



## Volunteer Spotlight: Paul Oberg

The Volunteer Spotlight this month is on Paul Oberg, Curator of McCormick School Museum. Paul is primarily responsible for the school archives but has done just about everything else required to maintain museum operations. He combines his expertise in museum management and public education to support the establishment and operation of an all-volunteer museum that houses the archives of the Wichita Public Schools (USD 259).

Employed by USD259 as Supervisor of the Office of Museum Programs in 1983, Paul played a key role in archiving the school system's historical records and collections. When the McCormick School closed as an attendance center in 1992, Paul established the McCormick Museum and Science Center and moved the records and collections there. District budget cuts eliminated the museum program in 1997 and concern for the care of the structure and its archival contents prompted volunteers (retired school personnel) to continue the museum. In 2001, Paul returned from Saipan where he served as the Director of the CNMI Museum of History and Culture and became the driving force in maintaining these archives for public access in the 1890s building and campus now known as McCormick School Museum. District-related materials are acquired, catalogued, protected, stored, and made available for research according to professional museum practices.

While employed in various part-time roles with local museums, as a substitute teacher, in private enterprise, and since retirement, Paul gives his time to McCormick School Museum in many ways. He consults with USD 259 and local preservation officials on funding and implementing needed repairs to the museum buildings. As a founding board member of McCormick School Museum, Inc., he provides expertise in areas of museum management, operation and development for the all-volunteer staff and administration. He provides archival and curatorial management of collections while designing and preparing educational exhibits. He assists with publicity, docents and programming, grant-writing, fundraising, custodial and building repair work, and much more. In recognition of his outstanding efforts, Paul was selected to receive a 2010 Award of Merit by the American Association for State and Local History.

Paul says, "I take great satisfaction in providing primary source information for individual investigations into the past and to support historical research into broader concerns regarding the Wichita Public School community. Not every query can be answered, but to hear a genuine exclamation of delight from a museum visitor upon encountering a photograph or reference to a former teacher or student acquaintance is a reward in itself." He would like to see more active, ongoing collaborations with the established museums of Wichita.

The successful preservation of any historic site demands a champion; Paul made his commitment to McCormick School as a school, archive, and museum many years ago. The next time you are



Paul Oberg, Curator of McCormick School Museum  
Photographer: Alicia Oberg

in the neighborhood, stop by and say Hi to Paul; he can show you something in the museum's archives that will certainly be of personal interest! The museum is located at 855 S. Martinson in Wichita. Museum hours of operation and contact information can be found in this *Bellringer* Newsletter.

The Newsletter of the McCormick School Museum, Inc. is published six times per year to inform constituents of the Wichita Public Schools and other interested patrons of activities and events taking place at the museum. Contributions help us to produce this publication.



Paul Oberg led the caroling for the MSM Carol Around the Tree event on December 11; Tom Fleming was pianist for the evening.  
Photographer: Cynthia Rhodes



USD259 music students sang carols around the tree during the recent December 5 MSM Holiday Open House Event. After caroling, the children toured the museum and ate cookies before returning to their schools. Photographer: Dennis Duty

## EVENTS & MUSEUM HOURS

The McCormick School Museum is open Wednesday from 9:00 am to noon and Sunday from 2:00 to 5:00 pm. Park to the north of the building; enter through door #4 (closest entrance to the parking lot). Ring the doorbell if needed. You may call 316-708-0676 to confirm museum hours before your visit or to schedule tours outside regular hours.

Currently, the stairway to the multipurpose room is handicap-accessible for events. Admission is by donation; your support is always appreciated.

### SAVE THE DATES

#### JANUARY 24

**Kansas Day Chili Feed:** 5:00 to 7:00 pm  
Celebrate Kansas Day with folk songs, homemade chili and toppings, cornbread, and peach cobbler. Suggested donation: \$10; kids under 12 are \$5.

#### MARCH 21

**Boiler-Cooked Potato Bake:** 5:00 to 7:00 pm  
Celebrate St. Patrick's Day and enjoy a large, delicious baked potato (freshly baked in the museum boiler).

#### MAY (TBA)

**16mm Film Fest:** 5:00 to 7:00 pm  
Come and watch entertaining and educational 16mm films from the McCormick School Museum film archives. Fun for all ages; families are invited. Refreshments served. Watch social media sites for more information as the date approaches.

To reserve a room for your meeting or event, contact the museum office for reservation information and availability.

#### For more information and to contact the museum:

**Bldg. Address:** 833 S. Martinson, Wichita  
**Postal Mail:** P.O. Box 12881, Wichita, KS 67277  
**Website:** [www.mccormickschoolmuseuminc.com](http://www.mccormickschoolmuseuminc.com)  
**Donations:** [www.savemccormick.com](http://www.savemccormick.com)  
**Facebook:** McCormick School Museum  
**Gmail:** [mccormickschoolmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:mccormickschoolmuseum@gmail.com)  
**Telephone:** 316-708-0676 (call or text)  
**MSM Office:** 316-558-5804 (leave a message)