

Dayton International Peace Museum History

In the summer of 2003, Christine Dull, long-time peace activist and citizen-diplomat, was returning from a citizen-observation visit to Iraq with her husband, Ralph, when she had a vision: *Dayton should have a museum dedicated to transforming our culture of violence into a culture of peace.* The museum would be a non-partisan cultural and educational facility designed to promote the concept of peace and the viability of non-violent solutions to conflict at the local, national and international levels. It would particularly seek to address the educational gaps, with regard to peace and peacemaking, of local, regional and international children, recognizing that they *can* and *will* become the next generation of peacemakers.

Fred Arment and Lisa Wolters, experienced advertising professionals, joined the Dulls, and the four worked long hours planning and obtaining the necessary documents. They used their own money and a \$10,000 grant from the Dayton People's Fund to begin the museum. In October 2005, the group, now incorporated as Dayton Peace Museum, Inc., had a brief tenure at 601 W. Riverview Avenue. At the same time, veteran and retired police officer Steve Fryburg came on as the Museum's full-time, pro-bono director.

After two years of planning, the Dayton International Peace Museum opened its permanent doors at 208 W. Monument Avenue in downtown Dayton, Ohio on October 14th, 2005. By 2006, the Museum had attracted more than 100 volunteers who had donated their time, energy, ideas, labor and personal funds.

The Museum has already made monumental strides toward establishing itself as an important cultural and educational institution not only locally, but regionally and even internationally. Two years of successful exhibits, events and educational initiatives have focused on bringing peace and the ways to peace into the public consciousness. During this time, the unpaid staff and volunteers have worked incredibly hard to ensure that the Museum will take deep root in the hearts of the community it exists to serve, by serving in a way that fosters lasting community transformation through inter-racial, inter-cultural, inter-religious, and inter-personal peace and harmony.