer Garden Party, and work with the museum collection, including cataloguing the book collection. A new initiative for this year is the Volunteer Docent program, which includes a training program designed to prepare volunteers to give tours of Ruthmere. Our governing body, the Board of Directors, is another special

group of volunteers. They give of their time and expertise to chart the course of the Foundation's future.

If you have an interest in volunteering at Ruthmere, please contact Kathy Sponseller or Laurel Spencer Forsythe at (574) 264-0330. Whether you have a few hours a week or a month to offer, we will welcome your interest and can accommodate your schedule.

Ruthmere appreciates its volunteers, who have given their time and talents to assist the museum with tours, events, gardening, and more. Volunteers are truly an integral part of the museum.

Thanks go to:

Barbara Adcock
George Adkins
Dottie Arnold
Tom Artley
Paula Barb
Judy Bechtold
Elmer Billings
Isabelle Freeman
Kathy Freese

Bob Frey
Joan Girton
Agnes Grahmbeek
Laura Grey
Jan Grodник
Dian Holdeman
Mary Ann Hunsberger
Dean Hupp
Rick Kennedy

Annette Kozak
Sally Linsey
Barb McArthur
Carrie Mathews
Connie Minzey
Paul Randall
Jeanine Rhodes
Betsey Semple
Marie Smith

Connie Stamper
Sue Toth
(of Books-Bound To Be Used)
Peg Trobaugh
Pat Warrick
Nick Witmer
Emma Wynn

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Dorinda Miles Smith

Robert & Peggy Weed

GOLD PATRON

Robert B. Beardsley

Thomas and Lois Dusthimer

George & Kathy Freese

Craig & Connie Fulmer

Laurel Spencer Forsythe

Jonathan & Leisa Norris

David & Janet Weed

M. Scott & Kim Welch

HELP, WHEN IT IS FORTHCOMING, IS OFTEN CONTAGIOUS

-RBB

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Philip and Jeannette Lux

Robert and Gail Martin

BRONZE

Laura Funk

Desco Glass

William and Diana Reglein

Steve and Kathy Sponseller

PATRON

Jane Burns

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Neil and Patricia Klockow

Charles and Betty Lamb

Ann Miller

The Reverend George Minnix

Phil and Bonnie Penn

Marilou Ritchie

Harold and Patricia Smith

Marika and Thomas Gordon Smith

Robert and Mary Lou Stackhouse

Don and Claudia Stohler

Donald and Cidney Walter

Susan Warner

Nicholas and Lindsay Witwer

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER

Every Saturday in October: Coffee on the Piazza (9:30 am-12:00 noon)

- 1 Free Family Sunday. Tours at 1, 2, 3 pm.
- 8 Ragtime Pianist, Bob Milne in Concert (2 pm and 7 pm) \$15 Reservations.
- 21 Saturday Garden Seminar: How to Put your Garden to Bed (10 am)

NOVEMBER

Edwardian Yuletide at Ruthmere begins the day after Thanksgiving and continues until New Year's Eve. The mansion is lavishly decorated with live poinsettias and evergreens, period ornaments, and other special seasonal accents.

- 5 Free Family Sunday
- 5 Juliana & Friends Piano Quartet (4 pm) free
- 24 Nicholas Roth in concert (7:30 pm)
- 30 Sip 'n' Shop (4-7 pm) Evening Yuletide Tours at 5 and 6 pm

DECEMBER

- 2 Greenleaf Neighborhood Holiday House Walk (12 noon-4 pm)
- 3 Christmas Tea (2 pm)
- 7 Sip 'n' Shop (4-7 pm) Evening Yuletide Tours at 5 and 6 pm
- 10 Christmas Tea (2 pm)
- 14 Sip 'n' Shop (4-7 pm) Evening Yuletide Tours of Ruthmere at 5 and 6 pm
- 24-26 closed
- 27-30 Yuletide Tours of Ruthmere
- 31 Closed

Ruthmere

THE RUTHMERE FOUNDATION, INC.
302 EAST BEARDSLEY AVENUE
ELKHART, INDIANA 46514
574.264.0330
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RUTHMERE LAUNCHES EXPANDED MUSEUM WEB SITE

Ruthmere has launched a completely redesigned and expanded website at www.ruthmere.org. The new website offers more complete historical and artistic perspectives on Ruthmere, along with simpler navigation for visitors and easier access to timely news about the museum and its events.

Ruthmere.org, developed in cooperation with Dufour Creative Services and J.Faigh Design, provides expanded histories of the Beardsleys, along with online galleries highlighting the museum's extensive art collection and décor features, news and calendar pages, and more information on the museum's unique

services. Board President Robert Beardsley had a hand in developing the new site during a visit in July.

The website's new format gives us a great new graphic look, along with much more flexibility to provide timely information about events and exhibits, as well as to add new material as our collections change and grow. It's not a static 'billboard' type of website – we hope visitors will return frequently to find out what's new.

For more information please call (574) 264-0330 or visit www.ruthmere.org.



If you would like to receive 'The Record' by email please visit the website, click on "Contact" and send us your email address with a note indicating you would prefer to receive 'The Record' via email.