

Vintage Purse Museum, NFP
3 Diversatech Drive, Manteno, Illinois 60950, 779-529-5022
https://www.vintagepursemuseum.org

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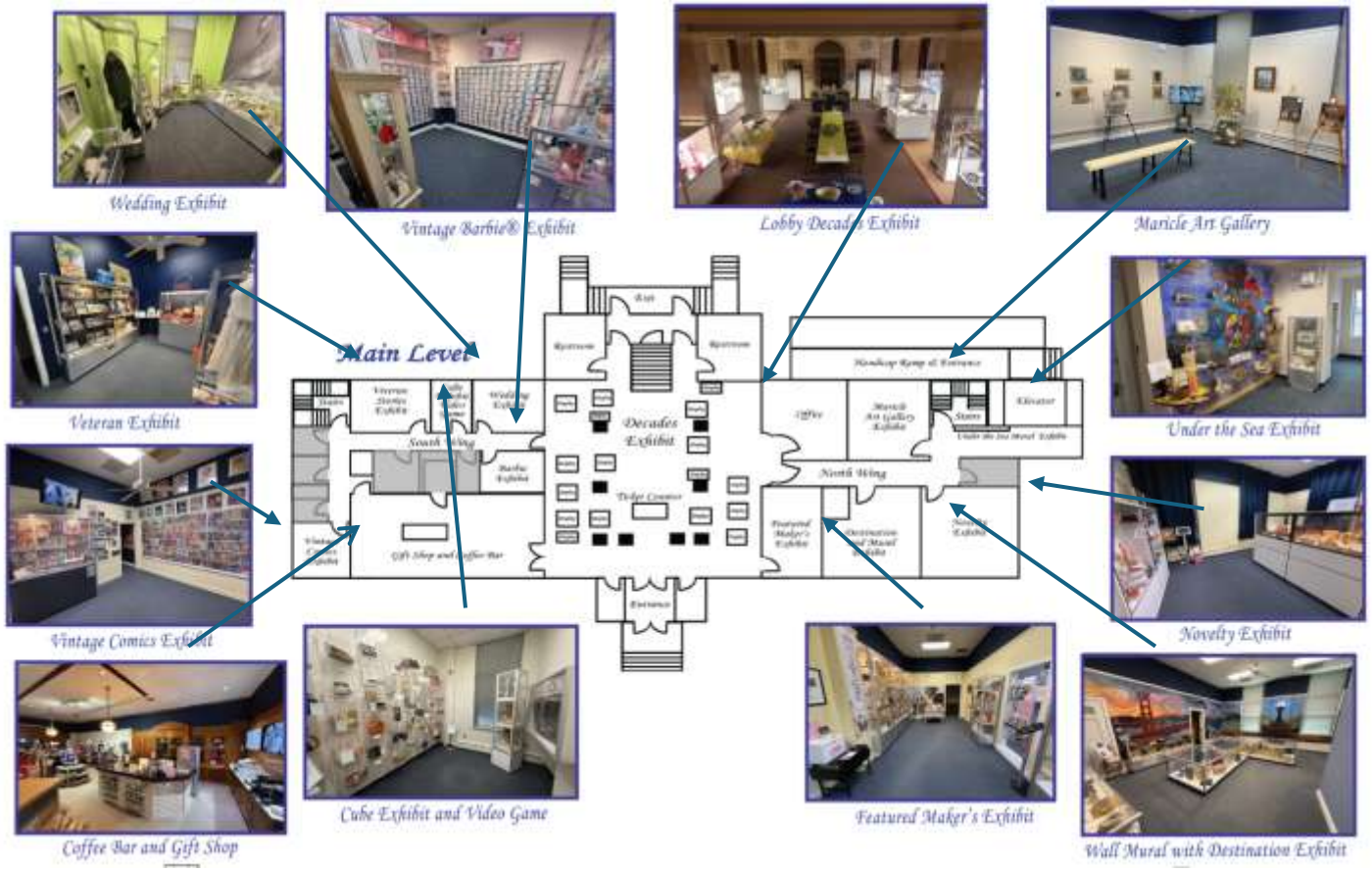


Introduction

- **The Vintage Purse Museum, NFP is a 501c3 nonprofit that has restored a landmark, historic building into a museum that provides employment and training for the disabled.**
- The Vintage Purse Museum is not only a repository of fashion, design, history and art; it is also a space for public engagement, education, and cultural exchange as a more diverse family-oriented attraction with exhibits including Comic Books, Barbie, Wedding, Antique Toys, Service Story, Art Gallery and a Bean-to-Cup Coffee Bar and Gift Shop. This level of engagement fosters a sense of belonging and inclusion, contributing directly to the educational and cultural enrichment of the community.



About the Museum



- Established in 2023, and after the restoration of the landmark building, now opened to the public since March 2025, the main level is completely restored and converted into an award-winning museum attraction (third 990 year).
- Other purse museums, like those in Amsterdam, Little Rock, AR and Seoul, focus on the global history of handbags, and only purses and handbags, limiting the attraction to a select clientele. The Vintage Purse Museum, NFP, will stand out inside a historic 24,000 square foot Art-Deco building as a more diverse family-oriented attraction with exhibits including comic books, Barbie, wedding, antique toys, Veteran Story exhibits, an Art Gallery and even an AI Game.
- The Vintage Purse Museum building is a grand landmark, with historical significance, and plenty of room to display what is the largest collection of fashion accessories on display in the world.

- ***A "Story So Far" video with before and after images available on our YouTube channel: @VintagePurseMuseumNFP***
  https://youtu.be/3ev1nGaYTlw?feature=shared

About the Mission

- **The Vintage Purse Museum, NFP exists to provide workforce development, job training, and employment opportunities for adults with disabilities while enriching the community through history, creativity, and inclusive cultural experiences.**

- In Illinois, the unemployment rates for individuals with autism and mental disabilities remain significantly higher than for the general population. For people with cognitive disabilities (including autism), over 51.7% did not participate in the workforce. (Source: sourceamerica.com). When it comes to autism specifically, unemployment challenges are even more pronounced. Estimates suggest that around 85% of autistic adults with a college education are unemployed. Many autistic adults face barriers such as lack of adequate workplace accommodation and support. Among employed autistic individuals, most are in part-time roles, with only 21% working full-time. Additionally, wages for part-time workers tend to be low, averaging around $9.11 per hour (Source: AUTISM SPEAKS - MYDISABILITYJOBS.COM)





- The Vintage Purse Museum will be a steppingstone to acquire skills and confidence to achieve a more joyful life by breaking down the barriers that imprison the disabled in poverty. The Vintage Purse Museum currently supports six disabled interns part-time for one or two days a week, thanks to donations from supporters. We are looking for additional supporters to extend their commitments and training.

About the Building



- The building at 3 Diversatech Drive in Manteno, Illinois, was originally constructed in 1928 as part of the administrative complex for the Manteno State Hospital. After the hospital's closure in 1985, many of the hospital buildings were demolished and the administrative building transitioned to other uses, also serving as the administrative offices for Homestar Bank from the 1990s until 2019, when it was abandoned. Constructed with steel girders, concrete, metal mesh, brick (the outside walls are three bricks thick), and beautiful marble, the building stands as one of the few remaining structures from the original campus, representing a significant piece of the area's history.
- In 2023, the building was acquired by the Vintage Purse Museum, a non-profit organization, adding the restoration of the beautiful building into a museum that hires disabled adults.

- ***A "Story So Far" video with before and after images available on our YouTube channel: @VintagePurseMuseumNFP*** ***https://youtu.be/3ev1nGaYTlw?feature=shared***

About *VPM Pure Vintage*



- All our products are labeled with love by our disabled clients.
- Our ingredients are all natural. Raw goat's milk soap bars and bath soaks. Natural oils are the base for all serums, lip balms and deodorant. Shea butter and cocoa butter complete our creamy formula products.
- VPM Pure Vintage is a division of Bun's Soapbox, made of RAW goat's milk from a local farmer that does not pasteurize the goat's milk. We do a cold process soap-making method that cures 4 to 6 weeks.
- The old fashion way with no chemicals.

A subsidiary of Bun's Soapbox

About the Awards

Vintage Purse Museum founder Kimberly Crothers' dedication to her community and her advocacy for people with disabilities likely played a pivotal role in her being named ***Kankakee County's Woman's Club Outstanding Woman of the Year***. This recognition highlights her significant impact both in advancing inclusivity and preserving cultural heritage.

Kimberly Crothers also won the ***Vernacular Architecture Forum (VAF) Local Advocacy Award*** for her restoration and conversion of the 3 Diversatech building into the nonprofit Vintage Purse Museum that provides employment opportunities for the disabled. The VAF is the premier organization established in 1979 to promote appreciation and scholarship of vernacular structures; an interdisciplinary organization composed of scholars from many fields, including history, architectural history, geography, anthropology, sociology, landscape history, historic preservation, and material culture studies. More at: https://www.vafweb.org/





About the Visitors

The Vintage Purse Museum has had hundreds of visitors since opening on March 15, 2025, organically growing as we train our interns and thanks to our volunteers.

Visitors, based on our marketing data kiosk in the lobby, have come from as far as California and Massachusetts, with the majority within the Midwest.

Our future marketing plans shall expand our reach into all other States.





About the Reviews



"Blown away by how cool it was. Give yourself 3 hours to check it out. 5 Stars!" --Donna Grabs

"Big kudos to Kimberly and her team for transforming the old Administration Bldg into a gem of a museum. What a beautiful place with a beautiful mission! 5-Stars!" –Melanie Holmes

"I live near it so sometimes I would stop bye while they were working on it and the sweet lady would let me walk around and look ! They decorated it so well ! 5-Stars!" -- Aurora Mirandi-Juarez

More on Google





"It was great. They have a well-organized collection and the people working there were helpful and friendly. I would recommend giving them a visit." –Chris R.

"Was completely blown away. So many beyond interesting purse and artifacts to look at. Kiosks to listen too. Gift shop of some amazing things. Plus fabulous ppl to meet. Definitely recommend 110 per cent." – Donna G

"Wonderful place to visit you will see a purse that your great great grandmother had and also don't forget to go and see the Barbie room. The veterans room is awesome photos all over the room. This one veteran was on a ship and he gave them photos and he was there to tell us about his Viet Nam experience. You have to go and see it. There's a game room. Paintings to purchase in another room if you like fresh art. The murals on the wall are spectacular for what the young ladies that have done in that museum is awesome. There's something for everyone including the coffee shop and goodies. Worth the money. Lots to see." – Sarah S.

More on Trip Advisor



Thank you for Your Support!

"PURSES WITH A PURPOSE"

Sneak Peek Video

http://www.vintagepursemuseum.org