





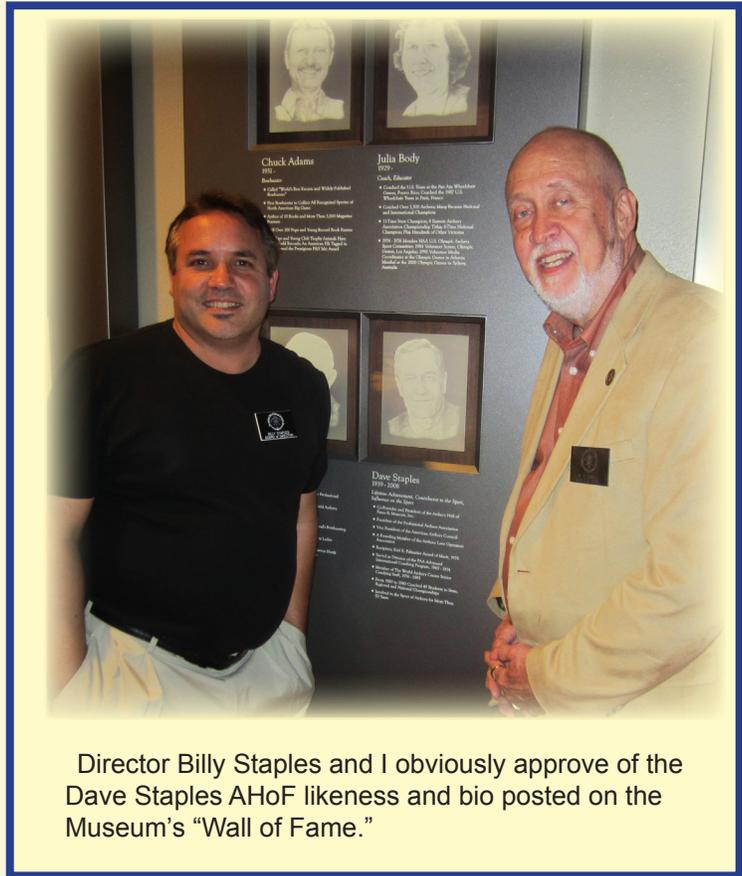
From the President

By M. R. James

NEAR THE END of our recent 27th Archery Hall of Fame induction ceremony, I told the assembled audience that I knew AHoF Founder, Dave Staples, was smiling down on us at that moment. I also said I was confident my old friend would be immensely proud of the AHoF's splendid and spacious new Museum.

I still clearly recall the phone call from Dave nearly a decade ago. He asked me to join him in Springfield, Missouri, where we'd sit down with Bass Pro Shops Founder, Johnny Morris, and other Bass Pro personnel. We'd be discussing how to incorporate a permanent home for the Archery Hall of Fame into Bass Pro's largest and oldest megastore, which attracts millions of visitors each year and ranks as the Show-Me State's *numero uno* tourist draw.

Preliminary talks already had taken place during annual Archery Trade Show meetings where Dave and Don Clark laid a foundation upon which to build and realize a collective dream. Current Executive Director Diane Miller was another early associate of Dave to envision a permanent home with breathtaking displays of archery artifacts. Now, at the time he called me, Dave admitted he was increasingly hopeful that a partnership with Bass Pro Shops would end a personal quest nearly as old as the Hall itself. A generous seven-figure donation from Hall of Famers Earl and Ann Hoyt had finally put the AHoF on solid financial footing and provided special incentive to move forward. And by the time Dave and I shook hands with Johnny Morris and headed back to the Springfield airport after talking things over, a preliminary



Director Billy Staples and I obviously approve of the Dave Staples AHoF likeness and bio posted on the Museum's "Wall of Fame."

deal had been struck that soon set the wheels of progress in motion toward construction of an Archery Hall of Fame Museum that would showcase its inductees and include appropriate archery memorabilia tracing the sport's history.

Not that things went smoothly, mind you. A perfectionist and business visionary, Johnny Morris wanted the AHoF to be "just right," reflecting quality, substance, and content befitting a public repository designed to pay homage to an ancient sport and certain participants whose accomplishments, influence, and inventions made a lasting contribution to archery and bowhunting. Plans were drawn, scrapped or modified, and redrawn. Tentative deadlines came and went. Time passed slowly until finally, after years of delay, final plans were okayed and construction work began in earnest. And at long last, on September 14, a special preview tour and open house was held on the eve of the AHoF's 27th Induction honoring the Hall's five newest members. "Impressive," "first class," and "amazing" were only a few of the

comments I heard following the Museum's initial tour. A brief welcoming ceremony revealed plans to have the Museum open to the public by Thanksgiving weekend with a Bass Pro Shops-sponsored Grand Opening in late March or early April of 2013. A satellite phone call from Johnny Morris was broadcast direct from a Colorado elk hunt where the Bass Pro founder and son John Paul were bowhunting big bulls. He reaffirmed his commitment to the partnership between his company and the AHoF, welcoming the Museum to his flagship store.

Personally, I was elated to see the visitors' reactions as the Museum was unveiled. And while many people contributed to the finished facility, extra special thanks are due Melissa Dalla Rosa and her construction crews at Bass Pro Shops, as well as AHoF Director Marilyn Bentz, who volunteered hours of on-site work weekly to represent the AHoF leadership in Springfield. All directors and

officers readily agreed that the end result was well worth the wait.

Though Dave Staples didn't live to physically witness the realization of his long-held dream, I know my friend would nod his head in approval and beam that familiar Staples smile. And that comforting thought makes me smile, too.



Director Rick McKinney and I discuss future Plans for the Museum



One of of the many displays throughout the Museum