

The logo consists of an orange circle containing the text "POCO" in a bold, sans-serif font and "muse" in a smaller, lowercase, script font below it.

POCO
muse

Magazine

Issue No. 8

The background of the cover is a photograph of a large tree with branches extending across the frame. The leaves are in various stages of autumn, showing shades of yellow, orange, and red, with some green still visible. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

A PERIODICAL HISTORY PUBLICATION *of the* POCO MUSE

“They lived their lives as they wanted—surrounded by nature’s beauty, doing the work they loved.”

This issue celebrates the work of two couples who moved from Chicago to Porter County where they found lifelong artistic inspiration in the Indiana dunes. *Hazel and Vin Hannell are perhaps the most beloved and well-known Porter County artists.* They continue to shape the artistic legacy of this region (page 4). *Photographer Herb Barghusen’s creativity was sparked by this special landscape.* His wife Joan shares stories behind some of his photos (page 12).

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By Serena Ard

Even decades after their deaths, Hazel and Vin Hannell continue to influence Porter County and its art community.

12 Reflections on Photographing in the Indiana Dunes

By Joan and Herb Barghusen

Adapted from Joan Barghusen’s April 2024 gallery talk at the exhibition, *The Path That Ventures Within*, which featured the photographs of her husband Herb Barghusen.

21 Ashley Vernon’s Top 5

In this series, friends of the PoCo Muse share personal stories behind their five favorite objects from the Collection.

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Dear Readers,

Lines of poetry may or may not rhyme. When discussing the formal qualities of an artwork, one might say that forms or colors rhyme with each other. Perhaps we can even say that history sometimes rhymes. The two creative Porter County couples in this issue—though different in many ways—are great examples of how we can engage our rich past with our evolving present. As you explore this issue, see what connections you can find between the Barghusens and the Hannells.

There’s still time this summer to get out and explore the Indiana Dunes. Whatever the season, Herb Barghusen reminds us “it’s not difficult to find something of interest in the dunes.”

Best,


Kevin Matthew Pazour
Executive Director, PoCo Muse


Joanne Urschel
Chair, Board of Trustees, PoCo Muse Corporation



About the Images

Above Left Herb Barghusen (left, 1933-2015) was a university professor with degrees in geology and paleontology. In retirement, Herb and his wife, Joan (right), moved to Ogden Dunes, where he pursued photography as an avocation. His color photographs focused on fantasies suggested by the duneland environment and its history. In Chicago, Joan was an author and the Education Coordinator at the Oriental Institute (now Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures). She helped Herb edit two publications of his color photographs in 2009 and 2013. This image of Joan and Herb was taken during one of Herb’s photo-hikes in Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore (now National Park) near their home in Ogden Dunes. While an eye condition late in life cost him the use of his left eye, he did not let that interfere with his photography.

Above Right Vin (1896-1964) and Hazel (1895-2002) Hannell moved from Chicago to Furnessville, east of Chesterton, around 1930 and helped create an artists’

Above Left Herb and Joan Barghusen in the Indiana Dunes. Courtesy of Laura Barghusen. Circa 2012.

Above Right Vin and Hazel Hannell. Circa 1950s

Cover “A gift of October color / measures the tree / weaves its shroud in red.” Photograph by and poem by Herb Barghusen, 2012.

community there. They left a lasting legacy in Porter County—they helped to organize the first Chesterton Art Fair and were active in the movement to save the Indiana Dunes. This photograph was featured in an article titled, “Craft ceramist Utopia ... is potters’ paradise in the dunes,” from the 1950s. Vin suffered an injury in his left eye during a lab accident as a young man.

Cover This 2012 photograph by Herb Barghusen was one of Joan’s favorites. As part of the 2013 publication, *The Path That Ventures Within*, this photograph was accompanied by Herb’s short poem that reads, “A gift of October color / measures the tree / weaves its shroud in red.” Red was Herb’s favorite color, and the poem reflects an irony he also tried to capture in the photograph. The red vines climbing the trees are Virginia Creeper, which, though beautiful, will ultimately kill the tree if not controlled. ●

In the Studio Vin (standing) works on a wood sculpture while Hazel (seated) reviews a calendar of the Chicago Society of Artists in their home and studio in Furnessville. Photograph from Gary Post-Tribune, November 1960. Hazel Hannell Papers (1934-1985), Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.



Hazel & Vin Hannell

By Serena Ard

Art is an enduring element in the cultural history of Porter County. Within that history, few have had as lasting an impact as Hazel and Vin Hannell. The Hannells helped establish an artists' colony in Furnessville, organized the first Chesterton Art Fair, and were active in the movement to save the Indiana Dunes. They created art—both fine and functional—and became famous for both. Even decades after their deaths, the Hannells continue to influence Porter County and its art community through the organizations they helped create and the art that depicts the dunes that they loved.

Vaino “Vin” Mathies Seth Hannell’s early life was rather unconventional and may have been the basis for his interest in art. He was born in Michigan in 1896 to Finnish immigrant George Seth Hannell and his Iowa-born wife Alice, the daughter of Danish and Swedish parents. George was a doctor. Shortly after Vin was born, the Hannells went to Finland to visit family. Vin’s uncle was the director of an art school and museum there. When the family returned to the U.S., Vin was left behind because he was ill and could not travel. He stayed in Finland until 1910, when he rejoined the family in Minnesota. While in Finland, Vin began his art training at the Academy of Fine Arts of Åbo.

Although we’ve been unable to find any particular record, Vin’s father died between 1911 and 1918. During that time, the family moved from Duluth to Illinois. During World War I, Vin served in the U.S. Navy Medical Corps as a pharmacist’s mate third class. He lost an eye in a laboratory accident during his service and later returned to the U.S. in 1919.

While in Chicago, Vin began classes at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC). He studied under professors who advocated a new,

Serena Ard is the Museum Curator at the Westchester Township History Museum in Chesterton, Indiana. She is a friend and frequent collaborator of the PoCo Muse.



Painting “Untitled,” by Vin Hannell. Gouache on paper, 1930. From the estate of Philipp Brockington, 2023.40.25.



Portrait A undated watercolor by Hazel Hannell of an unidentified young girl, originally assumed to be a self portrait. Donated by Patricia Lane, 2024.12.1.

modern technique and a focus on everyday subjects. In 1923, he showcased his art at the exhibition of *Artists of Chicago and Vicinity* at the Art Institute.

While at SAIC, Vin met Hazel Johnson. Hazel was born in La Grange, Illinois, in 1895. Her father Benjamin was a successful real estate agent in Cook County, and her mother Augusta was college educated, a homemaker, and sometimes an artist. Starting at age five, when her mother finished painting for the day, Hazel would use up whatever paint remained to make her own creations. Throughout public school, Hazel focused on art, but her father insisted that she study something more “utilitarian.” She learned shorthand and typing “so I’d have a way to make a living.” Her foray into office work did not last long. “I got fired for being impertinent,” she once said. As World War I ended, Hazel studied art at the Church School of Art, the American Academy, and the Art Institute. One of her early commissions was designing fabrics and wallpapers for Marshall Field’s Department Store.

Hazel and Vin married in 1923. In the early years of their marriage, they lived on the South Side of Chicago and briefly considered staying at Jane Addams’ Hull House. Hull House was a

The Hannells used their art skills to teach and encourage those served by Hull House. In 1927, the Hannells helped fund the construction of the Hull-House Kilns.



Hull House Kilns A girl glazing a piece of pottery made in the Hull House Kilns, circa 1930s. University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections and Archives.

settlement house that offered educational and social opportunities for poor, working-class (predominantly immigrant) residents. Volunteers like the Hannells taught classes on various topics from art and literature to domestic practices, history, and current events. Those who worked with Hull House fought for social changes that would enable the poor to make better lives for themselves. The Hannells used their art skills to teach and encourage those served by Hull House. In 1927, the Hannells helped fund the construction of the Hull House Kilns, where artists taught pottery techniques for creating tableware, figurines, etc. These classes helped the poor develop skills that might help them find work.

Vin was part of a “radical” movement in art, which promoted an anti-institutional viewpoint, with groups like the Society of Independent Artists, the Chicago Society of Artists, and the Chicago No-Jury Society of Artists.

For the first time in 1926, the *Illinois Art Exhibit*, held in Chicago, divided the event into two displays, one for the “Conservatives” and one for the “Modernists.” Separate juries and judges evaluated the two groups. Frank Dudley, perhaps the most renowned dunes landscape painter, was

one of the judges for the conservative art. Vin was among the judges for the modernists.

In 1929, Vin became a founding member of Ten Artists of Chicago, an exclusive group of artists who considered themselves “sane Modernists.” They organized several shows, including open-air art fairs, and stood against many of the institutionalized traditions of the art world.

The Hannells’ first work with ceramics was for Chicago architect Arthur Hoyne. Hazel and Vin had a potter friend make the ceramic tiles, and then they painted the tiles. The couple reportedly opened their own ceramics shop in the city, but it grew bigger than they wanted, so they sold it. They used the money to take a long trip to Europe in 1928-1929 with other artist friends. Upon their return, they looked to the Indiana Dunes as a haven in which they could rebuild their lives.

The Hannells were close friends with many other young artists in Chicago, like Fred Biesel and Frances Strain, a couple who had a summer home in Furnessville in 1926. The Biesels often invited their Chicago friends to visit them in the dunes, and Hazel and Vin made several trips there. Those experiences prompted them to buy land and build their own home in Furnessville.

Vin’s design for their Furnessville house was



Painting “Canadian Farm” by Vin Hannell. Oil on canvas, 1941. From the Estate of Karen Lewry Kanaga, 2023.14.1



Victor Vienna Café The interior of the Victor Vienna Café designed by the Hannells for the 1933 Century of Progress International Exposition. Hazel Hannell Papers (1934-1985), Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

featured in *Architectural Record* in July 1931. Chesterton contractor John Ameling built the house on their five-acre parcel. Since the couple could not afford to keep two homes during the Great Depression, they sold their Chicago home and moved to Furnessville full time.

During the Depression, both Hazel and Vin continued to work and exhibit their art. Vin worked on the WPA Federal Art Project and featured his art in the exhibit *J. Z. Jacobson Art of Today: Chicago in 1933*. He also served as president of the Chicago No-Jury Society of Artists, and both he and Hazel served as officers for that group and the Chicago Society of Artists. Hazel had her first and only exhibit at the Art Institute in 1936.

The Hannells worked in traditional art mediums like oils, watercolors, and ceramics, but they also designed and built furniture. Vin and Hazel worked with others to design the interior of the Victor Vienna Garden Café at Chicago’s Century of Progress World’s Fair in 1933. The café was an “echo of ‘Old Vienna’” with employees dressed in Viennese garb serving Viennese food. The organizers of the café had established similar eateries in the 1893 and 1904 World’s Fairs in Chicago and St. Louis, respectively. The new one was of “modern design,” and who better to design

the interior than modern artists like the Hannells?

Although the couple continued to connect with the Chicago art world, their life became more enmeshed in the dunes. They began doing pottery work in Furnessville in an old chicken coop on their property. Their first materials and equipment were remnants from the old china factories in Chesterton and Porter.

In April 1944, Hazel and Vin opened Hannell Pottery. The building burned down only seven months later, and they had to “start all over.” They rebuilt the structure and reopened in April 1945. Hannell Pottery became popular for Porter County residents and for dunes tourists. At first, they only used the native red clay of the area in their pottery but later added white clay. In the early 1940s, Hazel and Vin entered into a distribution partnership with Clem and Nixon Hall of New York to sell the Hannell pottery in retail markets around the country.

Soon, Vin began to cut back on his painting to focus on sculpting and pottery, but Hazel noted that, “we always painted, and we had one rule. If one of us was painting, the other tended to the business work.” She also noted that Vin did not want to do pottery when they first moved to Furnessville, but Hazel felt it was the most practical source of income.

Vin and Hazel supported the local art community as well. They enjoyed helping to spread

“We always painted, and we had one rule. If one of us was painting, the other tended to the business work.”



Wood Sculpture “Untitled (Possibly of Holy Family)” by Vaino “Vin” Hannell. Oak or walnut, undated. 1901.43.1



Hannell Pottery Studio The Hannells entertaining friends at their pottery studio. From “Craft ceramist Utopia ... is potters’ paradise in the dunes,” undated.



Linocut Prints of Hannell Property These two linocut prints each illustrate the Hannells’ property in Furnessville. The one on the left was created by Hazel and was featured in the 1947 calendar of the Chicago Society of Artists. Courtesy of the Chesterton Art Center. The one on the right was created by Vin, who also designed and built the pictured home. Donated by Kirsten Renehan, 2024.14.2

the appreciation of art and encouraged the success of their fellow local artists. They taught creative ceramics for the Dunes Arts Foundation, which formed in Michiana Shores in 1952, and in 1957, the *Chesterton Tribune* announced that, “a small art gallery will open at the Hannell Pottery Shop in Furnessville. Work by nine area artists will be exhibited.” The Hannells continued to welcome local artists to work and exhibit at their shop.

One of the first art shows in Chesterton took place during the 1952 Chesterton Centennial celebration. The tent show exhibit, which the Hannells helped organize and promote, featured many local artists. This was one of many local shows that the Hannells would help produce.

In 1959, Hazel and Vin served on the committee for the first annual Chesterton Art Fair. Underwritten by Valparaiso University’s Sloan Galleries and Director Richard Brauer, the art fair would become one of the Hannells’ lasting legacies

The Hannells continued to welcome local artists to work and exhibit at their shop.

in Porter County. The 65th annual event took place this year. Vin and Hazel continued to serve on the Art Fair committee and were founding members of the Association of Artists and Craftsmen of Porter County (AACPC).

As part of the AACPC, Hazel and Vin were also integral in establishing the first art center in Chesterton at 119 ½ Calumet Road. The center seemed to attract many visitors, but it closed within a year. Artists turned to local businesses as venues for displaying their work. Chesterton Pharmacy, Chesterton State Bank, Dunes Park Book Store, Vawter’s Restaurant, and many others began displaying local artists’ works in the early 1960s.

Vin passed away in 1964, having just glimpsed the impact that he and Hazel would have on the local art scene and the Duneland community at large.

Hazel had long been recognized for her own

art and abilities, but in many ways her career and success were overshadowed by Vin's fame and talent. After Vin's death, Hazel continued to operate the Hannell Pottery Shop, worked with the Chesterton Art Fairs, offered her assistance and talents to different groups and galleries, and expanded her own collective works. It is estimated that she created 1,000 watercolor paintings inspired by the dunes, mostly landscapes and native flowers, and a total of 10,000 paintings in her lifetime. She continued to teach classes to both adults and children and was one of the first instructors at the Art Barn in Jackson Township. She also continued her series of wildflower woodblock prints. Hazel said she originally hoped to do a block for every local wildflower.

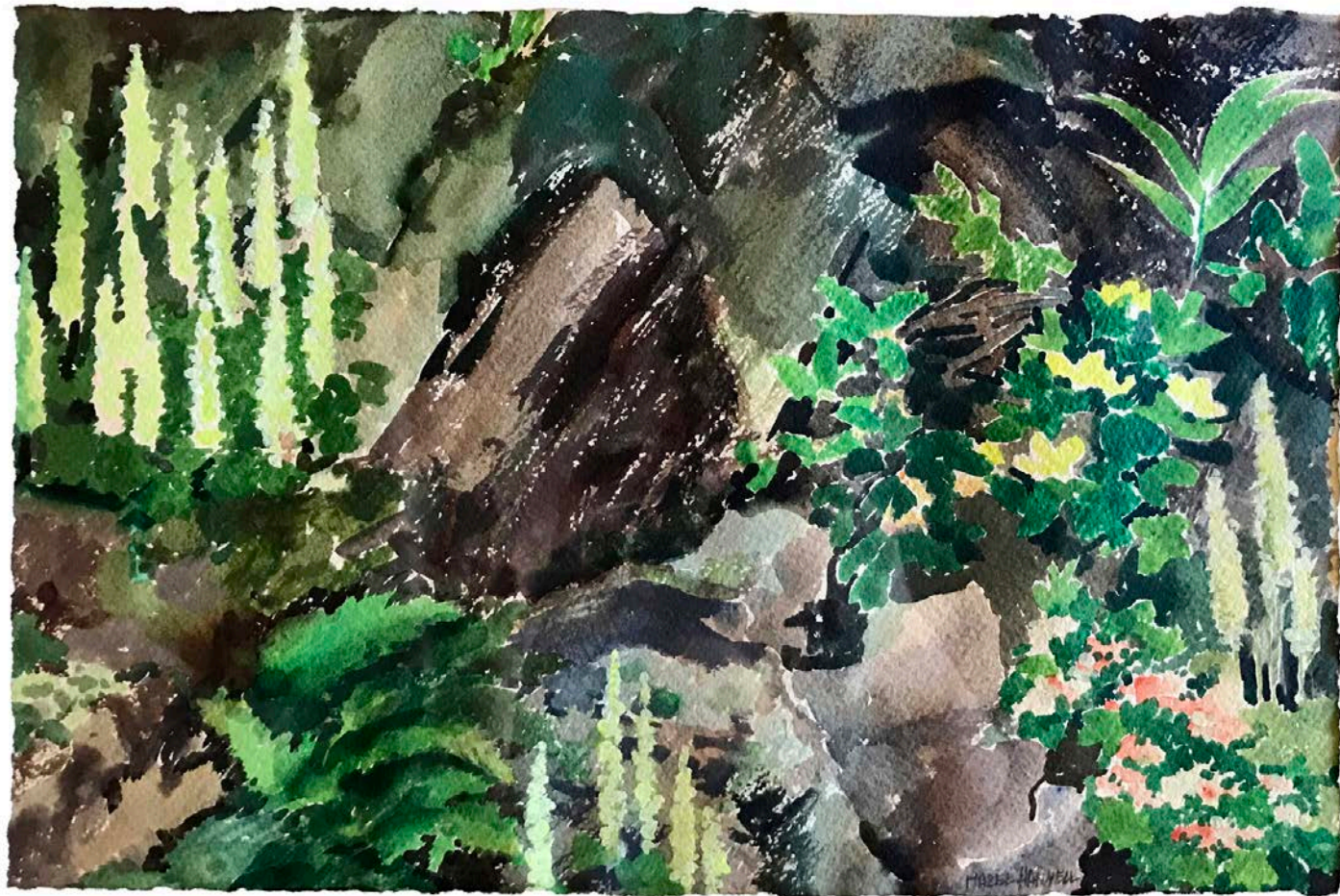
In addition to her art, Hazel focused on social justice issues. Hazel had long been involved in social movements, including women's suffrage and fighting for the rights of the poor. In the 1950s, she and Vin became members of Save the Dunes Council, which aspired to rescue the Indiana

It is estimated that she created 1,000 watercolor paintings inspired by the dunes, mostly landscapes and native flowers, and a total of 10,000 paintings in her lifetime.

Dunes from industrial expansion and destruction. She supported the Council's efforts by offering her works for sale at their gift shop in Beverly Shores. In a sign of true support for saving the dunes, she donated part of the Furnessville property to the National Park Service but put the house and pottery shop on a lease back in 1971 in order to retain her home and workspace.

Hazel continued to operate Hannell Pottery until age 92 in 1988, when she moved to Oregon with friend and fellow Porter County artist Harriet Rex Smith. In Oregon, she continued painting until age 103. She died in 2002 at age 106.

Hazel and Vin Hannell are Porter County legends. It may have taken some time for them to get here, but they made their mark on the community through their art, their environmental activism, and the general goodwill they showed to others. They lived their lives as they wanted—surrounded by nature's beauty, doing the work they loved. •



Watercolor "On the Mountain Side," by Hazel Hannell. Watercolor on paper, 1967. Donated by Debbie Fray, 2024.28.1.



Linocut Blocks These two linocut blocks were created for making prints by Hazel Hannell. 2022.32.2-3



Pottery This ceramic dish with handles is typical of the slab pottery produced by the Hannell Pottery Shop. "Hannell" is stamped into the native red clay underside, and the design features a hallmark floral motif in blue and gray glaze. Donated by Deborah Stipanovich, 2024.17.4.

Reflections On Photographing in the Indiana Dunes

By Joan & Herb Barghusen

“There is a touch of fantasy in these photographs, things not quite as they really are. The dune landscapes with their myriad facets lend themselves to imaginative interpretations. By chance, a mysterious phantom fauna materializes—formed not of flesh and blood but wood, foliage, and flowers. These apparitions mysteriously resemble something they are not. They feed my imagination.”

— Herb Barghusen

The color photographs of Herb Barghusen (1933–2015) may surprise you. Taken along the crisscrossing trails of Ogden Dunes and Indiana Dunes National Park, the images depict a familiar landscape, well known to the many visitors of the dunes and wetlands. Yet for Barghusen, this area and its remarkable history exerted a powerful force on his imagination, transforming it into a spiritual forest where illusions slid in and out of view and fantastical creatures suddenly took shape.

In January 2024, the PoCo Muse hosted an exhibition, *The Path That Ventures Within*, which featured Herb's photographs that were generously donated to the PoCo Muse Collection by his wife Joan. The exhibition took its title from a collaborative book project between Herb and the poet Robert Longoni (1936–2022). During the exhibition's run, Joan presented a talk in the gallery which shed more light on Herb's process and inspiration.

Collected here are highlights from the exhibition. Every photograph featured was taken by Herb Barghusen. The captioned footnotes have been adapted from Joan's gallery talk. All of the short poems, unless otherwise noted, were written by Herb, who was inspired by Robert to compose his own verses. Other quotations featured throughout have been taken from Herb's 2010 publication, *Reflections on Photographing in the Indiana Dunes*.

*Spirits dance
where life has been.*

— Joan Barghusen



1 “Spirits dance / where life has been.” (Joan Barghusen), 2010

*Pond plants and flowers
weave phantom faces
and constellations
of fragmented stars.*



2 *Untitled*, 2010

1 (previous page) Both Herb and the poet Robert Longoni wanted to include this photograph in their book collaboration, but neither could come up with a poem. While Joan was working on the manuscript ("we were like Jack Sprat: he could do images and I could do text"), a poem spontaneously arrived to her: "Spirits dance / where life has been." Joan's poem was met with a resounding "Yes!" and was included in the final publication.

2 (above left) Herb was drawn to this mysterious skunk cabbage rising from Cowles Bog. "Herb was good at mystery," according to Joan, and his favorite color was red. Named for their pungent aroma when in bloom, skunk cabbages are harbingers of spring, as they generate heat which melts snow.

3 (above right) "(Herb) was not above turning an image upside down," as he did with this kaleidoscopic photograph of the marshland to heighten its abstract quality.



3 *"Pond plants and flowers / weave phantom faces / and constellations / of fragmented stars,"* 2007.

"It is not difficult to find something of interest in the dunes. Railroad tracks emerge from the sand and disappear in the underbrush. Floral and plant arrangements of striking color draw the eye in spring, summer, and fall; stark winter landscapes serve up visions of memento mori to those who are sensitive to remembrances of death. The world of the dunes is in a state of constant flux, unyielding both in the force of its natural rhythms and in its struggle with the industrial environment. The flora bear witness to this continuous cycle: seeds germinate, plants appear, foliage grows, fruit forms, color changes, disintegration begins, and the cycle goes on."

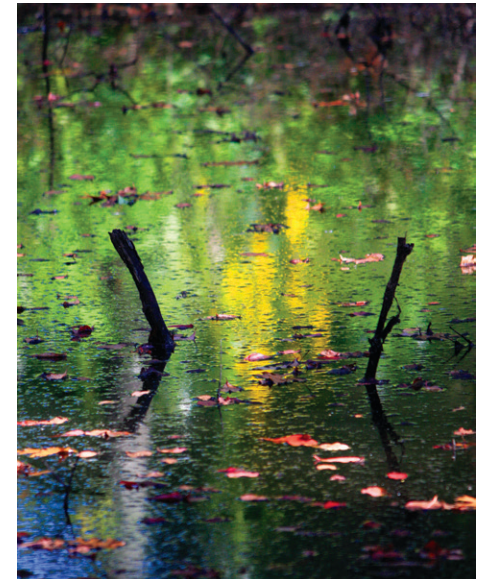
*Cycles of life and death
play out in shades
of green and brown.*



4 *"Cycles of life and death / play out in shades / of green and brown,"* 2009



6 *Cowles Bog Trail*, 2009



5 *Cowles Bog Trail, Monet Impression*, 2009

4 (above left) While working with Robert on the book collaboration, Herb was inspired to write his own poems to accompany his photographs, adding new dimensions to the themes he explored visually.

5 (above right) Herb's early photography was exclusively with black-and-white film. Although he "barely knew how to turn on a computer," he adapted quickly to the digital camera and showed natural aptitude working with color. The pure primary colors of petals and leaves reflected on the water's surface create an effect reminiscent of the Impressionist painter Claude Monet.

6 (left) Many effects were achieved by patiently waiting for the right moment of light. He never used digital manipulation. Color was sometimes enhanced by using a "vibrant" setting on the printer. Here, high drama is created by contrasting the cool shadows with the orange leaves burning like "fiery coals."

"Scenes encountered in the landscape incite my imagination and awaken fantasies. A tree rises up and begins to dance at the eastern edge of Long Lake (#7). Along Boat Club Road a tree trunk has long been carved by wind, ice, and rain into a large hanging fish well past its prime (#9)."



7 *Untitled*, between 2008 and 2010



8 *Untitled*, 2010

7-8 (above) "Herb had a propensity to see shapes and make imaginative sense out of them." One source of inspiration was the sprawling limbs of fallen branches which seemed to dance in the water or crawl along the forest floor.

9 (right) These imaginative shapes took on a narrative quality. A weather-shaped tree trunk transforms into a fish caught on a hook and starting to rot.

10 (opposite) Do you see the profile of a face? While on his photo-hikes, "Herb would often haunt his locations for many hours." And upon discovering a theme that provoked him, such as this "mummified face," would return to it again and again in various seasons and light conditions (see #19 on page 20).



9 *Untitled*, 2009

*A mummified face
searches where we cannot go,
paths laid deep in the past.*



10 *"A mummified face / searches where we cannot go, paths laid deep in the past," 2009*

"The profile of a phantom head, shadowed under sun-drenched hair, furrows its brow. The ancient shape of the mummified head evokes a scene beyond us, something we do not see or know, buried deep in the past (#10). Nearby, a tree with red foliage transforms into a burning bush by a slight twist of the camera lens (#12)."



11 *Untitled*, 2010



12 *Cowles Bog Trail*, 2009

11 (above top) "Even as a young child, Herb had a penchant for visualizing forms." He remembered lying in bed and seeing faces in the patterned wallpaper design. This abstract view of autumn leaves brings to mind the popular optical illusion posters where a three-dimensional scene emerges from a two-dimensional image.

12 (above) The "burning bush" is a poignant allusion and metaphor in Herb's spiritual forest.

“The growth of the Industrial Revolution brought destruction to areas within the Indiana Dunes and grief to many who could see the spiritual wonder of the place. Sand was mined in the region where this photograph was taken. The skeletal remains of buried railroad tracks are an obvious clue to the methods employed. This excavation, and others like it, are permanent. The land will change over long periods of time but will not go back to what it was.”



13 *Untitled*, 2009

13 (above left) The photograph (from which the detail at right was taken) was very important to Herb. It was taken not far from the couple's home in Ogden Dunes at the eastern end of Long Lake Trail. Before the steel mills arrived, the area was mined for sand which was used to build up the lakefront in Chicago. This "assault on environment" left scars which Herb felt he discovered in the phantoms appearing in the detailed image.



14 *Untitled (detail)*, 2009

14 (above right) In this detail, Herb saw three phantoms haunting this environment which experienced a traumatic event: a "grotesque balloon-headed creature" searches intently in the upper center; "a dark dog head with piercing eyes" (a premonition of death) lurks behind the tree on the right; and finally, at the base of the tree, a ghostly "wraith runs on a course that will take it out of the picture." Though not the easiest to see, once they appear, it's difficult not to see them.

“In my fantasy, the three phantoms in this photograph inhabit a psychological atmosphere of suspicion, foreboding, and anxiety that seems entirely appropriate to this location and the event that took place here. The ghosts are, in effect, haunting memories of the past.”

*Battered face,
born of bark,
keeps its watch a secret.*



15 *"Battered face, / born of bark, / keeps its watch a secret,"* 2012



17 *"When an elusive spirit / shows itself, be still. / One step to either side / and it's gone."* (Robert Longoni), 2009

15 (above left) For Joan, this photograph of a "battered face" seen in the gnarled tree burl is especially meaningful. Before Herb was a photographer, he was a paleontologist, and much of his research involved reconstructing an organism's musculature based on faint markings and indentations on fossilized bone.

16 (left) "The Lion," as it's commonly known, was a fantastical sphinx-like creature Herb found in the clumps of muddy roots in Cowles Bog, which he returned to many times during the spring of 2012. "One day after a hike, Herb ran into a park ranger who asked what he had photographed that day. He said he found the lion and went on his way. The next time he saw the same ranger, she said, 'I saw the lion.'"

17 (above) This image, and the poem by Robert, acts as "a kind of Rorschach test" for many people who see the emerging "elusive spirit" differently. What do you see?



16 *"Don't look away. / It's what we don't know / that shapes our beasts,"* (Robert Longoni), 2012

*A touch of magic
in the dunes,
sunlit haze transforms
to mystical fog.*



19 *Untitled*, 2010

18 (above right) Another example of irony in Herb's photographs: the beautifully-soft edges in this romantic scene of Ogden Dunes are actually the result of air pollution from the neighboring industrial complex.

19 (above) Herb often revisited this scene of a felled tree trunk, which for Herb looked like the profile of a "mummified face." This photograph was taken in the fall and six months after #10 on page 17.

20 (near right) A fire-scarred shard of wood cuts a sharp silhouette against a winter sky and evokes a menacing fish hook.

21 (far right) Herb was particularly interested in making something of the sculptural forms emerging from the vegetation at water's edge. These muddy roots resemble a newborn bird to many viewers.



18 *"A touch of magic / in the dunes, / sunlit haze transforms / to mystical fog,"* 2010



20 *Untitled*, 2010



21 *Untitled*, 2010

"The problem with fantasy is that it is precariously balanced in the face of reality. Yet fantasy continues to work its magic within the cycle of death and renewal that so characterizes this place. The fish is no longer recognizable and the burning bush has lost its color. The phantom fauna will not reappear in the shapes already seen. Yet fantasies will continue to appear as long as there is imagination to welcome them." •

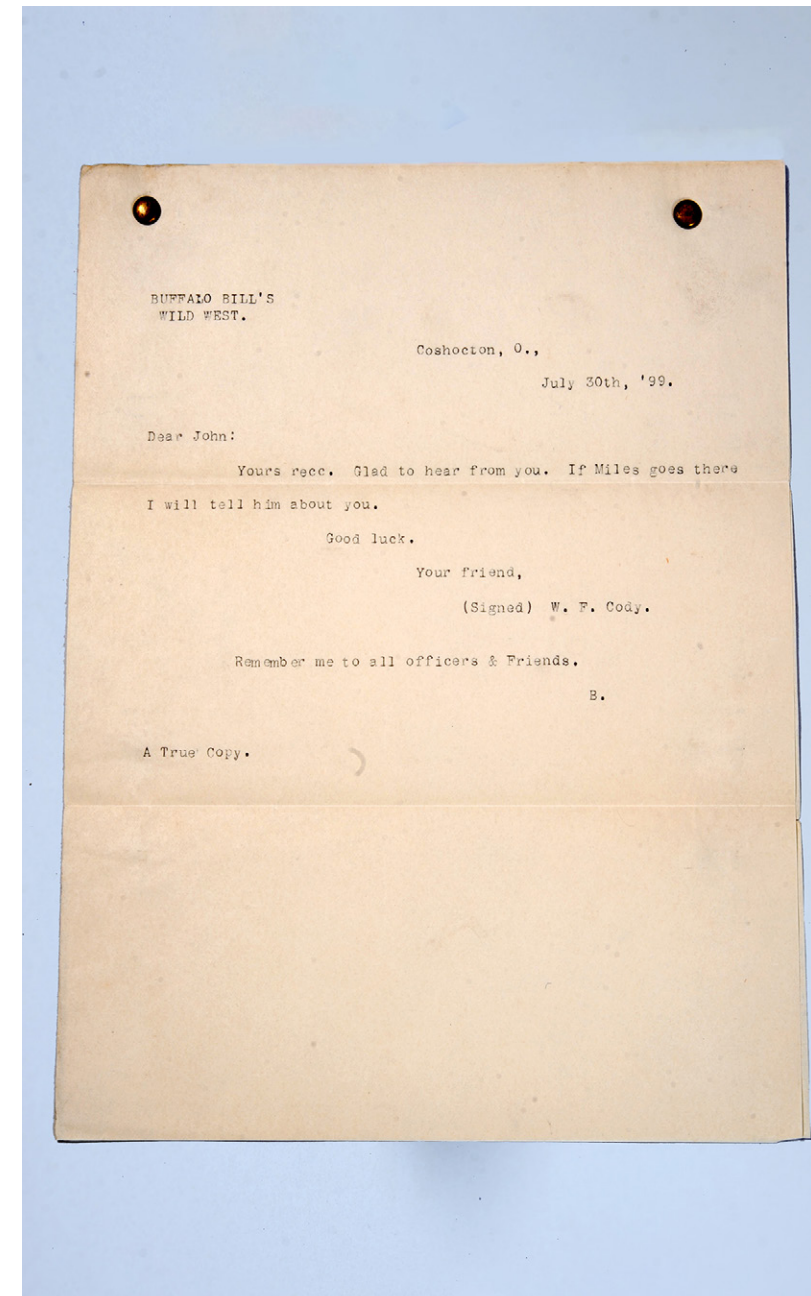
Ashley Vernon's TOP 5

TOP FIVE is a series in which friends of the PoCo Muse share personal stories behind their five favorite objects from the Collection.

Ashley Vernon began an internship with the PoCo Muse in June 2023 and soon after assumed the position of Collections Assistant. She graduated from Valparaiso University in May 2024, where she studied Art and Humanities. In the fall of 2024, Ashley began work on a master's degree at the Winterthur Program in American Material Culture at the University of Delaware.

1 **Letter to "Broncho John" Sullivan from "Buffalo Bill" Cody**
1899
1900.12.179

My favorite item from the collection is one that inspires a sense of personal nostalgia. This letter, reportedly from Buffalo Bill to Valparaiso resident Broncho John Sullivan, may appear to be a short, unimportant correspondence. However, for me it held a pleasant surprise. The letter shows that it was sent from Coshocton, Ohio, which is the town where both of my parents grew up. These historical figures were once in two towns I hold dear to my heart. For me, it emphasized just how small the world really is.





2 Orville Redenbacher "The Commander" Commemorative Popcorn Festival Hat
Circa 1979
2016.7.4

My second item is probably the one that made me chuckle the most. It is a blue snap-brimmed hat. It features a circle patch with Orville Redenbacher's face. Above this are the words "The Commander." Paired with the gold-colored embellishments, this becomes a fashionable hat that I feel everyone should strive to have in their closet. It is a fun reminder of Valparaiso's cherished traditions and celebrations.

3 Opera Glasses
Between 1890 and 1930
2015.25.5

Due to the museum's proximity to the Memorial Opera House, we encounter a lot of artifacts based on theater and performance. While I love seeing items such as the posters for past performances, I think it is important to also explore the historic role of the audience. I find myself wondering what shows were seen through this beautiful set of opera glasses, as they act as a rare opportunity to see through the eyes of previous owners.



4 Sheriff's Residence
Kim Johnson Belange
Watercolor
Circa 1990s

This beautiful interpretation of the historic Porter County Sheriff's Residence shows a time when it stood apart from other buildings in town. Yet the wooden walkways and dirt roads portray routes that still exist today. Having admired this structure from both inside and out, I believe this painting captures its presence well. It has served various purposes throughout its lifetime and inspires nostalgia for many generations. I believe this painting perfectly captures this sense in its pastel colors and airy feeling.

5 Velvet Hexagonal Quilt
Undated
2009.1.5

My number-five artifact feels like an appropriate choice, as it was discovered during the last week of my internship at the museum. It is a colorful velvet hexagon quilt. This item stood out to me, as I was instantly impressed with the design. My grandmother made many quilts in her lifetime, and I remember how much care and effort she put into each and every one of her creations. I see the same energy and love sewn into every small hexagon of this artifact. This impressive quilt is best described as colorful, fun, and timeless. I truly wish I owned one myself. ●



POCO
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The award-winning Porter County Museum maintains free general admission as this area's oldest institution devoted to the history and culture of Porter County.

Hours

Tues-Sun, 11a-4p

Address

20 Indiana Avenue
Valparaiso, IN 46383

E-mail

info@pocomuse.org

Phone

(219) 510-1836

Website

pocomuse.org

Social Media

@pocomuse



Last Look! Trained at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Hazel Hannell (1895-2002) began a career designing wallpapers and fabrics for Marshall Field's Department Store. But when she moved from Chicago to a burgeoning Indiana artist colony in the early 1930s, she fell in love with the flora of the Indiana Dunes. There, she worked on preservation projects and created a series of woodblock prints celebrating wildflowers and native plants. Printmaking allowed Hazel's renderings, such as this 1937 print of Bloodroot, to reach a wider audience and bring attention to the beauty of the Indiana Dunes.