



# Volunteer Here!

Email [ereth@emichigancity.com](mailto:ereth@emichigancity.com) for more information!



Dear future volunteer,

Thank you for your interest in sharing your time with us! We are a growing museum and really appreciate the extra help, whether it is behind the scenes doing office work or on the front lines helping with special events. As we get busier and busier, the need for volunteers is crucial.

If you don't know much about our program offerings, please poke around our website, [www.barkermansion.com](http://www.barkermansion.com). You will see that we offer everything from guided tours to scout sleepovers to garden parties and weddings.

The following pages contain a volunteer application. After you fill this out, a background check will be completed and you'll be added to our email list. We send out requests for volunteer help via email approximately twice per month, so you can pick and choose what's of interest to you. This packet also contains background information on the mansion and the Barker family. While we don't expect you to know everything about our history, we hope this is a good starting point.

Thanks again for your interest in volunteering with us!

Emily Reth, Director

[ereth@emichigancity.com](mailto:ereth@emichigancity.com)

(219) 873-1520 x4



# Volunteer Application



<b>Date</b>	
<b>Name</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Phone</b>	
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Hobbies</b>	
<b>Previous work or volunteer experience</b>	
<b>In which areas would you like to volunteer at Barker Mansion?</b> <i>Please note that the time commitment you desire is completely flexible, whether you choose to volunteer once per week or once per year. <u>We would appreciate if you committed to at least one opportunity per month.</u></i>  <input type="checkbox"/> Front desk greeter (Saturdays year-round, includes Sundays in summer) <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas decorating (begins in November, undecorating in January) <input type="checkbox"/> School groups <input type="checkbox"/> Wedding hosting <input type="checkbox"/> Leading tours <input type="checkbox"/> Office assistance (filing, special clerical projects) <input type="checkbox"/> Grant research and writing <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing and graphic design <input type="checkbox"/> Photography (during programs and events) <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening <input type="checkbox"/> Housekeeping <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
By signing this form you consent to a background check which will be facilitated by Barker Mansion. You can expect to be given meaningful tasks and provided with adequate training by mansion staff. You will be expected to conduct yourself in a professional and courteous manner while volunteering. Proper dress attire must be worn (with the exception of certain positions such as gardening or housekeeping). Any classified information you are exposed to while volunteering must be kept confidential. Barker Mansion will not be held responsible for any injuries occurred while, or as a result of, volunteering.	
Signature: _____	Date: _____

Return completed form in person or mail to:

Barker Mansion & Civic Center  
c/o Director Emily Reth  
631 Washington St.  
Michigan City, IN 46360

For office use:

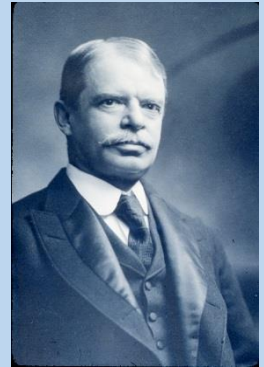
- background check
- initial contact

# *A Brief Barker Family History for Volunteers*

The Barker story starts in 1836 with the arrival of Catherine's grandfather John Barker Sr. Searching for a new opportunity he had left Andover Massachusetts at the age of 22. John Barker came to Michigan City in 1836 from Andover, having worked his way here in the course of two year. John H Barker and his father John Barker were founding fathers of Michigan City

John Barker married Miss Cornelia Collamer of Sandy Hill, New York in 1841. They had five children their first born son died in infancy their second child was John H Barker, George Taylor was their third child, Wallace C was their fourth child, and Ann S was their fifth and last child.

John H Barker was 23 when he became general manager of the Haskell Barker car company. He became president of the company after his father retirement in 1869. After the prosperous times in the growth it Haskell & Barker, John Barker made the decision to take on the project of enlarging their home, this project took four years from 1905-1909. He put Frederick Perkins, an architect from Chicago, in charge of the remodel. Parts of the old house were removed and new portions and old rooms redecorated. When the house was finished in 1909 it consisted of thirty-eight rooms, ten bathrooms and seven fireplaces.



John H. was married twice. His first marriage was to Jennie M. Brooks. They had three children, who all died before the age of five. He married his second wife, Katherine Fitzgerald in 1893. They had one daughter, Catherine born in 1896.

In 1909, John H Barker, his wife Katherine and his daughter Catherine moved into the newly remodeled home they lived there until 1910. In 1910, when Catherine was only fourteen years old both her parents died, her mother had died after surgery in Chicago, while her father was on a business trip. Her father died of pneumonia that same December.

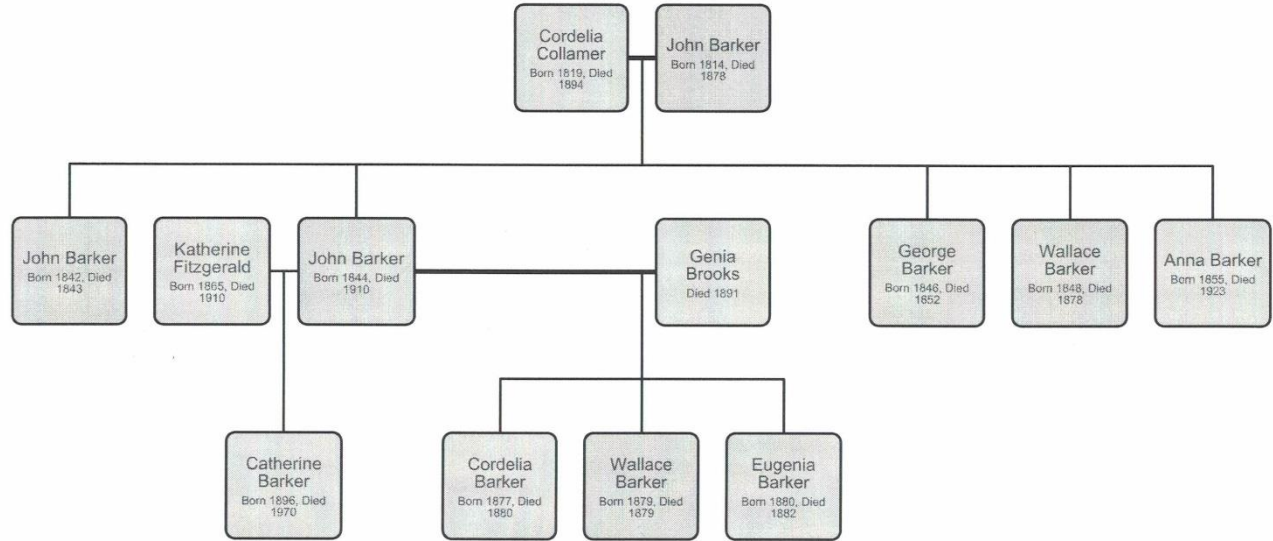
Catherine was attending Miss Legates School in Detroit. She continued to maintain her residence in Michigan City under the chaperoned guidance of Mr. Ashcroft. Her business affairs were managed by her guardian Mr. James Forgan of the First National Bank of Chicago.

Her formal education continued at Briarcliff on the Hudson and at Miss Finch's in New York City. Catherine was married in 1915. She later divorced and continued to maintain the house is one of her residence until 1949, although only intermittently after 1930 when she was married Mr. Charles V. Hickox of New York.

Catherine Barker Hickox and Charles V. Hickox had a total of six children. They had a set of twin boys that died as infants. They had two daughters Katrina and Sarane, and other set of twin boys named Charles Chatterton and John Barker. They raised their children in New York, but visited Barker Mansion often.

She enjoyed visits to Barker Mansion to show her children where she had once lived. In 1948, Catherine deeded Barker's mansion to Purdue University to be used as an educational center. In 1968 when Purdue established the Purdue North Central campus and at that point the property and building of Barker's mansion was returned to the Barker Welfare Foundation, which Catherine had established in 1924. In 1968 Catherine presented Barker's Mansion to Michigan City to be used as a cultural and civic center in memory of her father John Henry Barker.

# The Barker Family Tree



# *Barker Charitable Works*

Trinity Cathedral, now known as the Trinity Episcopal Church was built in 1889. John H Barker contributed the cost.

Barker Hall, built in 1886 by John H Barker in memory of his first wife and their three children, who died in infancy.

John Barker also donated the money to have the Bishop's Mansion built for Trinity Church.

In 1929, his daughter Catherine had Barker Hall reconstructed in memory of John H Barker's first three children who died in early childhood.

Michigan City Public Library built in 1859 to which he also contributed a third of the cost. He and Mrs. Barker would host the Library Foundation meetings at Barker's Mansion.

John Barker donated Marquette Hall at St. Mary of Immaculate Conception Church.

St. Anthony's Hospital built in 1904 the cost of the building and equipment being \$80,000, large part of which he contributed in the name of Mrs. John H. Barker, Catherine's mother.

The bandstand, Peristyle and the first conservatory in Washington Park were donated by the Barker Family.

John Barker in 1904, gave an annual endowment to the Ames Band which later became the Municipal Band.

The YMCA was built in 1910. Mr. and Mrs. Barker held the fundraisers and foundation meetings at Barker Mansion he also contributed one half of the project cost of \$100,000.



Catherine donated the altar at St. Mary's Catholic Church in honor of her mother Katherine Barker.

Catherine Barker helped start the Michigan City School of Fine Arts in the Warren building in 1922.

Catherine Barker created the Barker Welfare Foundation in 1924. The foundation continues to be active today and instrumental in giving their support to Barker Mansion and many other charities. Many of the family members are actively involved in the running of the Barker Welfare Foundation today.

Catherine Barker established the Barker Annuity Fund which provided pensions for the former Haskell & Barker employees who were not eligible for the benefits under the newly established Pullman Plan. When the purpose of the Annuity Fund had been fulfilled the remaining balance was transferred to the Barker Welfare Foundation.

In 1948, Catherine had given the Barker Mansion to Purdue to use as an educational study center.

After Purdue North Central was established in 1968, the ownership of the Barker Mansion was returned to the Barker Welfare Foundation. At that time Catherine and Foundation arranged for the home to be donated to Michigan City.

Written summer 2015 by Intern Keri Jakubowski. Sources available upon request.



## *Frequently Asked Questions by Visitors*

**Q: When was the mansion built and by whom?**

A: The mansion was built in two stages. John Barker built the original mansion in 1857. His son, John H. Barker expanded the mansion in 1905 to include the part you're standing in today.

**Q: Who were the Barkers and how did they become so wealthy?**

A: John Barker was the president of a freight car company that stood where the outlet mall stands today. The company did very well during the Civil War years and Barker amassed great wealth. Eventually his son, John H. Barker, took over the company. John H. Barker was married to Katherine and they had a daughter, Catherine, in 1896.

**Q: What's the story behind the mansion becoming a museum?**

A: Catherine, the daughter mentioned above, inherited the mansion in 1910 when both of her parents died of different illnesses. Catherine retained the mansion until 1948, at which time she donated it to Purdue to become a college campus. It functioned in this capacity until 1968, when Purdue no longer needed this location. Reverting back to Catherine, she then donated it the City of Michigan City to become a museum. The furnishings, which had been put into storage during Purdue's time, were placed back in their proper locations. Because of this foresight, we have over 90% of the original artifacts.

**Q: How is the mansion funded?**

A: The City of Michigan City has ownership of the mansion and pays basic expenses. The items inside the mansion, however, are owned by the Barker Welfare Foundation. The Barker Welfare Foundation was established in the 1920's by Catherine. The Foundation funds many large-scale repairs and pays for interpretive program expenses to this day.

**Q: Do the Barkers still live here?**

A: No, Catherine raised her family in New York and her children set up lives there. They do visit, though!

