



**Outreach and Engagement** ([/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/))

## Historic New Harmony

([/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/))

### In Harmony Newsletter

DECEMBER 2021/JANUARY 2022 Edition

#### Interim Assistant Director's Update

When this year started, there were still a lot of unknowns as to what we'd be able to accomplish, but after weathering the storm of 2020, the Historic New Harmony team felt prepared to take on whatever came our way. We were ambitious as we began planning our 2021 season, and I'm happy to report that very little of what we planned did not come to fruition. [Read more about we accomplished this year \(\[/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/assistant-director-s-update/\]\(https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/assistant-director-s-update/\)\)](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/assistant-director-s-update/).

#### A Look Ahead

As you read in Claire's report on our activities and programs in 2021, the Historic New Harmony team was busy and is looking ahead to 2022 which shows no sign of stopping! At the top of our "To Do" list is embarking on a new strategic plan. This will inform our direction, priorities and engagement for the next five years. [Learn more about what we have planned for 2022 \(\[/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/historic-new-harmony-news/\]\(https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/historic-new-harmony-news/\)\)](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/historic-new-harmony-news/).

#### Christmas Traditions

The way we celebrate Christmas had changed dramatically throughout the years. [Read more about how New Harmony residents have celebrated in the past \(\[/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/history-lesson/\]\(https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/history-lesson/\)\)](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/history-lesson/).

#### NHGCA Update

The new year will start with a short break at the Gallery with *PAÑUELXS* opening January 22. [Learn more about this upcoming exhibition \(\[/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/new-harmony-gallery-of-contemporary-art-update/\]\(https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/new-harmony-gallery-of-contemporary-art-update/\)\)](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/new-harmony-gallery-of-contemporary-art-update/).

## Robert Owen 250th Creative Writing Contest

Our Robert Owen 250th Celebration is coming to an end, which means our second and first place winners are now published! [Read all the winning pieces \(/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/robert-owen-250th-creative-writing-contest/\)](/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/robert-owen-250th-creative-writing-contest/)

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## NOVEMBER 2021 Edition

### Interim Assistant Director's Update

When I sat down to write my update this month, I was at a bit of a loss. Not because I had nothing to report—quite the opposite in fact. The HNH staff has been so busy in the last month wrapping up our daily tour season and our Robert Owen 250th celebration, hosting *Water/Ways* and even looking ahead to next year (you'll hear more details about what we have planned in next month's newsletter). I just couldn't decide what to share and then it hit me... [Read more about what HNH is thankful for this year \(/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/assistant-director-s-update/\)](/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/assistant-director-s-update/)

### NHGCA Update

The NHGCA continues its partnership with the New Harmony Clay Project with *Filled Up 2: A Ceramic Cup Show*. [Learn more about the latest exhibition \(/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/new-harmony-gallery-of-contemporary-art-update/\)](/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/new-harmony-gallery-of-contemporary-art-update/)

### New Harmony State Historic Site Welcomes Site Coordinator

On October 25th, Jess began her tenure at the New Harmony State Historic Site. [Learn more about Jess \(/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/new-harmony-state-historic-site-update/\)](/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/new-harmony-state-historic-site-update/)

### Robert Owen 250th Creative Writing Contest

Our third place winner is all the way from England! [Read Barry Carter's poem here \(/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/robert-owen-250th-creative-writing-contest/\)](/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/robert-owen-250th-creative-writing-contest/)

### Museum Shop Update

Written and illustrated by the talented Marsha Bailey and produced by the Kiwanis Club of New Harmony, this coloring book is full of important New Harmony scenes. [Read more about this new coloring book \(/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/historic-new-harmony-news/\)](/web/20220201184524/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/about/in-harmony-newsletter/historic-new-harmony-news/)

### Christmas in New Harmony

Every December New Harmony celebrates Christmas in a big way! The first weekend of December hosts Christmas in New Harmony, a spirit filled weekend sure to get you in ready for the holiday. The town will be decorated in the Christmas spirit along with a tree lighting, a performance of the Nutcracker, Artisan



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## [Historic New Harmony](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/) [\(/web/20220201195017/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/\)](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/)

### Assistant Director's Update

DECEMBER 2021/JANUARY 2022

Claire Eagle, Interim Assistant Director

When this year started, there were still a lot of unknowns as to what we'd be able to accomplish, but after weathering the storm of 2020, the Historic New Harmony team felt prepared to take on whatever came our way. We were ambitious as we began planning our 2021 season, and I'm happy to report that very little of what we planned did not come to fruition.

We began the year with the launch of our [Robert Owen 250th Celebration](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/) ([/web/20220201195017/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/)). As the leader of the second attempt at Utopia in New Harmony, his 250th birthday was the perfect opportunity to celebrate not only his accomplishments, but the accomplishments of his children, community members he and his partner William Maclure brought to New Harmony and the future utopians he influenced. This year-long celebration included a [virtual conversation series](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/robert-owen-250th-virtual-conversation/) ([/web/20220201195017/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/robert-owen-250th-virtual-conversation/](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/robert-owen-250th-virtual-conversation/)), [children's activities](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/robert-owen-250th-kids-games-activities/) ([/web/20220201195017/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/robert-owen-250th-kids-games-activities/](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/robert-owen-250th-kids-games-activities/)), a [creative writing contest](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/robert-owen-250th-creative-writing-contest/) ([/web/20220201195017/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/robert-owen-250th-creative-writing-contest/](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/robert-owen-250th-creative-writing-contest/)), a scavenger hunt, a birthday party with Robert Owen himself in attendance and so much more!



After having to cancel Heritage Artisans Days in 2020, we didn't want to go another year without one of our favorite programs. We moved virtual, inviting students from all over Indiana and Illinois to join our live broadcasts from Murphy Auditorium. With 5,022 views over five days, our Virtual Heritage Artisans Days went better than we could have imagined. While many teachers were eager to return to in person, they appreciated our team's efforts to continue such a staple program.



([/web/20220201195017/https://www.usi.edu/media/5637315/virtual-had-logo-claires-update.png](https://www.usi.edu/media/5637315/virtual-had-logo-claires-update.png))

In October, we opened *Water/Ways*, a Smithsonian Museum on Main Street traveling exhibit, at the Athenium. Made possible in Indiana by [Indiana Humanities](https://webcf.waybackmachine.org/web/20220201195017/https://indianahumanities.org/) (<https://webcf.waybackmachine.org/web/20220201195017/https://indianahumanities.org/>), we were one of only six sites in the state to be chosen to host. With new partnerships, including [The Nature Conservancy](https://webcf.waybackmachine.org/web/20220201195017/https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/indiana/) (<https://webcf.waybackmachine.org/web/20220201195017/https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/indiana/>), the [United States Geological Survey](https://www.usgs.gov/), [Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana \(OKI\) Water Science Center](https://www.usgs.gov/)

(<https://webcf.waybackmachine.org/web/20220201195017/https://www.usgs.gov/centers/oki-water>) and the Posey County Soil and Water Conservation District, we were able to explore New Harmony's connection to the Wabash River through our companion exhibit and programming. My favorite part was the screening of the documentary *Along the Wabash*. Not only was the film beautiful, but we were also treated to a discussion with the film's producer, writer and director, Susanne Schwibs. It was truly a one-of-a-kind experience.



Behind the scenes, we completed all sorts of projects as well! We migrated to a new cloud-based collections management software, completed several maintenance projects and completed a rotation of artifacts that allowed us to put recently acquired Harmonist furniture on exhibit at the David Lenz House.

By all accounts, 2021 was a success! Everything I shared above is only a fraction of what the Historic New Harmony team accomplished this year. In addition, the number of visitors and tours nearly tripled compared to 2020 and we are already ahead of 2019 numbers with a few weeks left. Our wonderful Atheneum staff welcomed these visitors to New Harmony while sharing our unique Utopian history. Next year is shaping up to be just as busy, just with a little more emphasis on behind-the-scenes. For more on what we have coming up in 2022, check out Leslie's article.

We wish you a safe, healthy and happy holiday and New Year.

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## NOVEMBER 2021

Claire Eagle, Interim Assistant Director

When I sat down to write my update this month, I was at a bit of a loss. Not because I had nothing to report—quite the opposite in fact. The HNH staff has been so busy in the last month wrapping up our daily tour season and our Robert Owen 250th celebration, hosting *Water/Ways* and even looking ahead to next year (you'll hear more details about what we have planned in next month's newsletter). I just couldn't decide what to share and then it hit me.

As is tradition for many in November, I began reflecting on what Historic New Harmony is most thankful for. First and foremost, we are thankful for you, our amazing supporters that continue to attend our programming (both virtual and in person), engage with us on social media, contribute to our annual giving campaign and most importantly, ask us questions which keep us learning more about this wonderful site.

Just a few weeks ago, we received an email from an architecture student in Germany. In one of his classes, he was given the task to analyze New Harmony from an architect's point of view. More specifically, he was looking for floor plans of a typical Harmonist home. Now as much as I'm sure we would all like to, our staff hasn't had time to just sit a while and do some good old-fashioned reading and research lately. This inquiry gave us the perfect opportunity to take a break, go searching for a book and provide the answers for that student in Germany.

In addition to all of you, I am so thankful for all the HNH staff including our Atheneum staff, fantastic maintenance team and Leslie, Paul, Christine and Dan. Though Dan left in June, our success this year would not have been possible without him. Without our whole team, we never would've successfully hosted the Robert Owen 250th Celebration, Virtual Heritage Artisans Days and a Smithsonian exhibition all in 10 months!

I wish you all a Happy Thanksgiving from utopia!

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## Historic New Harmony

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### Historic New Harmony News

DECEMBER 2021/JANUARY 2022

#### A Look Ahead

Leslie Townsend, Director of Community Engagement and Historic New Harmony

As you can see from Claire's report on our activities and programs in 2021, the Historic New Harmony team was busy and is looking ahead to 2022 which shows no sign of stopping! At the top of our "To Do" list is embarking on a new strategic plan. This will inform our direction, priorities and engagement for the next five years.

We plan to begin work in the winter of 2022 with the goal of implementing it July 1, the start of our new fiscal year. Steven Stump, Assistant Director of USI's Center for Applied Research, will facilitate the plan and we will seek input from members of our HNH Advisory Board; University faculty, staff and students; and the New Harmony community. It's no secret that Historic New Harmony is unique. We are many things: a historic site, museum, event organizer, repository of amazing collections, property manager, community resource and the list goes on. We are also an outreach program of a university, and that holds special challenges and opportunities. New Harmony is and has always been a learning laboratory, and we will use [USI's strategic plan](https://www.usi.edu/strategic-plan/) ([/web/20220201195219/https://www.usi.edu/strategic-plan/](https://www.usi.edu/strategic-plan/)), adopted in 2021, as a blueprint to look forward to ways we can make a difference both at the University and in the community.

Historic New Harmony is fortunate to have an active, dedicated and passionate Advisory Board under the direction of Chair Katie Waters. This past fall, we held a brainstorming session and as a result, the Board has activated three new workgroups. The Connections group will explore ways to have a greater association with the University and facilitate and assist in projects with USI students, faculty and staff. The Cultivation group will look at ways to expand our reach with supporters. And finally, the Special Events group will work to plan exciting donor and fundraising activities. These groups and projects will be essential as we plan for the future and will complement and be a part of the new strategic plan.

This coming year also presents us with a major new opportunity which will keep the HNH team very busy! I can't wait to share details, and more information will be coming, but this could impact us for the next few years and have a lasting effect. Stay tuned!

These are just some of the new things in the works. Of course, the HNH team will continue the work that is our foundation—welcoming the public and sharing our Utopian history through tours, field trips, special events and programs. As we look to 2022, I want to thank you—our supporters, friends, board members, community and dedicated staff.

Here's to a very happy New Year!

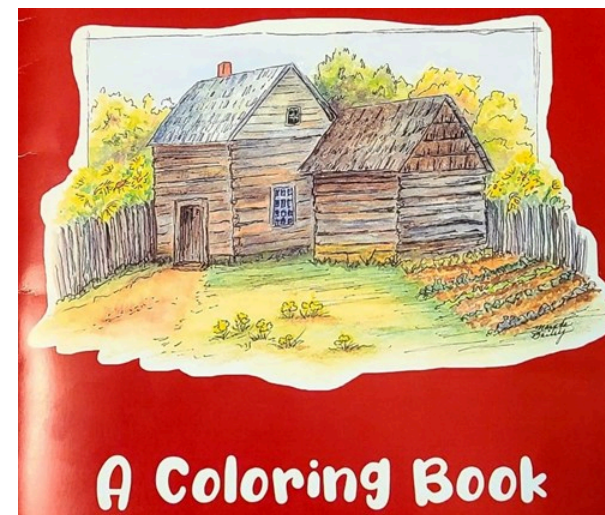


## NOVEMBER 2021

### Museum Shop Update

Paul Goodman, Experience Coordinator

Hot off the presses! This new coloring book was written and illustrated by the talented Marsha Bailey and produced by the Kiwanis Club of New Harmony. Marsha Bailey has been drawing for as long as she can remember, whether it was in Indiana, Michigan or Maryland. Watercolor was her main medium for many years, until 16 years ago when she fell in love with colored pencil. She has branched out into portraits since starting with colored pencil, and it has been rewarding to be able to capture that certain expression of the subject. While she lived in Maryland, she helped start the Matawomam Creek Art Center and was a juried member of the North End Gallery, where she won several awards. She was fortunate to have her Christmas ornaments selected to be on the Blue Room Christmas Tree at the White House three years, and she attended the opening receptions. Being a member of the Hoosier Salon and OVAL has given her opportunities to display her creations. Whenever possible, she has taken art classes with award-winning artists from all over the country. She says, that although winning awards is nice, the most rewarding is when someone truly loves a painting enough to purchase it.



Each of the pages in her book has a drawing of an important aspect of New Harmony along with a short historical fact. This book, along with many other items, such as the finger puppets, candles, pencils, Jacob's Ladders and cup-and-ball, would make perfect Christmas stocking stuffers!



[Outreach and Engagement](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/)

## Historic New Harmony

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### History Lesson

DECEMBER 2021/JANUARY 2022

#### Christmas Traditions

Paul Goodman, Experience Coordinator

Christmas during the nineteenth century here in New Harmony wasn't celebrated the same way we do today. The Harmonists had no lights, no inflatable snowmen or Santas and no celebration of the nativity. There was more religious zeal than all the glam and glitter. However, some Harmonists would have some simple decorations in their homes. Christmas day would have been heralded in with laurel, myrtle, orange branches and ivy draped across mantels and lintels. Simple swags of holly, ivy and other branches would be placed on fence gates and sills. Being from Germany, they did practice the tradition of the Evergreen tree, but instead of baubles and string lights it would be trimmed with cookies, colored popcorn, nuts and oranges. At noon, the children of the community would receive a sack with a combination of candy, colored popcorn, an orange, walnuts, dried grapes, figs and dates. In the evening, there would have been a large feast of rice soup, roast veal, beef, apple schnitzel, sauerkraut, bread, ginger cakes and wine. No talking was allowed during the feast except for the music that was to be played and sung between the courses. However, this was not a day that they would've gotten off from work like we do today. Work would've continued throughout the festivities, as well as three church services throughout the day.

The Owen community, as well as many around the rest of the United States, continued to celebrate Christmas depending on where you came from and what your country-of-origin traditions were. Many in the Owen Community that came from Britain would feast, gamble, hunt and visit with friends as such as the customs in British manors would be. The feasts would be grand with goose being the main star of the meal. If you could not afford goose, many people celebrated with rabbit. If those with wealth wanted to be like Queen Victoria, they would have a lavish feast with beef and a royal roast swan or two. If you came from France, you would put up your crèche, or what we know as the Nativity scene. Then, the children would put their shoes by the fireplace to be filled with gifts from Pere Noel and the adults would feast during Le Réveillon, which is an after midnight large feast. Food was a main component in French celebrations at Christmas. One dish that was served during this feast you might recognize is la bûche de Noël, or the Christmas Log. If you were of the Puritan religion, you did not celebrate Christmas because the Bible does not mention it.

As time went on, new conditions in America began to undercut the local customs to make way for the common celebrations we know today. Advances in communication and transportation made it possible for all of these different traditions to mix. Immigration to different parts of the country, new wealth and larger markets superseded old ones, population boomed and the pace of everyone's lives accelerated. The thought of a family joining together around a fireplace bringing the past and the future together made the country very nostalgic. Christmas began to resolve into a more singular and widely celebrated holiday for families at home. It gave families time away from all the craziness of contemporary life to remember their heritage and to celebrate it with their family. The Civil War intensified the Christmas appeal. The sentimental celebration of family matched the yearning of soldiers and those whose lives had been lost. Its message of peace and goodwill spoke to most of the American families praying for their loved ones.

After the war, the symbols of the modern Christmas began to take shape. The German Christmas tree became an icon as more and more people saw them in German American homes and through media, such as newspapers. By 1900, one in five Americans were estimated to have a Christmas tree in their homes. The act of giving gifts at Christmas started to increase as well. More Americans were giving gifts as a symbolic solution to the problems with economic inequality that was growing in America in the late 1800s. However, this became very controversial because some felt that it was a materialistic perversion of the holy day. Most people chose handmade gifts over the commercial ones from factories or stores. To help them sell more gifts some of the larger stores started to wrap their gifts in bright colors and tinsel to mask the fact it was manufactured rather than homemade. This also allowed for a moment of revelation when the receiver would open it. Through the works of newspapers and illustrations, Santa Claus would become the figurehead of the American Christmas. Christmas in America has changed even more so than in the 19th Century, but the values of family, love, unity, peace, heritage and goodwill will live on for centuries to come.



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## OCTOBER 2021

### Pioneer Hearth Cooking Demonstration

Join Historic New Harmony Interpreter Becky Smyth as she demonstrates pioneer hearth cooking. Ms. Becky has been an interpreter at HNH for over 30 years, guiding tours, demonstrating Harmonist cooking and candle dipping and so much more!



## [Historic New Harmony](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/) [\(/web/20220201195109/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/\)](https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/)

### New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art Update

DECEMBER 2021/JANUARY 2022

Iris Williamson

Happy Holidays! The last day New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art and the Gallery Shop will be open in 2021 is Saturday, December 18. If you plan on doing some holiday shopping at the Gallery Shop or from *Filled Up 2: A Ceramic Cup Show*, make sure you visit by December 18!

The Gallery Shop opens back up on January 4, but there will be an additional break before we have a new exhibition in the Main Gallery. This is to allow for some facility improvements in the gallery and to align our next opening with when USI students are back in class.

Opening Saturday, January 22 and lasting through Saturday, March 5 is a solo exhibition by Chicago-based artist Vanessa Viruet. Viruet will be presenting large-scale sculptures and textile works utilizing materials like hoop earrings, oversized bandanas and flags. In her upcoming show, Viruet considers the aesthetics of femininity and masculinity through a lens of her Puerto Rican heritage. In addition, Viruet's *Black Car Pañuelo* will be installed in Maclure Square, directly across from the Gallery. An opening reception is planned for 4 to 6 p.m. Saturday, January 22, and an on-campus artist talk will be held at noon Friday, January 21 at University Center West, Rm 226-227.



### NOVEMBER 2021

Iris Williamson

Next up at the New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art is *Filled Up 2: A Ceramic Cup Show* (<https://webcf.waybackmachine.org/web/20220201195109/https://nhclayproject.org/filled-up/>) with the New Harmony Clay Project. This juried exhibition highlights a broad selection of ceramic cups submitted from artists around the country. The exhibition will be on display beginning November 20, and a public reception will be held from 4 -6 p.m. Saturday, December 4 (in conjunction with Christmas in New Harmony). From that point, you can purchase the cups as a holiday gift for a loved one or yourself!





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## Historic New Harmony

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Robert Owen 250th Creative Writing Contest



**Celebrating Robert Owen's 250th Anniversary  
Historic New Harmony's Global Creative Writing Contest**

Sponsored by the Working Men's Institute  
In Partnership with Indiana Poet Laureate, Matthew Graham

Guest Judge: Matthew Graham – Indiana Poet Laureate

During his 35 years in southern Indiana, Matthew Graham has been a respected and recognized writer, teacher, and advocate for poetry and the arts. Having recently retired from the University of Southern Indiana (USI), he has taught all levels of creative writing, contemporary literature, and worked with multicultural and international students in freshman composition. Among other community service Graham has worked with diverse writing groups such as high school students and community writing groups.

Matthew Graham is the author of four books of poetry, most recently *The Geography of Home* (Galileo Press, 2018). His work has earned numerous national, regional and local honors and awards, including a Pushcart Prize, an Academy of American Poets Award, two grants from the Indiana Arts Commission, and the Artist of the Year Award from the Arts Council of Southwestern Indiana.

While at USI, Matthew co-founded and co-directed (with Thomas Wilhelmus) *The Ropewalk Writers' Retreat*, a summer program that brought national and international writers to New Harmony, Indiana for 22 years, and the *Ropewalk Visiting Writers Series*, which brought prominent fiction and non-fiction writers and poets to the USI campus for free public readings. The list of participating writers includes the present U.S. Poet Laureate, Joy Harjo.



Visit his [Indiana Poet Laureate site](https://webcf.waybackmachine.org/web/20220201195355/https://www.in.gov/arts/programs-and-services/partners/indiana-poet-laureate/) (<https://webcf.waybackmachine.org/web/20220201195355/https://www.in.gov/arts/programs-and-services/partners/indiana-poet-laureate/>).

## First Place (18+)

Lois Gray, 69

### "Oh Say, Can You See? We Are All One Humanity"

Thomas Say woke up with the rays of the rising sun, stretched out his arms to the sky, and picked off a tick that tickled walking through his thick leg hairs. He slept very well last night on a mat of Jewelweed he tamped down along the banks of the Wabash River, south of the settlement of New Harmony. The intrepid naturalist was on one of his several-day forays looking for new insect and mollusk specimens, so abundant in these deciduous woodlands and wetlands in southern Indiana. There was so much pleasure for him in these solo sojourns.

On the ground next to him, was the sturdy dried pig bladder he used as a vasculum to store plant specimens he collected to identify. There was such a variety here on this trip! He attributed it to the rocky habitat. Large limestone outcroppings jutted out on the river side, near the natural dam below town, where fossils were evident when the Wabash levels waned.

It was Summer of 1826 and Say was enjoying a few perfect collecting days of low humidity and little rainfall. He didn't eat much on these trips and mainly relied on water, some hard cheese, dried meat, and bread he brought along in his pack. He enjoyed fresh berries when he chanced upon them as a special treat. Grabbing his supplies and vasculum, he began to walk to start the new day's trek.

As he approached the natural dam rocks, he noticed a friend out on them looking up at the massive limestone cliffs and waved to him. It was the town owner, Robert Owen, outfitted in his usual Scottish flair with his hiking stick and little dog. He was admiring the wildflowers in many colors waving in the breeze and returned Thomas' greeting with a friendly "Hullo".

The two men, both self-professed "votaries of nature", sat together on the rocks in the sunshine and talked at length about the finds Say was bringing back home. When he opened the plant vasculum and its contents tumbled out, Robert Owen exclaimed. "Oh, so many of them look like the ones I grew up with as a child living along the River Clyde in Scotland!"

It was along the Clyde that Owen established his fame and wealth as the director of the New Lanark cotton spinning mills. Here at Harmony on the Wabash River, he was working to establish a community that would become an ideal for social reforms, based on education and equality for all ages and gender.

Owen drew several springs of White Avens, *Geum canadense*, from the pile at his feet. This flower was abundant in patches on the lower edges of the surrounding woodlands, all along the massive limestone cliffs. It was an obvious member of the Rose family with its numerous stamens in the center and many rounded petals.

"In Scotland, we have a plant that looks so much like this one. I am fond of it, because I only see it on special trips to the Highlands. It only grows at higher altitudes where we have limestone cliffs in my country. It is called Mountain Avens, *Dryas octopetala*. It, too, has the white rounded petals and numerous stamens in the center and is in the Rose family," he observed. "So many miles between them, yet they both grow loving this limestone rock, looking so much alike."

Thomas Say nodded his head in agreement. "As I study nature more and more, I am impressed with both its diversity and its universality in so many designs. So many specimens are similar, yet just a little different in their own way, as they go through time. The same pattern, but with a little twist of individuality," he mused. "They all struggle to survive as best they can."

His companion responded in kind. "I feel the same way about humanity. We humans are all of the same pattern, but with differences in color, shape, hardiness and where we like to live. I think our cultures need to accept the great diversity of humanity and give them all equal opportunities to survive, thrive and be fit. My vision for New Harmony is based on that very idea," Robert Owen explained.

"And such a good vision that is," Thomas Say concurred, as the two men got up, dusted themselves off, and proceeded on their way. "I hope that message always rings true in the future for our new state and new country. We are all one humanity with equal rights to opportunity and a good life."

Although this meeting in the woods is imagined, the message of one humanity for all is real. Oh Say, can you see that?

## **Second Place (18+)**

Linda Neal Reising, 65

"Thread"

“These plans must be devised to  
train children from their earliest  
infancy...They must afterwards  
be rationally educated...”  
--Robert Owen from *New View of Society*

It was always twilight in the mills,  
the air a dusk of dust and lint.  
But time of day meant little to workers  
forced to toil for sixteen hours  
or more at a stretch. Children no more  
than five or six— paupers pulled  
from orphanages or workhouses—  
were apprenticed for seven, eight, nine  
unimaginable years, crippled by labor  
or lash. Many became “scavengers”  
who cleaned the machines while they  
were running, risking loss of limb or life.  
Tiny hands that tied knots into broken  
cotton threads shook with starvation,  
longing to hold an oatcake. The factories  
rattled and hissed hot air that settled  
inside their lungs. Smallpox, Typhoid, Cholera—  
ghostly triplets, stalked the overcrowded floors.  
Into this world, Robert Owen came,  
he who had apprenticed to a draper at ten.  
And he made it his mission to change  
this system, to save some semblance  
of childhood, but even more to give  
the young the gift of knowledge,  
to educate all for free, to open new worlds,  
a wish that followed him to the banks  
of the Wabash in the New World, a thread  
of aspiration that still runs through the warp  
and weft of our country's fabric today.

### **Third Place (18+)**

**Barry Carter, 40**

Small shadows pass  
As a hand reaches  
Out from a mirror  
To pick up and put  
Back the broken piece of glass, did the fingers  
Belong to  
William Blake who wrote  
About child labour.  
Robert Owen campaigned  
For reform, his conscience  
Would guide him  
Through a forest of moons.  
The Moon's ghost  
Chained to a butterfly  
Reflected in the eyes of a worker  
After working down  
A Latin American mine  
Will he see the butterfly  
In his dreaming darkness  
As he sleeps. UNICEF reaps the legacy of Robert Owen  
Creating a unity of vision for  
The invisibles.

### **Honorable Mention (18+)**

**Charlie Gaston, 85**

*"Robert Owen: Protector of Workers"*

How can I connect Robert Owen of two and a half centuries ago to the present day? Well, here it goes with a little background on the author. I was born on March 23, 1936 in Bloomington, Indiana and had a normal childhood living in a town of 18,000 with similar sized Indiana University. My parents moved out of North Carolina in the 1930's. My connection with Owen will come up through my mother's side in Gaston County, North Carolina.

Gaston County was a hot bed of cotton mills, powered by water converted to steam. My mother was the oldest of eight children. When her father was a ten-year-old boy in the 1880's he worked in the mill on the spinning machinery turning cotton to cloth. It was a very unsafe environment. There was no way to shut down the machine if any part of your body was trapped by it. Unfortunately, at ten years of age, my grandfather lost three fingers and a thumb to the cotton mill machinery. He survived and was able to go back to work and worked himself up to become the supervisor of the whole factory. I remember as a child visiting my grandparents in the best house because all laborers lived in factory owned houses.

The mill was across the street from my grandfather's home and still today I can feel and hear the mill running day and night. When Granddad came home I would watch as he lit up his Lucky Strike cigarette, unbelievably holding it with his severed thumb and fingers. I remember the dark brown stains on his fingers from the nicotine and how he would come home and listen to WWII news, ending with President Roosevelt's fire side chat.

Well gentle reader, come along with me as I lead you to Robert Owen, who was a pioneer in child labor in Scotland.

Robert Owen worked his way up the cotton mill ladder through his wife's father, David Dale. David Dale was a capitalist with no interest in stopping child labor. The Dale name would serve as a middle name for Robert Owen's children. David Dale's factory had the biggest child labor force, bringing in pauper children from the surrounding large cities. These children were called "apprentice workers" until they reached the age of fifteen and were then forced out on their own and replaced by more 'pauper workers.' David Dale's workers were suffering long hours and low wages. Housing was appalling, dirty and small.

Now Robert Owen comes along to marry David Dale's daughter Caroline and start the great child reform movement with better learning and educational conditions. When Owen took over, he wasn't an absent owner. He witnessed their misery and increased worker pay and better living conditions by adding rooms or second stories to the factory owned houses. He built schools and even paid wages when demand was slack!

Reader, you can see the man Owen developing into a leader of human rights and his success gained him wealth. Being a leader in worker rights, other mill owners were resentful. As Owen spread his word to London to get laws changed, his opponents spoke out. Parliament passed nothing to help his cause!

Owen's workers were proud and worked hard in return for removing their misery. The company books showed success. The biggest social benefit was that he made the happiness of the entire community who saw pride in their efforts.

Gentle reader let's now catch up with my grandfather in Gaston County. We left him in his big mill home listening to FDR on the radio and smoking a Lucky Strike. This man sired eight children, my mother being the oldest. In 1914, he was appointed superintendent of the largest mill in Gaston County - a title he would carry until the 1940's. One other event would again injure him. As the unions were beginning to organize in cotton mills, my grandfather was injured by the clash between works and scabs. As I write this story at the age of 85, the constant mill noise of my visits to my grandfather is my way of remembering the past!



Let's get back with Owen and his New Harmony catastrophe. Around 1816, Owen read a local journal by John Molish of a German Utopia in Pennsylvania called Harmony. This became his newfound interest in America, staying with him until 1825.

Father Rapp pulled out of Harmony, PA and traveled by horse to the Vincennes, Indiana land office buying 6000 acres on the Wabash River. This community would be called New Harmony and was built in ten years by six hundred Rappite followers.

Owen followed the movement of this group over the years. To his great surprise an agent, Richard Flowers called on Owen in New Lanark to offer him the 6,000 acres on the Wabash River. Flowers made the sale. Owen, on the way to America, stopped at every major city to promote his New Harmony – a town living and sharing as equals with no sign of religion, but plenty of speech, singing and dancing.

As knowledge of the Owen purchase got started – people were on the move west by the wagon loads to the new commune to live and work equally. Owen stayed a year making and changing rules, ending up in a great state of confusion - equal to a runaway horse. Soon, Owen pulled out and went back to England, leaving his young son in charge. Owen would come back one more time, but complete failure was in order. Even his money partner, Maclure stayed a few years, but he too disappeared to Mexico. Maclure crossed the 13 states as a geologist and later Owen's sons would follow – making New Harmony the birthplace of geology.

Science and arts would have a lasting effect over socialism Today we in New Harmony feel the effects of both, with people visiting from around the world to feel the magic and great history of this place.

I came here in the 1960's to study the construction of the Rappite's prefab method of putting together the homes. In turn, I took the method of 1814-1824 to Bloomington. The truss roof was my first introduction to house building in the 1960's.

Changing from builder to organic farmer in the 1970's, I took breaks from the farm. I would bicycle the 140 miles to New Harmony. In 1998, I was captured by the unusual feel and purchased a 1860 home and found myself walking in their footsteps. Now today we know Owen as a success!

I join you gentle reader, as I too seem to be carrying the torch of the past! But really, is it the past?

## **First Place (13-17)**

Claudia Esmaela Ghaderpoor, 15

Shrouded in evils  
Built upon foundations  
Of muck and grime  
And casted away into  
The mouth of hell,



A forsaken cause.  
The land to be called  
'Utopia.'

A vessel for paradise  
Taken from hell?  
The world shook and reeled  
With laughter. They watched  
In silent mockery as he dipped  
His hands in ambrosia  
And steeled his resolve  
To forge a land called  
'Utopia.'

Yet the cleanse anticipated  
For the land was not one  
Immersed in bloodshed.  
He took his hands and built  
A new foundation, a promise  
Of comfort for the troubled  
Souls encased in debauchery.  
Shunned by the world, here  
Lies the flourishing bud called  
'Utopia.'

What makes a savior and  
What makes a man? For  
One who toiled and strove  
For the providence brought  
Not by divinity's grace but  
By the hands of man.  
Who sought to challenge  
When all the world gazed  
In passive indifference.  
Who realized his ventures  
Of a land called  
'Utopia.'

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[Kids' Games & Activities \(/web/20220201195355/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/robert-owen-250th-kids-games-activities/\)](/web/20220201195355/https://www.usi.edu/outreach/historic-new-harmony/programs/robert-owen-250th-celebration/robert-owen-250th-kids-games-activities/).

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