

Collections & Exhibits: Behind the Scenes at our Museums

Museum Hours:

Long Home Museum
1004 E. Market,
Logansport
1 - 4 PM Thursday -
Friday & First Saturday of
the Month
\$5 Adult Admission

Cass County Museum
Castaldi Family History
Center
421 E. Broadway,
Logansport
10 AM - 4 PM
Tuesday - Thursday

*Both Museums are Closed in
January for Cleaning &
Exhibit Maintenance*

GIVING OPTIONS

*Send your charitable, tax
deductible donation to any
of the following.*

**Cass County Historical
Society**
421 E. Broadway
Logansport, IN 46947

**The Charles P. Schaefer
Designated Endowment Fund**
c/o Cass County Community
Foundation
P.O. Box 441
Logansport, IN 46947
(Send to Cass Co. Comm.
Foundation)

**Cass County Historical
Society Pass Through
Account**
c/o Cass County Community
Foundation
P O Box 441
Logansport, IN 46947

CCHS IS A 501(C)3 NON-
PROFIT ORGANIZATION

Article shared with our members via *The Confluence*, our quarterly member newsletter, in October 2024. To receive the latest news on our efforts, please consider becoming a member of the Cass County Historical Society and follow us on our social media platforms [@casscountyhistory](#) or www.casscountyhistory.org

Heather Fouts
CCHS Executive Director

We have been very busy behind the scenes at our museums and in this article I hope to share our exciting progress and good intentions. While not super visual to the community yet, big strides are being made toward proper museum collections management. Through discussions and collaborations with other Indiana historical societies, Cass County libraries and schools, the Indiana State Museum, Indiana Archives and Indiana State Library, we are becoming better informed and better prepared to offer a quality history education, research and preservation experience in Cass County.

Cass County Historical Society (CCHS) are the stewards of *thousands* of historic Cass County material artifacts. These material artifacts were all donated to the public trust of our organization's mission to collect, preserve and share Cass County Indiana history. We provide the Castaldi Family History Center - our research library and archive where we maintain all book, document and photo



**The mission of the Cass County Historical Society is to
collect, preserve and share Cass County Indiana history.**

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Collections & Exhibits ... Continued

records. We currently serve 10-25 guests monthly with family genealogy or history research. We currently average about the same number of guests monthly for tours of the Long Home Museum. We currently have 112 paid members.

Our museums: Long Home Museum (Market Street) and Cass County Museum (Broadway Street), use a digital records archive service called Past Perfect. This online software service is recommended and used by many small museums. Past Perfect preserves our data in the online cloud, allowing digital access to research and maintain our collection and contact records from anywhere with an internet signal. CCHS began using the desktop version of this software some years ago and had switched to the online version of this service prior to my arrival in October 2022.

At the time of my employment, there were approximately 60 artifacts recorded on the desktop version of Past Perfect. During the move of our organization's operations from the former CCHS office located on 11th Street to the new Cass County Museum, museum collections records were found in many places, existing on many forms of old technology. Early handwritten journals, typed or printed paper records, hand written index cards from old catalog systems, floppy disk drives, slides, rolls of film, CD and DVD records,



Top: Dr. Catalina Tome of the Indiana State Museum (ISM) visits the Cass County Museum to assess our collection of American Mastodon fossils.



Bottom : Dr. Tome shares American Mastodon fossil preservation and display techniques used by ISM staff during a training visit from our collections committee of volunteers.



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Above Left: Collection Committee volunteers Steve Muehlhausen and Lloyd Knight visit Howard County Historical Society for an archive management training session with Randy Smith, HCHS Assistant Curator.

Above Right: CCHS Collections Committee of volunteers work with Program Manager Jill Snyder assessing and moving Cass County family history records into the Castaldi Family History Center archive at Cass County Museum for patron genealogy research use.

Collections & Exhibits ... Continued

multiple portable flash drives and old computer towers. These collection accession and archive records, in all their existing forms and states of completion, have been consolidated in our Technology Office at Cass County Museum. Staff and collections committee volunteers, with the assistance of Past Perfect customer service, have begun the painstaking task of digitally cataloging these old records. This task involves finding, identifying, photographing, organizing, scanning, writing and uploading all known information for each and every material artifact or archive record curated by CCHS. It is a daunting, but necessary task to gain control of and preserve the future of Cass County's historic artifacts collection and records. Hard copies of the Past Perfect record we are actively creating are also saved on portable external hard drives. These hard drives, when not in use for record maintenance, are stored in one of our many fireproof vaults at the Cass County Museum.

As we gain control of our collection and plan exhibits, a massive effort to identify and consolidate like-themed artifacts is underway. CCHS has used multiple collections storage and display methods in the past, few of them organized in a manner that is easy to self-navigate by any outsider. While arguably secure, it's not preservation if our experience, knowledge and control of our collection can not be easily passed on to the next responsible party.

For some time now the carriage barn at the Long Home Museum has been used as the primary location for storage of CCHS artifacts not on public display. This is problematic for multiple reasons, the most important of which is the lack of consistent, museum-standard temperature, humidity, light and pest controls. Artifacts that stand to be most affected by these conditions are actively being transferred out of the carriage barn to the Cass County Museum for assessment, cataloging and proper storage. The ReVere automobile was *safely* stored and maintained in the carriage barn when not on display or being used in the community. The ReVere automobile is currently on public exhibit at the accredited Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum in Auburn, IN, where it will remain on loan and public display until remodel of its new permanent exhibit home at the Cass County Museum is complete.

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Collections & Exhibits ... Continued

We purchased the Cass County Museum, located at 421 E. Broadway Street in November 2019. The original intention of this building purchase was to move our organization into a more accessible downtown location, consolidating all exhibits offered at Long Home Museum, Cole Clothing Museum and Ridlen Museum of American Political Communication under one roof. This idea and early efforts to achieve it did not succeed for a variety of reasons, including disagreement and misunderstandings over the suggested sale and departure from the Long Home Museum, the March 2020 retirement of long-standing executive director Thelma Conrad and the onslaught of loss created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cass County Historical Society has a *valid operational need* for both museum locations. With both properties we will have enough space to properly collect, preserve and share Cass County Indiana history. Losing either property would result in a severe cutback of the services and experience we currently have the space to provide.

We have approached the Cass County council regarding the restart of their annual financial support of our organization. We should know their response before year end. The Cass County government has not contributed financially to our organization since 2010. Several of the records we store and maintain came from the county. The City of Logansport assists our organization via a \$20,000 annual utility allotment. This governmental support of our organization's operating expense is detrimental to our success providing the educational county history exhibits and experiences we have planned. The City of Logansport has also offered CCHS the use of one of their READI 2.0 opportunities to potentially fund remodel of the South Gallery at Cass County Museum, the future permanent exhibit home of the ReVere automobile.

CCHS Museums - One Mission, Two Museums

As repeated multiple times in this article, the mission of the Cass County Historical Society is *to collect, preserve and share Cass County Indiana history*. Exhibits are the anchor to which all our programs and educational activities are attached. Gaining control of our collection and using it to create effective, visually aesthetic, accessible, educational experiences is a priority and being worked on as quickly as we are physically and financially able.

Print labels including language translation via *StQRy* (see stqry.com), a digital audio translation service accessible via smartphone and free museum wi-fi, will be added to all CCHS exhibit displays for added education and language interpretation assistance. This addition is a long-term goal that may take several years for our organization to achieve and install completely, but it is worth sharing that our plan to manage that need is actively in place and efforts are currently being made to achieve it.

Long Home Museum

The Long Home Museum is a Victorian Italianate home, built in 1853. Long Home is registered on the National Register of Historic Places. It was gifted to the Cass County Historical Society in 1967 to use as a museum. Also located on the Long Home Museum site is the William Chick Family Log Cabin. The log cabin, constructed around 1863, was moved from Galveston to the museum site in 1974 for use as an educational experience. Accessibility, space and structural problems at the Long Home Museum site were, indeed, part of our original motivation to find a new CCHS museum space. But it is my belief, as stewards of this historic home, our path forward with the property should be one of restoration, improvement and preservation - not abandonment.

Besides being the "right thing to do," keeping the Long Home Museum site provides the additional space we require to self-store and actively display most history categories/themes present in our collection. Many of our items are much better suited aesthetically for display in the Victorian Long Home Museum setting: material artifacts like antique furniture, tools, housewares, dishes, fine art, hand crafted items, textile and quilt collections. The physical setting and visual experience this location stands to offer is aligned strongly with what many historical societies our size traditionally strive to offer.

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Cass County Historical Society has the privilege (and the challenge) of caring for several additional material artifacts and artifact collections that are ill-fit or too big for a traditional historical society home museum. These artifacts have found an appropriate new home at the Cass County Museum downtown. We also continue to actively collect artifact donations. Donations of items that do not directly align with Cass County Indiana history or that already exist in the collection will likely not be accepted as we move forward. Please feel free to contact the museum if you have any questions regarding a donation.

In 2023 we received funding from Indiana Historical Society to hire KJG Architects to perform a structural analysis of the Long Home Museum site. The analysis outlining structural challenges of this site is publicly available on our website casscountyhistory.org under "Our Museums." We are using this analysis as a roadmap forward on priority structural repairs, restoration and adding accessibility. In 2023 we repaired the dangerous busted sidewalks surrounding the museum grounds and on 10th street. Just announced (see page 14), this fall the Cass County Community Foundation and Dave Reid Roofing, Inc. will make important repairs and restoration needed on the Long Home Museum roof.

A plan to improve the Long Home Museum grounds is actively being developed. CCHS does not have a groundskeeper on staff, we are completely dependent on staff or volunteer effort and paid assistance to achieve all museum building and grounds maintenance. In 2023 and 2024 volunteers from the United Way assisted with an initial clean up of the property and the carriage barn. This year, we developed a "Phase 1" to further clean up and re-mulch the site. We have a quote in hand for this service that is just under \$5,000.

We are developing plans to renovate the northwest corner of the Long Home Museum property into a more accessible entrance to the site. This will include renovation of the two back porches that have deteriorated and adding ramp access to the first floor of the museum.

Exhibits featured at Long Home Museum are/will be:

George Winter, Wils Berry and other historic artwork - currently on display throughout the museum with more to come.

Native American - Currently open. Exhibit room needs structural repairs on the exterior wall and around the window. The exhibit will be closed when funding is secured to repair the room. With assistance from friends and representatives of the Miami Tribe, artifacts will be assessed and documented during repairs, then reset in the same space.

General John Tipton - Items are currently on display in the Library or in storage and will soon be consolidated and displayed in the first floor Parlor.

Rivers & Canals - Items are currently on display on the first floor near the back staircase or in storage. A more consolidated display of this history will be assembled as we progress with our moving and restoration efforts.

We highly recommend visiting the Carroll County Historical Society and Canal Museum at Wabash Erie Canal Park located in nearby Delphi, IN as what we intend to install at Long Home Museum will still be a small exhibit in comparison to the extensive work our neighbors have done to tell this history.

Settlers & Immigrants - A fresh arrangement of Cass County pioneer artifacts and information on the waves of immigration that have made Cass County what it is today will be located in the southeast second floor bedroom. **Currently under arrangement, Opening November 2 2024.**

Some artifacts formerly on display in this space, including police, fire, local business, toy and high school artifacts have already been moved to the Cass County Museum for assessment and documentation. A selection of police artifacts will be loaned to Logansport Police Department for display in their new station lobby's police history exhibit.

William Chick Family Log Cabin - It is our intention to restore the cabin experience at Long Home Museum

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as quickly as financially possible. We are actively researching grants and contractors licensed to assist with this endeavor.

The corn crib existing behind the cabin's fate has not been determined yet. Currently it is in very poor condition. Moss, termites and exposure have taken their toll. Inside this structure there is a pile of large wooden timbers that we're working to determine the origin of. We know the corn crib did not originally belong to the William Chick Family Log Cabin property. It appears to have been built on our site to supplement the aesthetic of the Log Cabin.

Farms & Agriculture - The importance of farms and agriculture to Cass County history will be taught at the Long Home Museum. We currently have no full exhibit of this topic and will be working to integrate those stories into our experience.

Early Communication, Hygiene and Healthcare artifacts- Currently on exhibit throughout the Long Home Museum with more to come.

Home Exhibits - Many visitors to the Long Home Museum come just to see the home itself. Several exhibits are active now that express the beauty of the unique home and speak of a day gone by.

- The kitchen is near original with many examples of nostalgic early appliances, houseware, food preparation and storage products.
- The dining room is fitted with cabinets we use to display fine antique dishware collections.
- The upstairs home exhibits include a larger bedroom and a children's bedroom (toy) display. Both bedroom exhibit rooms are in need of extensive structural repairs to the walls and windows and will be closed temporarily when that work is done.
- Beautiful stained glass windows throughout the home
- Multiple iron chandeliers once lit with gas flame, converted to electric
- Tiled fireplaces and bathrooms
- Custom woodwork throughout the home

Cass County Museum

Cass County Museum provides a guest accessible space for important history education exhibits and the *Castaldi Family History Center* - our research library and archive. Artifact collections that are too large or aesthetically ill-fit for display at Long Home Museum will now have room to gain the space and spotlight they deserve. The temperature, humidity, light and pest controls at the Cass County Museum are more appropriate for proper historic artifact and archive care.

Earlier designs for unnecessary, expensive additions to the building have been reigned in to more reasonable, affordable improvements to provide our experience within the existing building footprint. Cole Clothing Museum and Ridlen Museum of American Political Communication have also chosen to take different paths forward with their museums, though CCHS remains actively involved. A selection of artifacts from both private museums will eventually be displayed in exhibits located on the second floor of the Cass County Museum.

There is much work to do at this location before installation of permanent exhibits can occur. Our

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progress, a digital copy of the floor & exhibit plans and investor opportunities for the Cass County Museum project are available on our website www.casscountyhistory.com under “Our Museums.”

Exhibits featured at Cass County Museum will be:

American Mastodons & Natural History - A natural history exhibit featuring our mastodons and other fossils, geological finds has been on display in a back corner of the Long Home Museum basement for years. Other specimens belonging to this collection were found in the Long Home carriage barn and closets of the Long Home Museum.

The American mastodon, closely related to the woolly mammoth and present-day African elephant, is Indiana’s state fossil. We are proud stewards of 21 American mastodon bones. Our mastodons were discovered in the mid-1960s by Arthur Berkshire, who lived in Cass county and owned farms in Cass and White counties. In June of this year I reached out to Dr. Catalina Tome, a paleobiologist at the Indiana State Museum, for assistance with assessment and preservation of our mastodon fossils. Dr. Tome visited Cass County Museum, assessed our consolidated collection of mastodon bones, and sent a report including measurements and findings on each bone. Our bones belong to at least three individual mastodons, two adults and one (rare) juvenile who would have been 2-4 years old at its time of death.

CCHS volunteers and staff present for Dr. Tome’s assessment of our fossils were invited to and visited the Indiana State Museum for a behind the scenes tour and training session in their fossil laboratory. We are currently waiting to hear back regarding the state museum’s assistance with bone preservation measures for our mastodons before mounting them for display. When assembled, this amazing collection of bones and other natural history artifacts will be a free exhibit permanently on display in the North Gallery at Cass County Museum.

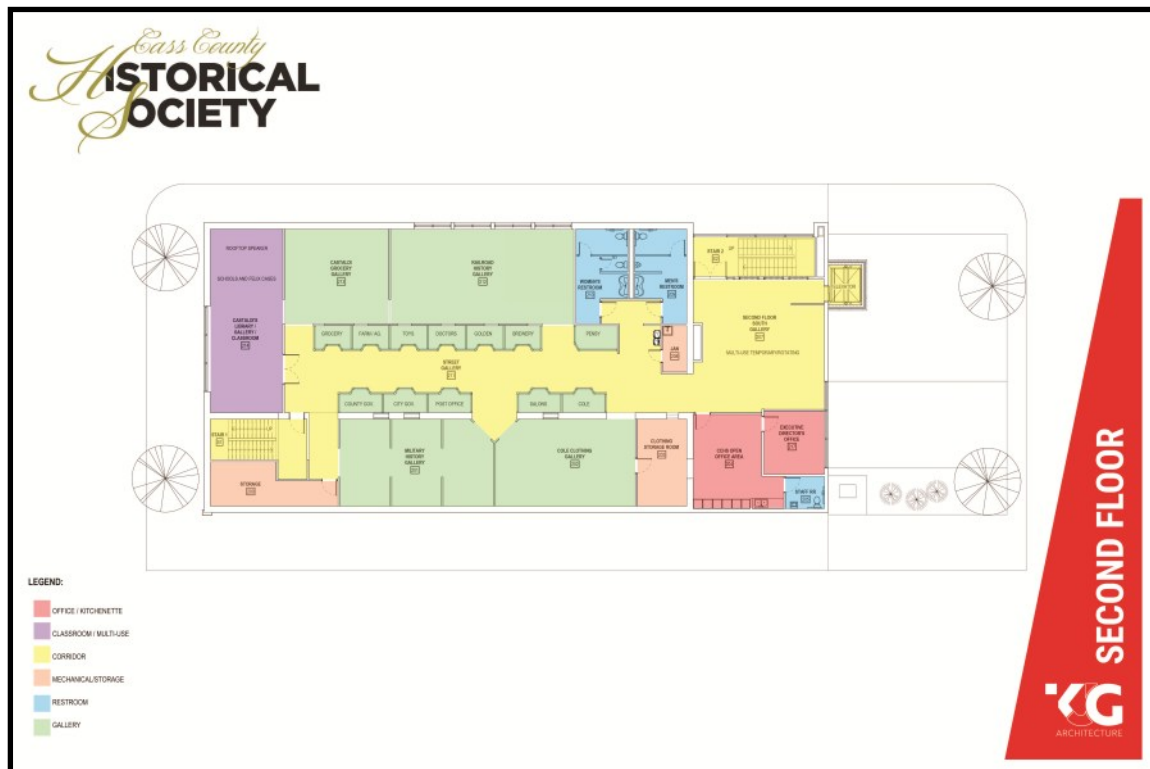
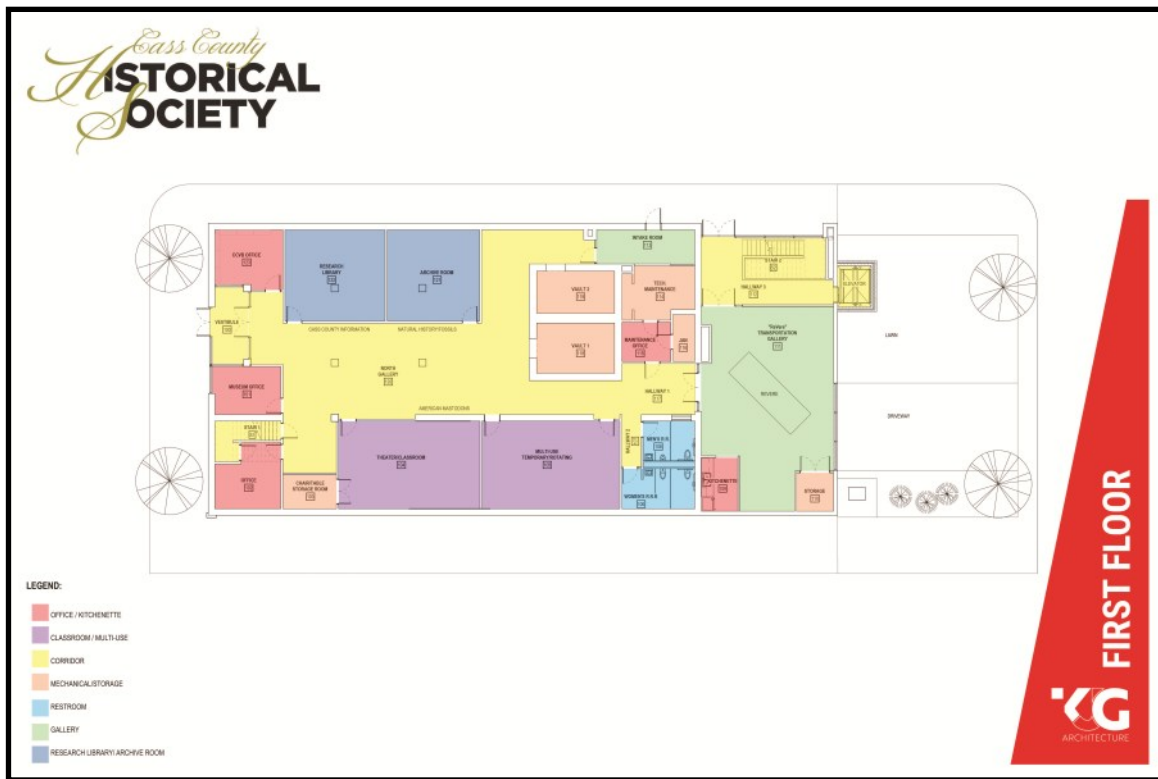
The ReVere / Automotive History - Hailing from Kokomo, IN, I fully understand the importance of the automotive industry on our local history. In 1998, CCHS was blessed with the generosity of this community, enabling us to purchase a 1920 ReVere Tourer automobile. Built in Logansport, the car is a rare early luxury vehicle. It is my understanding that less than ten of these vehicles exist (intact) in the world today. Our ReVere and Jay Leno’s ReVere are of the very few that actually still run and can be driven.

Until recently, the car was safely stored in the Long Home carriage barn and was only taken out occasionally for public events or exhibitions in the community. To avoid damage during our cleanup, moving and organization efforts in the Long Home carriage barn and to get this spectacular vehicle out on public display, I reached out to the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum (ACD), an accredited vehicle museum located in Auburn, IN. ACD Executive Director Brandon Anderson and Curator Sam Grate have been more than helpful in helping us safely store and publicly display the ReVere at their museum during construction of its new permanent exhibit home in downtown Logansport.

The new permanent exhibit home of the ReVere and other artifacts related to our automotive history will be on display in the South Gallery on the first floor of the Cass County Museum. We are actively fundraising for this project. As mentioned earlier, we have been working with the City of Logansport regarding potential use of a READI 2.0 grant opportunity to fund our remodel of the South Gallery exhibit space, including addition of a new garage door entry for the vehicle on the south side of the museum.

Second Floor Exhibits - On the second floor of the Cass County Museum we have a “streetscape” planned, featuring a central row of exhibit cases that will appear to be a street with storefront facades. Inside these cases, artifacts currently on display at Long Home Museum that share the history of local entrepreneurs, early businesses and county/city government artifacts will be displayed.

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Cass County Museum floorplan and initial exhibits layout images are also available on our website: casscountyhistory.org.

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Collections & Exhibits ... Continued

Four feature exhibits will exist in the second floor exhibit spaces surrounding the central “streetscape”:

- Railroad History - Items once on display at the Long Home Museum and the Iron Horse Museum will have a new permanent exhibit home on the second floor of the Cass County Museum.
- An expanded Castaldi Family Grocery exhibit (moving from Long Home Museum) & an extension of the *Castaldi Family History Center* library that will be used for book collections, school exhibits and classroom space.
- Jean Cole clothing exhibit - 100+ years of fashion history & the Cole family legacy will be taught in this new exhibit coming to the Cass County Museum.
- The military exhibit currently on display in the basement of Long Home Museum will be moved to a larger exhibit space at Cass County Museum, allowing for better, safer displays and the inclusion of more artifacts.

Just Keep Swimming...

As you can see, we have a lot going on. It is an extreme amount of activity for one full time director, one part time program manager and a handful of active volunteers to manage, but we are doing it! This year we have been campaigning to fund creation of the new exhibits at Cass County Museum and also restoration of the Long Home Museum. This may, indeed, be our plea for the next few years as we get ourselves organized, restored and remodeled.

How can you help?

1. First and foremost - spread positivity! This costs nothing! Share the good word that CCHS is on-task, actively working to provide something really great via our history education experiences at Long Home Museum and Cass County Museum. Cass County has a colorful history, well worth the effort involved and size of experience we plan to offer. We didn't sell the Long Home, we didn't sell the ReVere automobile, it isn't our plan to sell anything. I invite anyone harboring such doubt to please contact me, I am happy to give anyone an in-person tour of our current state and progress. I am easiest to reach via email: hfouts@casscountyhistory.org.
2. Of course, donate. There are many avenues available to donors for financial contributions, all listed inside the front cover of this newsletter.
3. Join or renew your membership with Cass County Historical Society. We have options ranging \$25 - \$500, all include this newsletter, mailed to your door, with the latest updates on our efforts and achievements.
4. Become a volunteer! Help docent (host) at our museums, providing open hours for the public to enjoy our experience. Help in the *Castaldi Family History Center* with research, organizing our shelves and records. Help work in the yard at Long Home...we have several needs, contact us at info@casscountyhistory.org to get started today.

I appreciate the patience of this community as we navigate the many tasks set before us. I hope this article has helped with clarifying our mission, our direction and the ongoing progress at Cass County Historical Society!