



POCO *muse* NEWS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021

from the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This new year marks the sesquicentennial of the former Porter County Jail that is home to the PoCo Muse. Last year taught us that quite a bit can change in twelve months, so you can imagine the number of “jail” stories that have accumulated over the last 150 years!

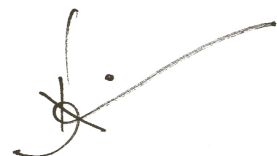
We plan to share these stories about the building and the people connected to it on both sides of the law over the course of this year in a variety of different ways.

As a side note, our standard members and above will now receive this newsletter six times in a year instead of three. You will find quick historical stories, important PoCo Muse news, and other information in these pages.

Our premier members and above will now receive the *PoCo Muse Magazine* three times a year in addition

to the newsletter. The magazine (read more on page 15) is a great reason to upgrade your membership.

Thank you for your ongoing support of our museum through your memberships, special gifts, and by simply caring about the work we do. The past year was certainly one for the history books, but your generosity has kept our little institution moving forward.



Kevin Matthew Pazour

Executive Director • PoCo Muse

P.S. Do you have a story connected to our building that you'd be willing to share? Did you ever spend time in our museum before it was a museum? Let us know at info@pocomuse.org, or give Quinn Albert a call at (219) 465.3595.

ABOUT THE IMAGE

This is the oldest known image of the former jail and residence in our collection, believed to be taken shortly after the jail was constructed. The county commissioners bought the lot at the southeast corner of Franklin Street and Indiana Avenue for \$2,200 on December 17, 1870, and on March 8, 1871, awarded the contract for building a new jail at a cost of \$24,325. New cells were added and a heating system was installed for \$4,500 in 1883, giving Porter County one of the best jail buildings in the state.

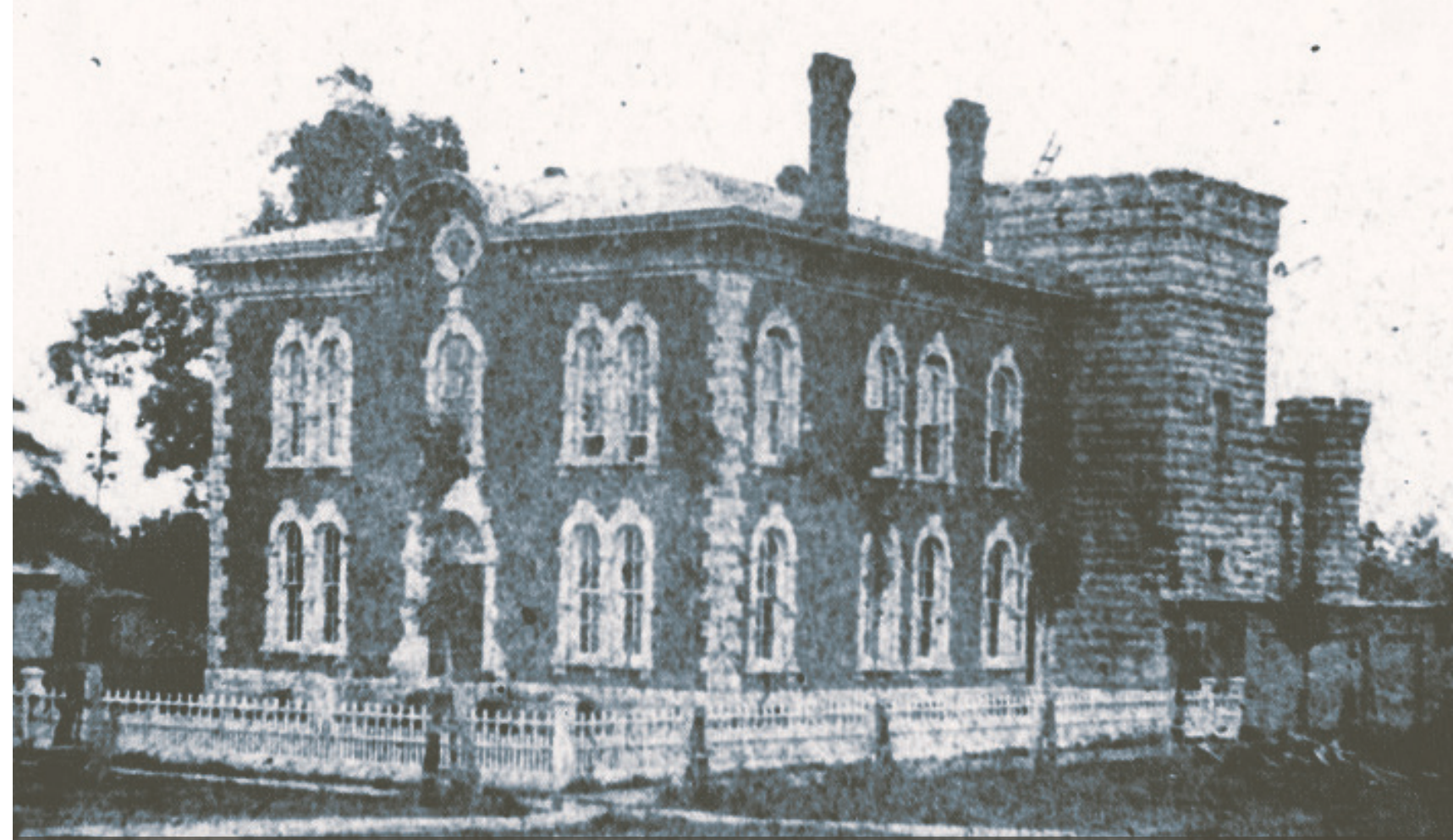


Image • The Porter County Jail and Sheriff's Residence at the southeast corner of Mechanic (now Indiana Avenue) & Franklin Street. Circa 1872.

CATALOGIT: OUR NEW COLLECTION SOFTWARE

The PoCo Muse has recently changed its collections software. The museum now uses *CatalogIt* to track and manage its archive and collection of artifacts. The cloud-based software makes it easier for PoCo Muse staff, interns, and volunteers to see what's in the museum's collection and to add new items to it. One especially exciting feature of the new software will allow PoCo Muse staff to publish portions of our museum collection online, so that the public can virtually browse the artifacts that we don't regularly display.

COMING SOON: POCO MUSE PODCAST

The PoCo Muse team is hard at work developing its inaugural season of the new podcast, the *PoCo Muse Podcast*. We are excited to try our hand at a new form of storytelling and look forward to the opportunity to connect you with more engaging history.

In celebration of the former Porter County Jail's sesquicentennial in 2021, Season One of the podcast will feature stories from inside the jail.

You can read more about it on page 14, and if you become a member, you'll receive a sneak-peek preview of the podcast on February 20, 2021.

JAIL EXHIBIT DEVELOPMENT UNDERWAY

As we look forward to reopening the doors of the museum, the PoCo Muse is excited to announce its first-ever exhibit dedicated to the former Porter County Jail and its history. This exhibit, to be housed in the former jail itself, will feature site-specific architectural details, jail-related artifacts pulled from our collection, stories of past inmates, sheriffs, and guards, and a historically accurate recreated cell.

Pair this interactive exhibit with our first season of the *PoCo Muse Podcast* for an in-depth, dynamic, multi-sensory experience of the former jail.

Stay tuned for more details to come about official exhibit openings!



Image • January 6, 1971: "Ice Is Nice. Skaters have been flocking to Kirchhoff and Lakewood skating areas. Braving the cold at Lakewood were (from left) Cathy Peters, 7, Corby Leininger, 9, and Mike Peters, 9.

TODAY IN HISTORY

View a variety of local stories on the day they happened from varying years in history. Visit pocomuse.org/today-in-history to read articles from *The Vidette-Messenger*, which are part of the PoCo Muse collection.

THE DECROW DIARIES

Volunteer Pam Murrow has done an extraordinary job transcribing the John B. DeCrow Diaries in the PoCo Muse collection. John lived in Morgan Township from 1866 until his death in 1923. For over three decades between the 1860s and 1890s, John noted his daily chores, tracked his business records, noted social gatherings, weather, and important local events, like when Valparaiso turned on its gas lighting for the very first time. Read these entries at johnbdecrow.com.

IMAGE OF THE DAY"

Visit the PoCo Muse feed on Facebook every morning at 7a to see the image of the day from 1971. You can see two examples from the series on pages 10 and 11.

LOOKING BACK

Interested to know what was happening in Porter County a century ago? Visit the PoCo Muse feed on Facebook every morning at 8a to read a news blurb of the day from 1921.

Members can look at the entire month of curated images and news blurbs in advance by logging into the "For Members" section on our website. The password arrives in every *PoCo Musings* email at the start of each month.

“DIDN’T LIKE TALKIES”

DIDN’T LIKE TALKIES; COULD NOT HEAR, BUT WIFE MADE HIM GO AND NOW THEY ARE DIVORCED

This article originally appeared in The Vidette-Messenger on Jan. 30, 1930.

Joseph Sego, 67 years old, and former sheriff of Porter County, but now a crossing watchman for the Nickel Plate Railroad in Hammond, was granted a divorce from his wife, Anna, 64, Tuesday, after testifying in Judge Cleveland’s Hammond Superior Court, that his wife was, “always dragging him to see the talkies.”

Sego, hard of hearing, preferred the silent version of the film industry. So dictatorial was Mrs. Sego that when Joe sat down to read, his wife interrupted to talk to him.

“I don’t like the talkies,” Sego told

Judge Cleveland. “I like to stay home and read. But she wouldn’t let me.”

“Did she object to your reading?” asked the court.

“She did,” replied the ex-sheriff. “She didn’t mind my reading newspapers so much, but when I started to read a book, she wouldn’t leave me alone. She made me go to the talkies instead. I can’t hear so well.”

“Why don’t you like the talkies,” asked the judge.

“What’s that?” questioned Sego, cupping his ear.

The question was repeated in a louder voice by Attorney Tim Galvin for the plaintiff.

“I can’t hear ‘em,” said Sego. Sego also said that one time he came home and found that his wife had sold their home and left a note saying he could go elsewhere. “She even had my

clothes all packed,” he said.

“I’ll grant the divorce,” the court declared. Both parties have been married before. They were married Nov. 9, 1924, and separated last June.



Image • Joe Sego and his first wife, Sophia. Circa 1894.



Image • Myrtle, Minnie, Clara, Raymond, and Joseph Sego. Circa 1930.

"SHERIFF FORNEY WAS ATHLETE, VETERAN"

FORNEY WAS BOTH A TIGER AND AN ELK

Information from this article originally appeared in The Vidette-Messenger on Feb. 14, 1946.

William B. Forney was born on a farm in White County, Indiana, on Nov. 1, 1883, a son of John W. and Anna Buchan Forney. He came to Valparaiso with his parents when a small boy.

After attending the Valparaiso schools, he entered the Northern Indiana Normal School, now Valparaiso University, where he completed the commercial course.

For several years, he followed farming and later was employed at Lowenstine's.

Keenly interested in sports, he became a professional baseball player, and saw service as a catcher with teams in the Three-Eye and Texas leagues. He

was also accorded tryouts by several major league clubs. He was well known in football circles, being a member of the Valparaiso Tigers, which were acclaimed Northern Indiana semi-professional football champions.

His first entry in Porter County public life was in 1913, when he was appointed deputy sheriff by W. S. Lindall. After serving in this capacity for four years, he was elected Porter County Sheriff in 1916 and was re-elected in 1918.

After leaving the sheriff's office, Forney became associated with Charles S. Peirce in the real estate and insurance business.

Upon selling his interests to Peirce, Forney became deputy under William Pennington, who had been elected sheriff. At the close of Pennington's term, Forney became a candidate in

1924 and was elected to the post. He was re-elected in 1926.

In 1938, he again became a candidate for the office and was elected by a big majority to the office of county recorder. Forney was re-elected in 1942, which was the office he held at the time of his death in 1946.

Forney was prominent in Elks' Lodge circles, and served as the Exalted Ruler of the Valparaiso Elks' Lodge. He was also involved with the Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War, but was also a veteran himself.

Forney was a member of old Company L, Indiana National Guard, and accompanied the unit to the Mexican border in 1916 when President Wilson sent troops there to protect the United States.



Image • Valparaiso Tigers team composite from when they captured the Northern Indiana Championship. 1905.



From left, front, are Scoutmaster Marv Wallace, Gerry Easterday, Gary Scarborough, John Klapp, John Oberholzer, Ed Klapp; back row, Steve Wallace, Mike Hunter, Eric Easterday, and Bruce Schoon.

KOUTS SCOUTS WIN KLONDIKE

Left • January 11, 1972.

Top unit at Klondike Derby at Harold L. Rogers-Lakewood Park was Troop 23 Mallard Patrol, sponsored by the Kouts American Legion. Group won title by accumulating most points in sled construction, first aide, fire building, and other survival projects. More than 250 scouts attended the Jaycee-sponsored affair.

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN BASKETBALL TEAM

Right • February 19, 1972.

Immanuel Lutheran's basketball team defeated St. Paul's of Hammond on Sunday, 33-24, to win the Calumet Lutheran Athletic Tournament held at Taft Junior High in Crown Point.



Members of the squad are, from left, front, Dan Bartelt, Tarik El-Naggar, Don Mundinger, Ken Bauer, Mark Thune, Levi Weinhold, and Steve Meyer; and from left, rear, Philip Koenig, Arden Anderson, Jon Stuckey, Coach August Prahlow, Mike Tanck, John Pennington, Dave Thiele, Dave Telschow, Bob Cotton, Joe Cotton, Assistant Coach Phil Bickel, and Keith Koch.

recognizing OUR SUPPORTERS

We extend our gratitude to the following individuals for their financial support in October & November 2020.

DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS

Laura & Ken Blaney
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MEMBERSHIP *benefits*

	STANDARD		PREMIER	
	2	4	2	4
Personalized membership card	●	●	●	●
Subscription to the bimonthly <i>PoCo Muse News</i> newsletter	●	●	●	●
Invitation to exhibit previews and receptions	●	●	●	●
Discounts on select events, programs, and tours	●	●	●	●
Access to the Graystone Research Library*	●	●	●	●
<i>PoCo Musings</i> e-mail reminders and members-only digital content	●	●	●	●
Subscription to the <i>PoCo Muse Magazine</i> history publication			●	●
Free admission to the Montague/Urschel Gallery*			●	●
Use of the Slagle Members' Lounge during gallery visits*			●	●
Benefits and privileges at 300+ cultural organizations in more than 40 states across the country through the Time Travelers reciprocal membership network			●	●
Priority reservation and early check-in for special events & programs			●	●
	\$40	\$70	\$75	\$125

*This benefit is not currently available due to the pandemic.

MEMBERS-ONLY *virtual programs*

VIRTUAL TOUR OF THE OLD PORTER COUNTY JAIL

January 30, 2021

Check your email on this day to receive a members-only link to this exclusive audio tour of the former Porter County Jail on our website (pocomuse.org).

Join Quinn (virtually) for a tour of the former Porter County Jail and learn more about the building and its features. Throughout its years as the county jail, this building underwent many modifications to accommodate its inmates and respond to the changing needs of the times.

In this tour, Quinn will take you behind the scenes to parts of the jail not normally accessible to the public.

SNEAK PEEK! POCO MUSE PODCAST, SEASON 1

February 20, 2021

Members will receive a sneak peek of our inaugural PoCo Muse Podcast. Season 1 will feature stories from the former Porter County Jail, available to the public in March 2021.

In March 2021, the PoCo Muse will debut its inaugural season of the *PoCo Muse Podcast*. The first season will feature stories from inside the jail.

These stories, pulled from our archives, will be specific to the various sites within the jail and will feature some of the following highlights: tales of infamous criminals; attempted jailbreaks; oral histories from those who lived in the residence or worked in the jail; remarkable architectural features; and many more!



Image • Cells in the former Porter County Jail taken after it became home to the PoCo Muse.

introducing A NEW PUBLICATION

NEW! POCO MUSE MAGAZINE

PoCo Muse Magazine, the brand-new local history publication of the PoCo Muse, will feature in-depth articles and images about Porter County history three times in a calendar year. Issues will highlight a variety of topics that follow larger themes set by the museum.

The inaugural issue of *PoCo Muse Magazine* will celebrate the sesquicentennial of the old jail with stories about the building's architect, an artistic inmate, and a harrowing tale of crime in the late 1930s. Look for the issue to arrive in your inbox and mailbox at the end of January 2021.

Anyone wishing to receive the *PoCo Muse Magazine* digitally or in print should join at, or upgrade to, our premier membership levels.

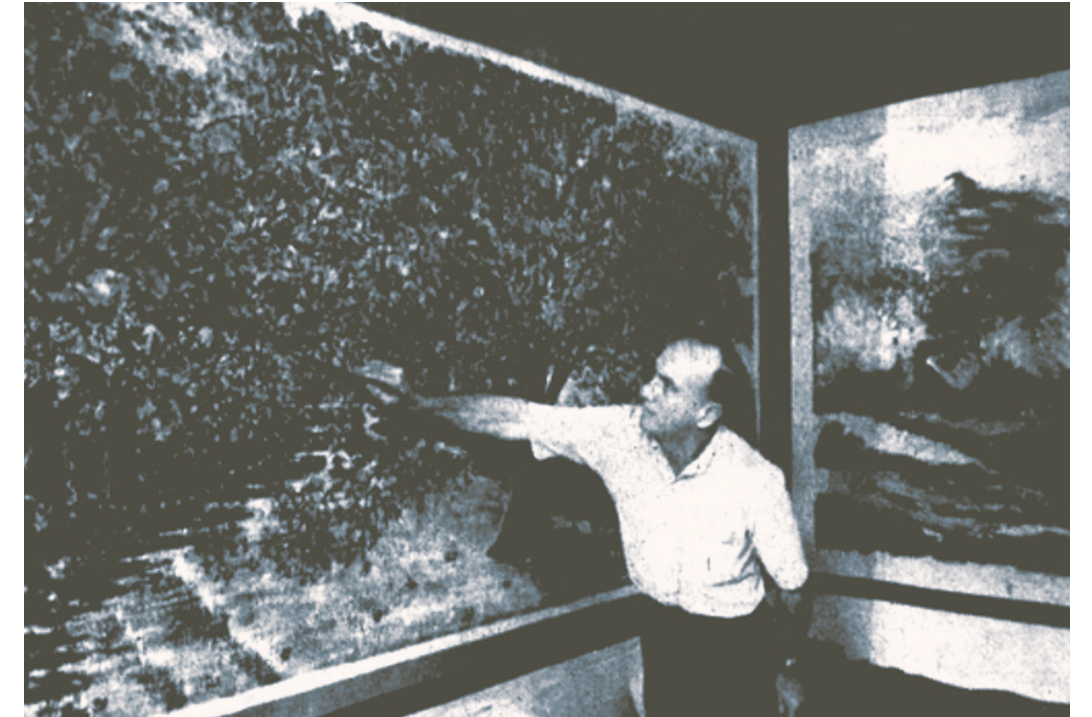


Image • The first issue of the PoCo Muse Magazine will feature a story about Robert Stroupe, an inmate of the Porter County Jail, who painted a mural in one of the cells in early 1969.

general INFORMATION

POCO MUSE

www.pocomuse.org

The award-winning PoCo Muse maintains free general admission (when not amidst a worldwide pandemic) as this area's oldest institution devoted to the history and culture of Porter County.

1871 PORTER COUNTY JAIL & SHERIFF'S RESIDENCE

153 S Franklin Street, Valparaiso, IN 46383
(219) 465.3595

Home to PoCo Muse artifacts and exhibits since 1975, the 1871 Porter County Jail and the c. 1860 residence are two of the oldest structures in downtown Valparaiso.

MONTAGUE/URSCHEL GALLERY

20 Indiana Avenue, Valparaiso, IN 46383
(219) 510.1836

Accessible by a door on the south façade, the Montague/Urschel Gallery is where all PoCo Muse public programming happens.

MISSION

We engage Porter County's rich past with its evolving present to educate, enrich, and inspire our communities.

RECOGNITION OF SUPPORT

Our institution would not exist without the ongoing support of the Porter County Commissioners and Porter County Council.

POCO MUSE FOUNDATION

20 Indiana Avenue, Valparaiso, IN 46383
(219) 510.1916

Established in 2010, the PoCo Muse Foundation is a recognized 501(c)3 organization that supports the PoCo Muse.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Joanne Urschel, Chair; Ellen Kapitan, Secretary; Kathryn McMillan, Interim Treasurer; Brandi Anstine; Gretchen Buggeln; Kathleen Evans; Ruth Johnston; Kevin Kerr; Carlos Rivero; and G. A. Ronneau

VOLUNTEER

Would you like to volunteer at the PoCo Muse? Email your interests and availability to Quinn Albert at quinn@pocomuse.org.

DONATE AN ARTIFACT

Start the process of donating an artifact by visiting pocomuse.org/donate-an-artifact. Email Asa Kerr at asa@pocomuse.org with any questions.

WHY CONTRIBUTE?

Monetary gifts made to the PoCo Muse Foundation enable our employees to create mission-driven programs and exhibits, preserve our vast collection of artifacts, and engage the public in ways that make the PoCo Muse an award-winning institution.

MAKE A GIFT

Visit pocomuse.org/donate to make a gift online or mail a check to the PoCo Muse Foundation.

