The Mining & Rollo Jamison Museums
PLATTEVILLE
WISCONSIN

Newsletter

Spring 2023

Huff Leaves Legacy Gift In Support of Education

For William "Bill" Huff, history and education are his hot buttons. He wants to see positive things continue to happen at The Mining & Rollo Jamison Museums — especially in the area of school field trips and educational programs — and so he made a gift to the Friends of The Mining & Rollo Jamison Museums of more than $250,000 to start the Bill Huff Family Education Fund.

Having grown up in Dubuque, Iowa, and Lancaster, Wisconsin, and graduated from the Wisconsin Institute of Technology, now the University of Wisconsin-Platteville, with a degree in mining engineering before founding property development and management business Huff Properties in

Continued on page 4

Thanks to the Bill Huff Education Fund, support for educational programs like school field trips will be available for generations to come.

Museum Reopens May 3 For Regular Tour Season

Tour season at The Mining & Rollo Jamison Museums kicks off Wednesday, May 3, and runs through October. We'll be open Wednesday-Sunday 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (closed Monday and Tuesday). To thank the citizens of Platteville for their continued support, Opening Day is FREE for Platteville residents with proof of residency. Advance registration is suggested. Register at www.mining.jamison.museum/programs.

Museum admission includes: 1) a fully accessible self-guided tour of all interior and exterior exhibition galleries; 2) the option of a video tour or a guided walking tour of the Bevans Mine and Hoist House; and 3) a ride on a 1931 Whitcomb mine train through the 3-acre outdoor Museum campus (weather permitting).

Book Signing May 8: '100 Things to Do in WI Before You Die'

Author Dannelle Gay

To kick off National Travel & Tourism Week in Platteville, the Museum has partnered with the Platteville Regional Chamber to offer a program and book signing with Dannelle Gay, author of the bestselling book "100 Things to Do in Wisconsin Before You Die." The evening will include a recognition of local Outstanding Hospitality Customer Service Employees and a talk by Regional Tourism Specialist Drew Nussbaum. Join us in the Platteville Municipal Auditorium for this free event. No registration necessary. May 8, 6 p.m. at the Platteville Municipal Auditorium, 75 North Bonson St.

Mark Your Calendar

June 21
Make Music Underground

Enjoy free live music on the summer solstice on the museum campus again this year.
11 a.m.-1 p.m. (pop by any time) Supermarket Circuits. Join Sonia Case in making musical circuits with liquids, fruits, and office supplies.

1 p.m. (sharp) Make Music Underground: The Tri-State Homeschool Choir in the Bevans Mine.

July 4
Heritage Day

Heritage Day is a July 4th community celebration of Platteville's rich history and bright future. Join us for a day of free family-focused activities and exhibitions, including early American outdoor games, a car and engine show, demonstrations, cricket pick-up games, and food at the concession stand.

July 10-13
Young Pioneers Camp

Young Pioneers Camp is a fun day camp for students entering 2nd through 5th grades. Travel into the past and discover life in our region in the pioneering period of the early 19th century. Prospect for minerals, create unique crafts, cook over a fire, play historic outdoor games, and more.

August 20
Mine Day

Platteville's classic festival of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math features live music and a variety of family oriented STEAM exhibitions and games. Demonstrations include blacksmithing, pneumatic drilling, lead-pouring and an earth science and mineral exhibition.

Summer 2023

Land, Place, and Life: A Driftless Walking Tour

The Walking Tour connects nature, history, and culture as visitors venture from the Museum on a 2-hour, 1.5-mile guided tour of portions of the David Canny Rountree Branch Trail. Explore the landscape of the Driftless Area and the Upper Mississippi Valley Mining District, learning how the geographical features developed into a way of life from prehistory to the establishment of Wisconsin as the Badger State to the development of contemporary communities.

Stay tuned for dates when the Walking Tour will be offered this summer.

This walk along a scenic, certified trout stream is offered in partnership with the Platteville Community Arboretum.

May 29-August 20

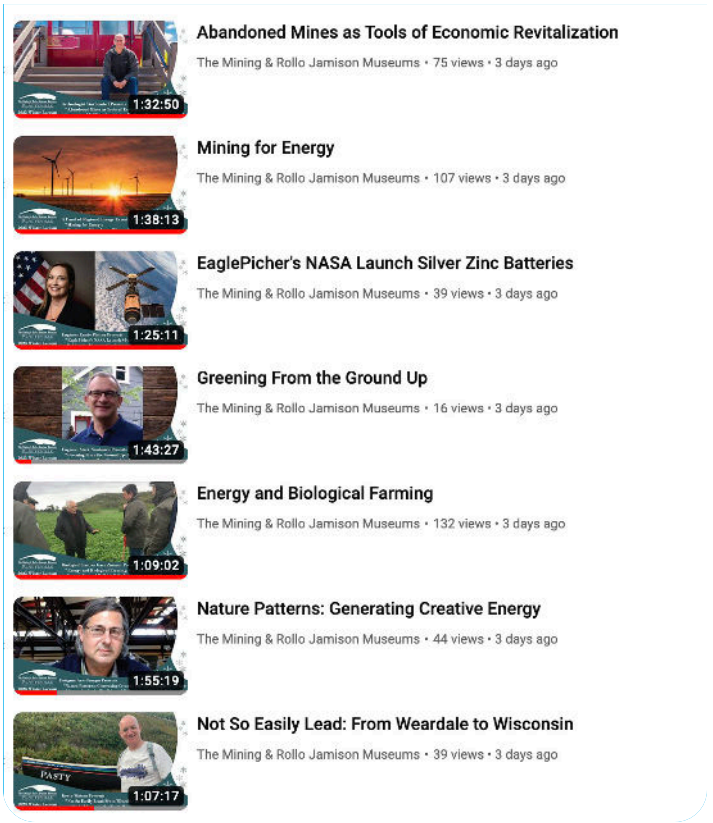
Pick & Gad Raffle

Save the date for this fun and important annual fundraiser now in its third year. Win cash prizes of up to $1,000 and support the Friends of The Mining & Rollo Jamison Museums by purchasing one or more tickets! Sales open on Memorial Day, and the drawing will take place during Mine Day (August 20).

Lyceum Videos Go Live Online May 1 for All to View

The 2023 Winter Lyceum featured seven electrifying lectures on topics exploring the realm of "energy" in the context of our Driftless Area place and current events. The subjects of the talks ranged from generating and storing energy in historic mines to solar and wind energy production to organic farming and architectural design. Participants joined in the live question-and-answer session at the end of each talk, probing the subjects that resonated with them. Each talk was recorded and made available exclusively to registrants. On May 1, the talk recordings will be made available freely to all via our YouTube channel.

Big thank you to the sponsors whose financial support has made this program possible: A&W Restaurant of Platteville, Clare Bank, Edward Jones Financial Advisor Bob Hundhausen, Inspiring Community, Southwest Health, State Farm Agent Jordan Holthaus, and TRICOR Insurance.



Education

Heidi Dyas-McBeth helps interpret the natural history of our lead-zinc mining region by presenting a sample of the Paleozoic coral *Receptaculites*.

Huff Fund Continued from Page 1

1967 in Upland, California, Bill appreciates the power of education to transform lives for the better.

"Leadership and a good team are needed to get where we want to go," Huff said, and he wants to enable the Museum to at least double what it can do now. As the Museum is preparing a capital campaign feasibility study in the coming year, Huff's gift has inspired the Museum to expand the scope of the future campaign to include not only necessary buildings and grounds improvements, but also the capacity to fill the buildings with life through education with staff to help carry out our educational mission through school field trips, tours, workshops, camps and seasonal festivals.

The Friends of the Museum extend their gratitude to Huff. The Bill Huff Family Education Fund is a mechanism that Huff has created to channel his life's work and optimism into a lasting gift in support of the Museum's mission. This gift will continue to inspire lifelong learning through hands-on experiences of place and cultural heritage at The Mining & Rollo Jamison Museums for generations to come.

Scholarship Area Expanded To Include Full Tri-State Area Historic Mining District

Thanks to the success of the School Field Trip Scholarship program and support from the Bill Huff Family Education Fund, the Friends of The Mining & Rollo Jamison Museums have extended field trip scholarships to all grade levels of the region's classrooms to cover the costs of both museum admission and bussing. Once only available to Grant County fourth grades, now the program is available to schools in all areas that were once part of the Upper Mississippi Valley lead-zinc mining district across the Tri-State Area, including Iowa and Lafayette Counties in WI, Jo Daviess County in IL, and Dubuque County in IA.

Data shows that Museum access is particularly difficult for rural schoolchildren in the region surrounding the Museum — but thanks to this support all area students are now able to take advantage of this Museum field trip opportunity.

'Mining in Society' Merit Badge Midway a Success

Blackhawk Area Council Scouts gathered on February 18 at UW-Platteville for the Pioneer Merit Badge Midway, where Museum staff offered a Mining in Society Merit Badge for the first time. Education Specialist Marie Whisenant led the scouts in a variety of object lessons and hands-on exercises required for the badge that drew from the Museum's wealth of resources on the subject.

Scouts received a crash course in mining from safety to reclamation.

Education Outreach: 13,000 Years of Driftless Ingenuity

Education Specialist Marie Whisenant visited several classes at Darlington Elementary School in March to present a hands-on module about Native American life in our area prior to European settlement. Arrowheads, furs, pottery, cordage, and other artifacts showed how tribes developed lithic and floral-faunal resources and innovated key processes for living in the Driftless Area landscape.

Darlington 2nd, 3rd, and 4th graders enjoyed a hands-on experience.

Staff Trains for Tour Season

All Museum staff, including the collections, communications, and visitor services teams, were trained on the interpretive narratives presented by tour guides for both Guided Mine Tours and School Field Trip Group Tours. This required gaining familiarity with the full breadth of the Museum educational areas, which span the areas of Driftless Area natural history, Upper Mississippi Valley district mining history, and the history of innovation and community embedded in Rollo Jamison's cultural collection.

New staff honed their educational narratives and interpretation of collections.

Ed Space to Be Conditioned

A single large storage room serves our education team by housing all the special event supplies, teaching collections, and props that are used to stage the full arc of programs and special events that the Museum offers year-round. This space, located at the west end of the 1905 Hanmer Robbins building main floor, has for some decades been neither heated nor cooled. This spring Bill's Heating & Plumbing installed a split-system heat pump to provide economical conditioning.

A mini-split heat pump system will heat and cool education storage.

Collections Spotlight

Important Taxidermy Pieces Selected to Be Restored

Addressing a "High Priority and Urgent" recommendation identified in the grant-funded 2021 Collections Assessment for Preservation project, the Museum is fundraising to engage conservator Terry Brown to restore two important taxidermy dioramas and to train the staff on doing its own care for the remaining specimens. Besides decades of dirt, historic taxidermy frequently contains arsenic, pesticides, and heavy metals that can pose a health threat to staff and visitors — and therefore calls for a specialist. The 1917 Beetown golden eagle and pre-1920 boxing squirrel diorama were selected for restoring and encasing in vitrines.

Save the Boxing Squirrels!

Please consider supporting the taxidermy collection restoration with a special gift. Just note "Taxidermy" in the memo line of your check or call Erik at (608) 348-1837.

This 1917 Beetown golden eagle clutches an arrow honoring WWI.

The pre-1920 boxing squirrels diorama has become a local icon.

Dairy History Relics Assembled

Some of the most popular and engaging displays in the Museum cultural collection exhibit galleries include the kitchen in "Daily Life" and the cattle-handling area in "Making a Living." Ongoing grant-funded collections stewardship work in storage areas have identified a variety of dairy-oriented artifacts such as glass creamery bottles; wooden butter churns, presses, and paddles; wooden cheese molds; and more. Staff will be selecting several of these to display as part of our interpretation of our region's rich dairy heritage.

Collections Specialist Christina Grev found dairy artifacts for new exhibits.

Player Piano and Lap Organ Sent Off for Restoration

With support from a private donor, two mechanical musical instruments have been sent for repair to ensure they continue delighting audiences for decades to come. The Weaver player piano has gone to Busch Music to rebuild the air motor, replace gaskets and regulation in cutoff device and tempo controls. The concert roller organ will undergo a standard mechanical restoration by Roller Organ Restorations.

The Weaver player piano is now with Marty Busch of Lancaster for repair.

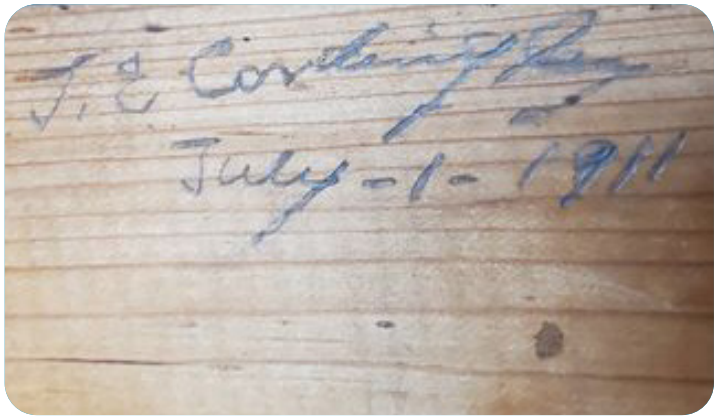
Garment Bag Patterns Created

Although some historic costume items are stored in archival textile boxes, others are properly stored on padded hangers with dust covers. Dust covers are used to protect garments from dust and light, the oils and acids in your hands, and abrasion from adjacent objects, as well as to prevent the transfer of fugitive dyes from one object to another. Volunteer Elizabeth Pronchinske worked with Collections Specialist Christina Grev to create ingenious paper patterns for basic dust covers and specialized ones for certain individual garments.

Elizabeth Pronchinske created patterns for sewing custom garment bags.

Historic Signature Identified

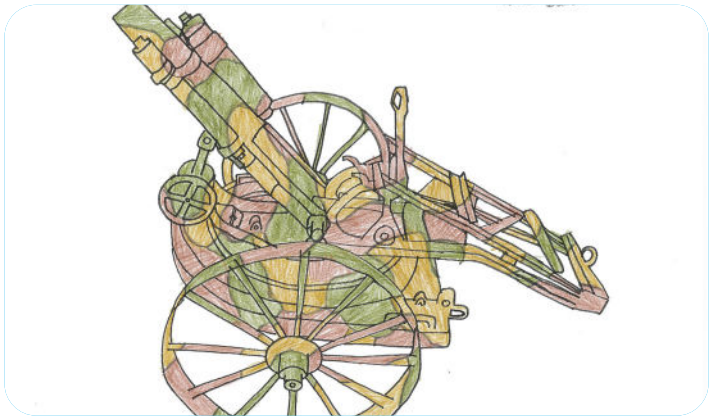
Museum Facilities Technician Emma Larsen spotted this signature dated 1911 on a wood beam in the attic of the 1905 Hanmer Robbins building. Museum Facebook page followers helped us to identify it as belonging to Platteville native Joseph "Joe" Edward Cordingley. Born in 1873, Joe served 27 years as building caretaker during its time as Platteville's high school. According to his obituary, "He had a deep-rooted love for children and youth and gave generously of his time and strength to meet their needs."



On July 1, 1911, someone signed a beam in the Robbins School attic.

WWI German Camo Sketched

The Museum is ready to begin Phase 2 of the restoration of the World War I German mortar with the completion of the camouflage painting. In Phase 1, thanks to the support of the Phi Sigma fraternity and the American Legion, the Minenwerfer was weld-repaired, sandblasted, primed, and stored indoors. Artist Lillian Larsen has created concept sketches of three German WWI camo schemes, and will begin mocking up and painting the pattern in May.



The Buntenfarben Anstrichwas camo scheme was used starting in 1917.

Train Cars Restored

Thanks to several generous donors and the work of Baker Iron Works and Jordan Droessler of Larry Droessler & Sons Building Restoration, historic train cars stored outside have been preserved! The cars received a sandblast, weld repairs, and epoxy paint needed to keep them safe for curious children to climb inside. Two cars even required custom sheet metal work to recreate historic fabric lost to advanced decay. Special thanks to Ron Boldt for helping to coordinate logistics for this project.

The final two restored train cars are now on display, ready for photo ops!

Historic Collaborations

Sigma Tau Gamma fraternity shared energy and skills on a busy Saturday.

Epic Volunteer Work Day

The UW-Platteville Sigma Tau Gamma fraternity worked with Museum staff on April 23 to carry out an epic six-hour spring volunteer day. Brothers worked together on relocating wood stoves from multiple locations to a single location in the Hanmer Robins attic, relocating rocks and lapidary arts supplies to a single location, relocating archival materials from vulnerable locations to archive space at the Rock School top floor, rehousing certain collections objects from one floor to another for preservation and registration, relocating industrial tools like pneumatic drills and miners shovels to the Cora Street storage building, removing scrap metal from the Rock School basement and maintenance shop, and a variety of outdoor work like weeding, raking, mulching, rock moving, and more. At the end of the day they enjoyed a guided tour of the underground Bevans Mine and offered to return for more volunteer days in the future.

River Museum Collaboration

In March, the new Museum collections team consisting of Museum Specialist-Collections Management Christina Grev and Collections Assistant Heidi Dyas-McBeth visited the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium curators and collections stewardship team for a behind-the-scenes tour of collections storage and research spaces. Besides comparing notes on collections policies and practices, we inspected seven Richard Herrmann display cases that they have offered to donate to the Museum.

Collections teams from two Upper Mississippi Valley museums swap ideas.

Brand New Pioneer Sweets Ice Cream Flavors in Testing

A cool ice-cream partnership between the Museum and the UW-Platteville's Pioneer Sweets is now in its second year. Not only will some of the favorite Driftless Area-inspired flavors from last year return this year, but also a selection of new flavors have been presented for consideration. Delicious new flavors this year will include Ripe Grape-Nutter Butter, Raspberry Lemonade, and Miners Delight.

Pioneer Sweets is an ice cream business run by UW-Platteville students.

Which 5 Artifacts Would You Choose As Most Significant?

The Telegraph Herald prominently included the Museum in a front-page feature on Sunday, April 23, titled "Local museums' treasures range from strange to solemn to significant," by reporter Erik Hogstrom. Alongside the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium, and the Galena & U.S. Grant Museum, our museum presented five of the most important objects in our collection for the powerful stories they tell.

The foot locker of WWI hero Scott Cairy was featured among our top artifacts.

Museum Targets Tour Planners At Circle Wisconsin Convention

Museum Director Erik Flesch courted group tour planners at the Midwest Marketplace in Baraboo in March. Circle Wisconsin is a state-wide membership organization representing group-friendly destinations, attractions, restaurants, theaters, casinos, museums and lodging in the state. The Midwest Marketplace offered a series of 48 six-minute meetings in two days directly with tour planners.

The Museum met with 48 tour planners in two days to cultivate visitation.

Talks at Badger Rock Show

The Badger Lapidary and Geological Society held a successful 52nd annual gem, mineral, and fossil show in Janesville in March. Besides featuring a variety of vendors and demonstrations, the line-up of speakers included Friends Board member Steve Bussan and Museum Director Erik Flesch. On March 26, Bussan presented "Underground at the Linwood Mine," and Flesch presented "178 Years of Underground Adventure: The Lorenzo Bevans Mine."

Friends Board Member Steve Bussan spoke at the Badger Rock Show.

Visit by WHS Textbook Author

Kurt Griesemer, manager of K12 Education Initiatives for the Wisconsin Historical Society, met with Museum Director Erik Flesch in April for a dive into Museum educational narratives and interpretation. Griesemer enjoyed discovering how lead- and zinc-mining made Wisconsin the Badger State, with its strategic national significance spanning from before the Civil War to the Space Race. He expressed an intention to incorporate significant aspects of our discussion into his work.

WHS educator Kurt Griesemer tries his hand "cobbing jack" at the grizzly bars.

Support Your Museum

The 2024 Miners Ball will take place Saturday, February 17.

Save the Date for 2024 Romantic Miners Ball

Following a most beautiful and romantic Miners Ball this past February, we extend our final gratitude to Platinum Ore Sponsors Bob Hundhausen (Edward Jones Financial Advisor) and UW-Platteville, and to the Gold Ore and Silver Ore Level Sponsors who made this legendary gala a success while supporting the Friends of The Mining & Rollo Jamison Museums. Thanks to all who attended and to the many hands that helped bring the Miners Ball to life: the planning committee, sponsors, auction donors, UW-Platteville Event Services, and the Ken Kilian Classic Big Band.

Now it is already time to start planning for next Valentine's Day! Save the Date for 2024: All are invited to the 2024 Miners Ball on Saturday, February 17! Registration is now live on our website. See www.mining.jamison.museum/minersball.

Welcome!

Heidi Dyas-McBeth, Collections Assistant

Christina Grev, Museum Specialist-Collections Management

Tyler Vargo, Museum Specialist-Visitor Services

Museum Leadership

City of Platteville Museum Board
Eileen Nickels, President
Garrett Jones, Secretary
Brad Brogley
Kathy Connett
Deb Jenny
Mark Stead
Bill Van Deest

Friends of the Mining & Rollo Jamison Museums Board
Deb Jenny, President
Hap Daus, Vice President
Duane DeYoung, Treasurer
Dee Woolf, Secretary
Steve Bussan
Mark Haas
Eileen Nickels
Matthew Zielinski

Museum Staff
Erik Flesch, Museum Director
Christina Grev, Collections Specialist
Tyler Vargo, Visitor Services Specialist
Marie Whisenant, Education Specialist
Angie Wright, Communications Specialist
Heidi Dyas-McBeth, Collections Assistant
Amanda Zasada, Communications Assistant
Emma Larson, Museum Facilities Technician
Sharon Trentz, Museum Custodial Technician
Tour Guides: Bruce Flesch, Elizabeth Pronchinske, Ashten Wilson

Behind the Scenes

Letter From the Museum Director

The Telegraph Herald honored us in a front-page feature on April 23. The interview was a chance to reflect on the importance of the Museum to the region not only as a place for special programs, but as a local repository of historical artifacts.

Repositories such as ours, with its 35,000 objects, are among the most important in the world because they provide physical and intellectual access to the objects that are most relevant to local identities. This is especially true when (as in the case of our Tri-state Area) local identities may be distinctive due to geographies that cross political boundaries, or unique industries, traditions, or ethnicities not well represented at national or state levels.

These collections have the capacity to make the biggest impact on local culture when made accessible for intergenerational learning opportunities — through exhibits, special programs, events, and workshops of many kinds that connect these objects to subjects of contemporary importance and current events. Sometimes, due to budget or staffing or space constraints, artifacts are not necessarily exhibited for many years; however, simply by preserving the artifacts in a safe repository, local museums are doing critical work of public history so that they will be available when resources allow and public will demands.

How is our place both universally significant, similar to other places around the nation, and how are we special? Local historical artifacts answer that as the material culture of our place, representing people, their way of life, their experiences, their relationships to the land and to one another. By displaying artifacts and interpreting the stories they tell, we can understand aspects of the culture and the time in which each object was crafted and used — and find connections that benefit life today and our attitudes toward pioneering a path forward for our own lives and communities.

Thank you for making the Museum a safe place for preserving and sharing the legacies of our significant collections with your support and participation.

Warm regards,

Erik Flesch, Museum Director
(608) 348-3301

Yes, I Wish to Support the 2023 Annual Fund!

The Annual Fund directly supports Museum operations, key public programs and initiatives.

- The Friends are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, EIN 39-1363989.
- Gifts are tax deductible to the limits of the law.
- You can give conveniently online: **www.mining.jamison.museum/donate**
- Please consider the Museums in your estate plans.

Please return this form and make checks payable to:

The Friends of the Mining
& Rollo Jamison Museums
P.O. Box 780
Platteville, WI 53818

Contact Erik Flesch at (608) 348-3301 or museumdirector@platteville.org with questions.

Name(s) for Acknowledgment: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP:_____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Gift Information ☐ Anonymous, please. ☐ I am interested to discuss a bequest.

☐ I/We enclose a $_____ gift in support of the Annual Fund.

☐ I/We enclose a restricted gift of $_____ for the following:

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☐ I/We Wish to be Sustainers and to a Make a Recurring Gift of $ _____

Account Type: Frequency: ☐ Monthly (~15th of month)

☐ Checking ☐ Savings ☐ Quarterly ☐ Annually

This sustaining gift will be ongoing until I contact the museum to change it or cancel.

Bank Name _____

Account # _____ Routing # _____

Signature: _____

Charge the One-Time Donation to: ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ AmEx ☐ Discover

Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____ CSC #: _____

Signature: _____

Your Support Preserves History For Generations to Come

Seasonal programs offered year round create lifelong learning opportunities that connect us to place and cultural heritage.

Plan on enjoying all the fabulous programs the year has to offer rooted in our landscape, historic architecture, and heritage collection. (See details inside.)

www.mining.jamison.museum

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Contact Us!

The Mining &
Rollo Jamison Museums
405 East Main Street
P.O. Box 780
Platteville, WI 53818

(608) 348-3301

museums@platteville.org

Visit us on the web at
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Friends of The Mining & Rollo Jamison Museums
405 E. Main St./P.O. Box 780
Platteville, WI 53818-0780

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