

The original documents are located in Box 4, folder “Children’s Museum, Indianapolis, Indiana, October 1, 1976” of the Frances K. Pullen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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Background, The Children's Museum of Indianapolis

The Children's Museum of Indianapolis opened in December, 1975, the third museum for children in America. The first was located in Brooklyn, the second in Boston. A wealthy Indianapolis woman visited the Brooklyn museum, and with three other women organized the Indianapolis museum. It opened in a carriage house.

The Museum has had three directors, including the current one, Ms. Mildred Compton. Chartered by the state of Indiana, the Museum is owned, operated and supported by the citizens of Indianapolis and surrounding areas. A volunteer Board of Trustees formulates policy and oversees the administration of the Museum.

Overcrowding and lack of exhibit space prompted planning for the new facility. A fund drive, which began in late 1972, has raised almost \$9 million. With a challenge grant of \$3.5 million from the Lilly Endowment Inc. as an incentive, the museum raised the rest of the money from the public. (91-year-old Eli Lilly may be there during your visit. The late Mrs. Lilly was a long-time trustee and patron of the Museum.)

The emphasis at the Museum on participation and involvement of the visitors is described in the attached article from The Christian Science Monitor.

A kindergarten student, Britt Schneider, drew the picture which is being used on the poster announcing the opening. He has sent you an autographed copy, and he will be involved in the program in some way.

Highlights:

- A reconstructed 19th century firehouse with a horsedrawn steam pumper and hand pumper in the Indiana Firefighters Gallery.
- A reconstructed Victorian railway station, home of Reuben Wells, a wood-burning steam locomotive. This was the most powerful railroad engine in the world in 1868. It was named for its creator, a master mechanic for the Jeffersonville, Madison and Indianapolis Railroad.
- A display of early Americana, including a log cabin and a genuine Conestoga wagon.
- Galleries showing the history and life styles of the American Indians, Eskimos and Latin Americans.
- A gallery showing the emergence of man, including three reconstructed dinosaurs and two early mammals.
- An ancient Egypt gallery, featuring the mummy of a young girl, a great favorite with the children.
- A natural science gallery and small arboretum to show Indiana's plants, insects, birds and geology.
- A kaleidoscope room for children under seven to help them develop their physical senses.
- A gallery featuring the cultures of Africa, Europe, the South Seas and Asia with concentration on Japan and China.
- A theatre seating 360.

Kaye

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 17, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: PETER SORUM
FROM: SUSAN PORTER
SUBJECT: Action Memo

Mrs. Ford has accepted the following out-of-town invitation:

EVENT: Tour of the new facilities at The Children's Museum
in Indianapolis, Indiana

DATE: Friday, October 1, 1976

TIME: To Be Determined

PLACE: The Children's Museum
30th and Meridian Streets
Indianapolis, Indiana

CONTACT: Polly Jontz
Director of Development and Public Relations
317-924-5431

COMMENTS: This will be the second stop this day for Mrs. Ford;
the first, as of this writing, is yet to be determined.

The dedication of the beautiful new facilities at The Children's Museum in Indianapolis is an invitation to Mrs. Ford which has been "high on the list" ever since learning about it. The Children's Museum of Indianapolis, this year celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, is the third oldest children's museum in the country and is a pioneer in the field of museum education through its varied collections. Museums for children are an American phenomenon; The Children's Museum of Indianapolis will be the largest museum for children in the world.

Because of Mrs. Ford's participation in the cancer center dedication in Houston, Texas, on Saturday, she will not be able to attend the formal museum dedication also on Saturday. She will, however, tour The Children's Museum on Friday late afternoon or evening and participate in the time set aside for an open house for the neighborhood. Brett Schneider, the first grader who drew the winning illustration (a big green dinosaur) for the museum grand opening poster would like to present Mrs. Ford a poster he has autographed for her.

Mrs. Ford will overnight in Indianapolis before traveling to Houston on Saturday. The file is attached.

Thank you.

c: BF Staff
Red Cavaney
Max Friedersdorf
Steve McConahey
William Nicholson
Jerry Jones
Terry O'Donnell
James Cavanaugh
James Connor
Jim Field
Jim Baker
Stu Spencer
Elly Peterson
William Greener III
Jud Summer
Rex Scouten
Staircase

9/15/76 - conversation with Polly Jontz

1st -

open house for neighborhood
U. S. Navy Steel Band will play
local rock station disc jockeys,
sports people
central city location, decision was made
to stay in this neighborhood
no ceremony,
Polly said she didn't think it would be
the best thing for Mrs. Ford

4:00 -
7:00 pm

30th -

invitational open house for members and
donors
small ceremony at 5:00 to present
membership to child who drew
green monster
5000 invitations sent out.

3:00 -
9:00 pm

Polly feels very strongly that the ~~and~~ ribbon
cutting on the 2nd is really the day
for Mrs. Ford, that's when the
coverage will be etc.

fire station - 1880's
1920's -

climb on.

locomotive + Vet. train
station

natural science area -

Cave

children's art
contest
others on
display
temporarily

Arboretum

Americana - log cabin
carpenter shops -

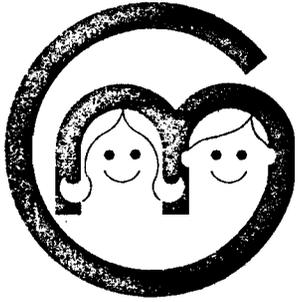
pre-heating
Area.

operating carousel

toy trains - operating

Am. Folk Art Collection

Alder airplane models.



August 25, 1976

Miss Susan Porter
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Miss Porter:

Now that the Republican convention has ended I am sure there are many decisions being made in The White House concerning Mrs. Ford's fall schedule. We at The Children's Museum want to reiterate our invitation to Mrs. Ford to participate in the dedication of the museum at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, October 2. As you may remember, this museum will be, upon its opening that day, the largest of its kind in the world.

I need not repeat the plans for that morning for they were included in my last letter to you, but only want to say they are progressing well and the opening will be as scheduled. We do think the museum's public dedication, which should attract attention nationwide as well as in Indianapolis and Indiana, would provide an excellent setting for an Indianapolis appearance of our First Lady. Of course, we would want her to make the major dedicatory remarks.

As you may remember, the cutting of the ribbon opening the new museum will be by a charming young man, Brett Schneider, who will enter first grade this fall. He won the honor when his illustration of a big green dinosaur was chosen to be used on the museum's grand opening poster and on billboards throughout the city. He has signed a poster especially for Mrs. Ford, and I am sending it in care of you. Brett was thrilled to think she might see his poster, and delighted to autograph one just for her.

Please keep us informed as to the progress of Mrs. Ford's plans. We hope she is well and rested from the convention.

Sincerely,

Polly Jantz, Director
Development and Public Relations

BF Pending to Consider
Indianapolis, IN
October 1 or 2, 1976
Children's Museum Dedicatior

August 30, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: MAX FRIEDERSDORF

FROM: SUSAN PORTER

Thank you for your memo of August 25th regarding the dedication of the Children's Museum in Indianapolis. This is an event we have had on our books for several months with the hope that Mrs. Ford would be able to participate. Your endorsement is appreciated.

Again, thank you.

c: BF Pending to Consider (Indianapolis, October 1,2, 1976)
Jack Marsh

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

August 25, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: SUSAN PORTER
FROM: MAX FRIEDERSDORF *M. F.*
SUBJECT: Invitation for the First Lady

As you are aware, Indianapolis will dedicate the world's largest Children's Museum on the morning of October 2.

The First Lady is being invited to cut the ribbon for the event and I wish to add my recommendation that this invitation be accepted if possible.

The facility cost \$7 million and all the money was raised privately.

Contact is: Polly Jontz - AC 317/924-5431.

cc: Jack Marsh
Sheila Weidenfeld
Bill Nicholson

May 10, 1976

Dear Ms. Jontz,

Your thoughtful letter telling of plans for the dedication of The Children's Museum is greatly appreciated. Although the official schedule is planned only a few weeks in advance, we have noted these dates on Mrs. Ford's calendar with the hope she might have the pleasure of attending. We will be in communication with you closer to the date when Mrs. Ford's plans are more fully determined.

With warmest regards,

Sincerely,

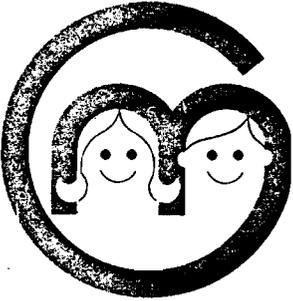
Susan Porter
Appointments Secretary
for Mrs. Ford

Ms. Polly Jontz
Director, Development and
Public Relations
The Children's Museum
30th and Meridian
Indianapolis, Indiana 46208

SP/sr

c: ✓ BF Pending to Consider (October 2, 1976, Indianapolis)

ENCLOSED MATERIAL SENT TO MRS. FORD'S FILES



April 26, 1976

Miss Susan Porter
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Miss Porter:

Last August Frances B. Julian, trustee of this museum and chairman of the grand opening of the new museum, wrote to Mrs. Ford asking her to participate in our gala opening this fall. At the same time we wrote to Warren S. Rustand and Mrs. Melvin R. Laird reiterating our invitation to Mrs. Ford. Mrs. Laird is from Indianapolis and is familiar with The Children's Museum.

Last Friday when President Ford was in Indianapolis some representatives from the White House previewed our museum at the invitation of Dr. Landrum Bolling, president of Lilly Endowment. The opinion expressed at the conclusion of the tour was that a visit from Mrs. Ford might be very appropriate at the time of our opening. So it is our hope that she might be responsive to a reminder of the invitation to participate in this important cultural event.

Originally we invited Mrs. Ford to the dinner for 400 persons who gave generously to the museum's funding campaign making the fabulous new facilities possible. That dinner is September 29, and of course we would be honored were she to attend. Meanwhile, however, the plans have expanded and we would like to extend our invitation to the public dedication to be at 9:30 a.m. October 2, 1976, where her attendance might be of greatest benefit to each of us. An alternative date might be the opening for 5,000 members on Thursday, September 30. The public dedication is open to everyone and will climax the week of festivities. We are expecting excellent news coverage which would, of course, be heightened were Mrs. Ford to participate.



Although plans are still being formulated for the ceremony, the ribbon will be cut by a kindergartener. An article concerning him is in the enclosed material. A time capsule of children's art, poetry, essays and music may be presented to the museum for safekeeping by the Indianapolis Public Schools at that event. Representatives Andrew Jacobs, Elwood Hillis and David Evans will be in attendance and Governor Otis Bowen and Mayor William Hudnut also have accepted invitations to be present.

As we said in our original letter to Mrs. Ford, upon its opening this museum will be the largest museum for children in the world. We have just celebrated the museum's fiftieth anniversary, marking a half century of education through museum interpretation, and count as our public "anyone who is or ever was a child." Because museums for children are an American phenomenon, it would be particularly appropriate if Mrs. Ford, representing our nation and committed as she is to cultural life, could participate in the public dedication of this wonderful new museum.

I am enclosing a compilation of background materials which will inform you and Mrs. Ford of this unique institution. We would hope that you will be as enthusiastic as we and will allow us to share with Mrs. Ford this most important moment.

We look forward to hearing from you. Please let us know if we can provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Polly Jontz". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over the typed name.

Polly Jontz, Director
Development and Public Relations

cc: Dr. Landrum Bolling
enc.

PJ/cd

3010 NORTH MERIDIAN STREET, BOX 88207, INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46208, PHONE 317-925-9263 / Director: Mildred S. Compton;
of Trustees: David H. Kenny, *President*, Jack R. Shaw, *1st Vice President*, Mrs. Richard D. Wood, *2nd Vice President*, Mrs. J. William Julian, *Recording Secretary*, Mrs. Alex M. Clark,
Spending Secretary, Jerome C. Steketee, *Treasurer*, Frederic D. Anderson, Alex S. Carroll, Robert P. Cronin, Charles R. Davis, William L. Elder, Omer H. Foust, Mrs. Edward Gallahue,
A. Heidenreich, John J. Heidt, Jr., Robert E. Heine, Mrs. John P. Holton, Philip S. Kappes, Merle F. Kuhlman, Luke D. Lanford, Thomas R. Lugar, Frank E. McKinney, Jr., Robert H. Mc
Mrs. Walter Myers, Jr., John D. Pittman, George H. Rawls, Harley W. Rhodahamel, Mrs. Joseph A. Rothbard, Raymond G. Sweeney, Martha L. McCardle, *School Board Representative*; H
Trustees: Reily G. Adams, Mrs. Walter C. Hiser, A. Malcolm McVie, Mrs. Wilson Mothershead, Henry J. Peirce, John G. Rauch, Jr., Mrs. Frederic W. Taylor, George L. Varnes; *Guild Pre*
Mrs. Frank E. McKinney, Jr.



Children's
Museum
of Indianapolis

August 19, 1975

Mrs. Gerald Ford
The White House
Washington D.C.

Dear Mrs. Ford:

One of the most exciting occasions in the arts,
the dedication of the new Children's Museum, will
take place in Indianapolis September 29, 1976.
The Children's Museum will be, on completion, the
largest of its kind in the world.

The Trustees cordially invite you to a formal
dinner in the museum that night to honor those very
important persons who gave so generously to make the
fabulous new building possible. Other significant
people in the museum and cultural field will be
included to make this a truly memorable event.
Following dinner the theater will be dedicated to
the late Mrs. Eli Lilly with a brief entertainment.
Mrs. Lilly was a museum patron and trustee for many years.

The Children's Museum of Indianapolis, this year
celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, is the third
oldest children's museum in the country and is a pioneer
in the field of museum education through its varied
collections. Museums for children are an American
phenomenon. It would be particularly appropriate if you,
representing our nation and committed as you are to our
cultural life, could participate in the grand opening of
this wonderful new museum.

I am sending to Mr. Rustand a compilation of pertinent
background materials concerning the museum which will
inform him of this unique institution and will demonstrate

the appropriateness of your participation. We hope you will talk with Mr. Rustand concerning the background materials, that you will be as enthusiastic as we about the Children's Museum, and will allow us to share with you this most important moment.

Sincerely,

Frances B. Julian

Mrs. J. William Julian, Chairman
Grand Opening Committee

6917 North Pennsylvania
Indianapolis, Indiana 46220

JWJ/dw

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

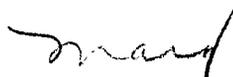
August 21, 1975

NOTE FOR SUSAN PORTER

Susan -

Since Warren is away (in Arizona)
and this is an invitation to Mrs. Ford,
may I leave with you for response?

Many thanks.



Mary Rawlins

3010 NORTH MERIDIAN STREET, BOX 88207, INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46208, PHONE 317-925-9263 / Director: Mildred S. Compton
of Trustees: David H. Kenny, *President*, Jack R. Shaw, *1st Vice President*, Mrs. Richard D. Wood, *2nd Vice President*, Mrs. J. William Julian, *Recording Secretary*, Mrs. Alex M. Clar
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Mrs. Walter Myers, Jr., John D. Pittman, George H. Rawls, Harley W. Rhodehamel, Mrs. Joseph A. Rothbard, Raymond G. Sweeney, Martha L. McCardle, *School Board Representative*;
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Mrs. Frank E. McKinney, Jr.



**Children's
Museum**
of Indianapolis

August 19, 1975

Mr. Warren S. Rustand
Director of Scheduling
The White House
Washington D.C.

Dear Mr. Rustand:

A series of events beginning with a formal dinner
September 29, 1976, will celebrate the grand opening
of the new facilities of the Children's Museum of
Indianapolis. The dinner will honor those very
important persons who gave generously to the \$9 million
fund raising effort, making possible the building of the
largest museum for children in the world. In addition
to dinner that evening, the museum's theater will be
dedicated to the late Mrs. Eli Lilly, long a trustee and
patron of the Children's Museum. Other special guests
will be national dignitaries and it is to this event
we are inviting Mrs. Ford.

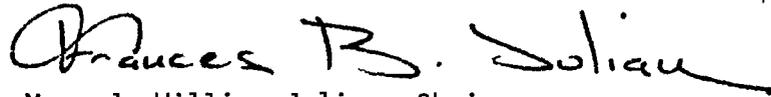
Enclosed is a compilation of pertinent background
materials concerning the museum and a copy of the
letter I am sending her. After you have glanced
through this material we hope you will share our
enthusiasm about this special place devoted to the
education and enjoyment of children of all ages.

We hope Mrs. Ford will want to participate in this
memorable occasion as our very special guest. It
would seem fitting that Mrs. Ford should represent our
country as the Children's Museum, with its new
facilities, continues its 50 years of leadership in
education for children through museum objects and
museum-related activities.

ACTION
T/D _____
SCHEMATIC NO. _____
DATE RECEIVED
AUG 21 1975
MESSAGE _____
SPEAKERS BUREAU _____
OTHER _____
APPOINTMENT OFFICE

We look forward to hearing from you or Mrs. Ford concerning her participation, and will be happy to provide you, or her, with any additional information that may be needed, and to develop the plans that would be necessary for her appearance here.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frances B. Julian". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Mrs. J. William Julian, Chairman
Grand Opening Committee

6917 North Pennsylvania
Indianapolis, Indiana 46220

JWJ/dw