

Historic Domes of the World

Monday, June 22 • 1:30pm • Complimentary
West Baden Springs Hotel • Lobby
Limited seating
Featured speaker: Gayle Cook

For more than 100 years, travelers have journeyed to West Baden, Indiana, to gaze up in wonder at a marvel of American engineering: the dome at West Baden Springs Hotel. Built at the turn of the century, the “Dome in the Valley” is a national architectural and cultural treasure that first astonished visitors in 1902 when the hotel opened after one year of construction.

The dome still astonishes guests today. Its steel framework of 24 girder ribs, each weighing 4.5 tons, is connected to a central drum and soars eight stories above the intricate mosaic floor. The dome spans 195 feet across the atrium and because of its size, in order to compensate for expansion and contraction of the roof, each span rides on rollers that in turn rest on columns and move depending upon how hot or cold it is outside.

The largest free-standing dome until the Houston Astrodome was built in 1965, the West Baden Springs Hotel dome remains the Eighth Wonder of the World. After just one glance, even a casual observer understands that facts and figures do not do it justice.

You are invited to learn more about the West Baden dome, our marvelous luxury hotel and many more details about America’s love of domed buildings from Bloomington resident Gayle Cook, who, along with her late husband, Bill, and son, Carl, led the decade-long renovation efforts at French Lick Resort. Mrs. Cook will offer her presentation about domes and their timeless appeal on Monday, June 22 at 1:30pm.

