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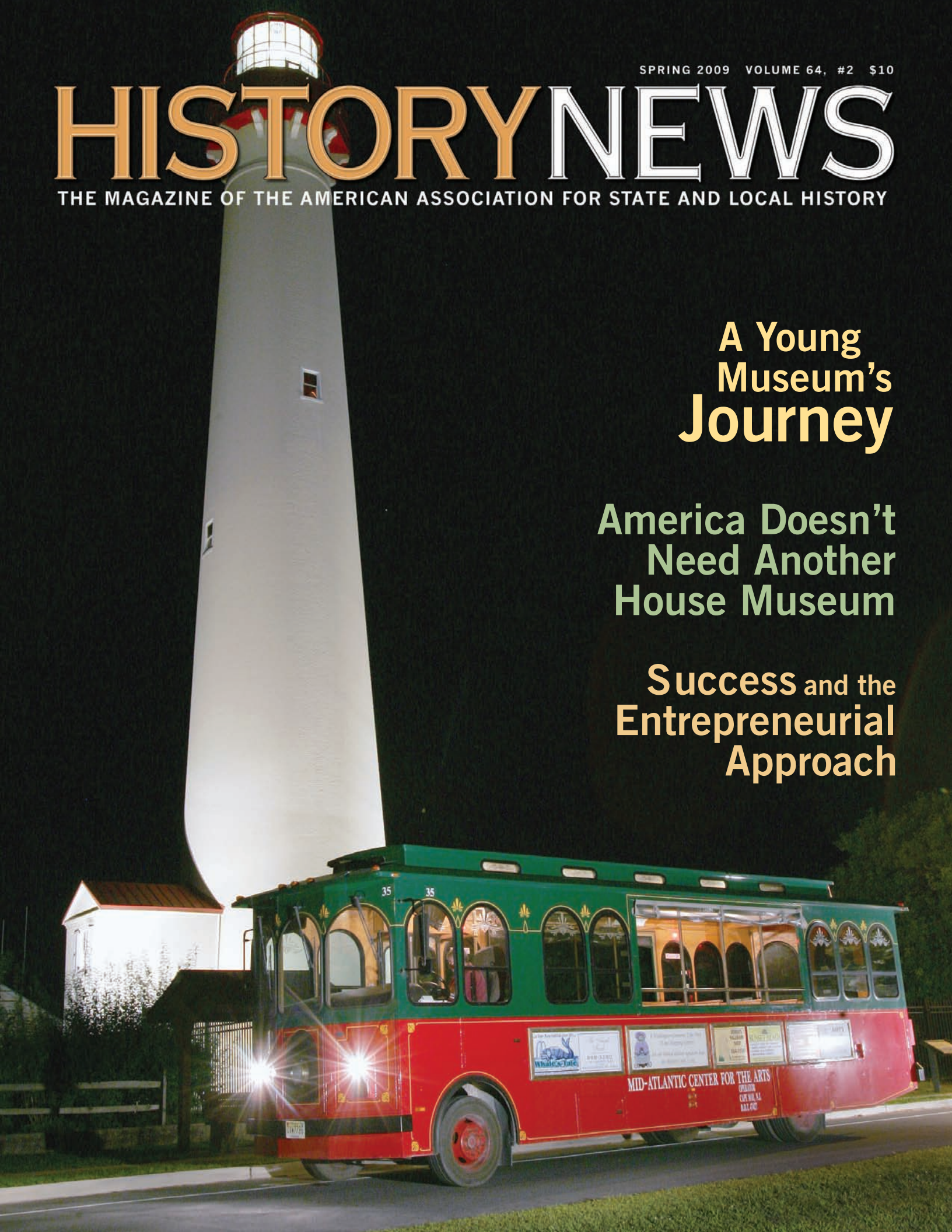
HISTORYNEWS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR STATE AND LOCAL HISTORY

A Young Museum's Journey

America Doesn't Need Another House Museum

Success and the Entrepreneurial Approach



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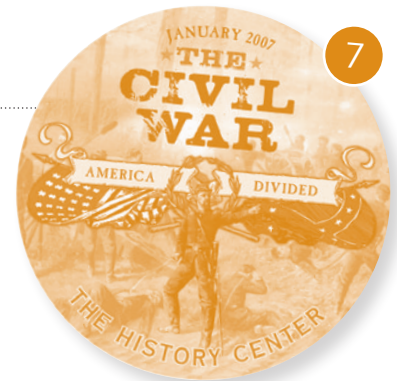


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ON THE COVER

In 2003, facing declining visitation and state funding, the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts made the entrepreneurial decision to offer ghost tours, Halloween programming, and lectures about the

history of spiritualism in the nineteenth century. These account for about five percent of their current revenues. *Photo courtesy of Maciej Nabrdalik.*

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Destination Indianapolis

BY EMILY RAWLINSON

As you prepare for your visit to Indianapolis during the 2009 AASLH Annual Meeting, August 26–29, 2009, know that you will be welcomed by a city rich in cultural institutions, historic homes, significant monuments, and cultural districts—all with important ties to Hoosier heritage. Between sessions, labs, speakers, and celebrations, we hope you will take time to enjoy some of the one-of-a-kind sites highlighted here.

A short walk west from the meeting's hotel headquarters will lead you to The Canal and White River State Park Cultural District. This district is downtown Indianapolis's world-class cultural attraction corridor. Along the historic canal, you will find the Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis Zoo and White River Gardens, Indiana State Museum and IMAX Theater, Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, NCAA Hall of Champions, and Victory Field (AAA baseball venue). White River State Park is often host to festivals, concerts, runs, and walks, and the beautifully restored canal is an urban waterway heading north from the zoo to the Indiana Historical Society, as well as several shops and restaurants. Take a stroll, ride a bike, or even pedal-boat your way through the heart of downtown Indianapolis for a truly unique view of the city.

The Indiana State Museum opened at its new park location in 2002. It features hands-on exhibits devoted to art, science, and culture as it pertains to local history and Indiana's place in the world—arranged chronologically from prehistoric fossils to pop culture icons, and even into the state's future. The original museum collection was literally a cabinet of curiosities started by the state librarian during the Civil War. Now the collections benefit from top-quality storage facilities and monumental gallery and gathering spaces suitable for crowds of schoolchildren and community groups alike. The neighboring Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art celebrates the history and art of Native American people and explores the cultures that helped shape America. Inspired by the land, people, and architecture of the American Southwest, the building's distinctive design houses galleries that include traditional and contemporary artifacts and artwork from all ten North American native cultural areas.

Journey north along the canal from these two attractions to the Eugene and Marilyn Glick Indiana History Center, home of the Indiana Historical Society. The IHS will launch its Indiana Experience in 2010, featuring new, innovative time-travel programs with opportunities for visitors to connect with the state's history. The IHS's William Henry Smith Memorial Library and Archives has state-of-the-art research and storage areas with access to more than two million manuscript, visual, and printed items relating to Indiana and the Old Northwest. Although undergoing a renovation to ac-

commodate the new Indiana Experience, the IHS library will be open during the AASLH Annual Meeting, and a guided behind-the-scenes tour of the archives, as well as facilities at both the Indiana State Museum and Eiteljorg Museum, will be available as a lab on Saturday afternoon of the meeting.

In addition to many museums, Indianapolis is home to some extraordinary historic houses. The Old Northside neighborhood, one mile north of central downtown, is known for its architectural charm and history of influential residents and provides a quiet escape from the bustle of Meridian Street. Here you will find the Morris-Butler House Museum, an excellent example of Victorian-era living. From the dramatic formal parlor to the private living quarters, you will see firsthand how an upper-class Indianapolis family and its servants lived in this restored 1865 Second Empire-style home. Just blocks away, the President Benjamin Harrison Home, built in 1875, was home to America's twenty-third president. Harrison campaigned from this sixteen-room Italianate mansion and lived there with the exception of his time in the U.S. Senate and the White House. Now restored to its late 1800s appearance, it features original Victorian furnishings, political mementos, and changing exhibits dedicated to President Harrison's achievements and impact on U.S. history.

The keystone of Lockerbie Square, the oldest surviving neighborhood in Indianapolis, is the James Whitcomb Riley Home, considered by historians to be one of the most perfectly preserved late-Victorian houses in the United States. It brims with authentic furnishings and personal belongings of Hoosier poet James Whitcomb Riley. Known as "Poet of the Common People," he is perhaps best known for his poem "Little Orphant Annie." Riley's immense national popularity grew from his quaint use of Hoosier dialect, his whimsical sense of humor, and from his work being used by schoolchildren for recitations—once a required practice in primary school education.

On the near west side, the Indiana Medical History Museum, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is the nation's oldest surviving pathology laboratory. It originally provided physicians in the late 1800s and early 1900s with state-of-the-art facilities to study mental and nervous disorders. Today, the museum uses an incredibly preserved historical environment and more than 15,000 artifacts to educate visitors about the developments that made today's advanced medical treatments possible.

A short drive north will then lead you to the Oldfields-Lilly House and Gardens, nestled in the lush grounds of the world-class Indianapolis Museum of Art. This early twentieth-century country estate offers a glimpse into the lives of the family of Josiah K. Lilly, Jr., an Indianapolis businessman, collector, and philanthropist. The first floor, restored with original artifacts, reflects the 1930s period of the Lilly family's occupancy, while the upper level offers expansive



The Morris-Butler House Museum is an excellent example of Victorian-era living.

Morris-Butler House/indy.org

views of the gardens, designed in the 1920s by Percival Gallagher of the famous Olmsted Brothers landscape architecture firm, and White River banks below.

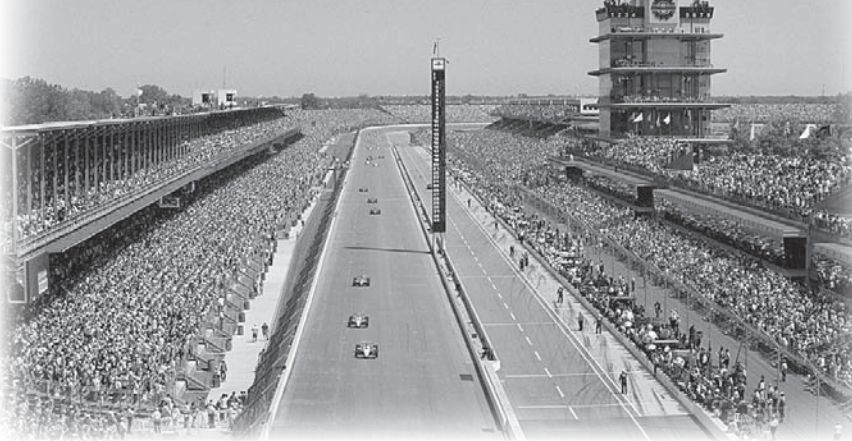
Another popular stop on the near north side is The Children's Museum of Indianapolis. No matter your age, you can act like a kid at the world's largest children's museum. It's packed with hands-on galleries exploring the physical and natural sciences, history, world cultures, and the arts, and offers thousands of family friendly programs and activities each year. A tower of colorful glass designed by Dale Chihuly spirals through the lobby, dinosaurs roam free as you dig for fossils, scientific principles of everyday life are put to the test, and childhood memories are made (and re-lived) with doll houses, trains, carousels, and more.

August is a great time to visit many of these sites, including the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, a National Historic Landmark and home to the famed Indianapolis 500. The Centennial Era celebration begins this year with a focus on the Speedway's rich history, commemorating the one-hundredth anniversary of the facility in 2009 and the one hundredth anniversary of the inaugural Indianapolis 500-Mile Race in 2011. The track will be bustling with activity during the AASLH Annual Meeting, as it prepares for the second annual Red Bull Indianapolis GP, scheduled for August 30, 2009. On the Speedway grounds, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Hall of Fame Museum showcases approximately seventy-five vehicles, as well as trophies and equipment used for timing and scoring—from the first race to the twenty-first century. During the Annual Meeting, AASLH members will have the opportunity to register to tour the museum and explore activity on the track.

Plan to take advantage of all Indianapolis has to offer when you attend the 2009 AASLH Annual Meeting, August 26–29, 2009. Group tours at many of these sites will be available through program registration, and recommendations for self-guided adventures will be available at the hospitality table. For more information, visit the AASLH website, www.aaslh.org/anmeeting.htm. ©

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The Indianapolis Motor Speedway celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2009.



Indianapolis Convention & Visitors Association