

James Whitcomb Riley Visits Miller's

By *Kathy Bottorff*

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"...We set around the kitchen fire an' has the mostest fun A-list'nin' to the witch-tales 'at Annie tells about, An' the Gobble-uns 'at gits you Ef you Don't Watch Out!..."



And with that, Danny Russel of Indianapolis began his portrayal The Hoosier Poet – James Whitcomb Riley. The name of that famous poem is "Little Orphant Annie" and was written in 1885. It's a poem that appeals to children and adults alike and puts everyone in the mood for ghosts and goblins and Autumn and Halloween!

Russel told the life story of Riley using his prose and poetry and several props. Re-enacting a story of how Indiana became the "Hoosier" state he told of young boys scurrying through the woods finding body parts and he suddenly pulled an ear out of his pocket and said, "Whose ear?" , "Whose ear?" to the merriment of the audience.



Other recitations throughout his program were: "A Nonsense Rhyme", "The Raggedy Man", "Our Dog Fred", and "The Hired Man's Faith in Children".

He also told of his broken relationship with his father, his love of Indiana as the most beautiful state in the nation, his love for children and spoke of founding Riley Children's Hospital in Indianapolis.

For more information about Danny Russel and his portrayal of Famous Hoosiers go to:

www.famoushoosiers.com