

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

DETROIT
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY



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As of Nov. 13, 2025

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Elana Rugh, Tom Buhl, Jim Deutchman, and Chris Rugh at the 2025 Society Ball.

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DEAR FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS:

For more than 100 years, the Detroit Historical Society has been sharing Detroit's stories and why they matter through exhibitions, programs, and community outreach. The past few years have been some of the most dramatic in our shared history, and we are grateful for your support as we continue to present award-winning programming and exhibitions while working to ensure that the essential work of preserving the region's history is sustained in perpetuity.

With your support, we staged 25 new exhibitions and dozens of public programs and educational events in 2025. Our inaugural exhibition in the new *City of Champions Gallery*, *Gridiron Heroes: The Detroit Lions*, opened in August with cheerleaders, Roary, and the Fight Song. *The Robert and Mary Ann Bury Community Gallery* featured five exhibitions this year, including a touching memorial to Vietnam Veterans sponsored by Vietnam Veterans of America Detroit Chapter #9, and *Wrigley Hall* was the site of a beautiful exhibit celebrating 100 Years of Impact by the Kresge Foundation. We hope you joined us as we debuted the Detroit edition of Monopoly™ in the *Streets of Old Detroit* and our first Constitution Day in the *Allee Gallery of Culture*. We also filled the museums with music, adding the popular Tales from the D concert premiere series and an exhibition featuring Tom Weschler's photos of Bob Seger to our annual Concert of Colors and Black Historic Sites Committee Jazz in the Streets of Old Detroit performances.

These exhibitions, programs, and partnerships helped us expand our audience this year, welcoming thousands of new supporters to our museums. We are thankful that our reach keeps increasing and that our members visit more often each year. We promise to keep adding the benefits, programs, and events that keep you coming.

Next year marks four significant historical anniversaries. In 2026 we will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States of America, the 325th anniversary of the establishment of the city of Detroit, the 75th anniversary of the opening of the Detroit Historical Museum, and the 65th anniversary of the opening of the Dossin Great Lakes Museum. With your continued support, The Detroit Historical Society will be here to help you celebrate them all. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Elana Rugh
PRESIDENT & CEO
DETROIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



John P. Decker
CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES
DETROIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

On front: Aerial view of a Detroit Lions game at Tiger Stadium, looking south from above the Fisher Freeway (I-75), c. 1960s. In view are Trumbull Street, Michigan Avenue, and Corktown homes and businesses. Detroit Historical Society collection.

2024-25 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

EDUCATION, PROGRAMS & OUTREACH:

- We once again hosted all Detroit Public Schools Community District 3rd graders in our partnership with the school system. Some 4,000 students enjoyed museum tours with time afterward to explore interactive activities and galleries.
- In total, 12,000 students visited us this year for a tour, scavenger hunt, StoryLiving theatrical performance, or a self-led experience.
- We expanded tour offerings for our youngest visitors, hosting 100 kids and their families in a new Camp Detroit Scholars program at the Dossin Great Lakes Museum. With generous funding from Comerica Bank, the program welcomes Detroit Head Start students aged infant to 4.
- In July, we partnered with the Detroit Police Department, Detroit Fire Department, and the Youth Connection for their Summer Youth Day. Students aged 11-19 involved in the city's DPD Explorers program enjoyed customized tours and scavenger hunts around the city.
- For Midtown Educator Night, presented by Detroit Cultural Center Association, the Detroit Historical Museum welcomed hundreds of educators and hosted partners including the Historical Society of Michigan, Outdoor Adventure Center and Department of Natural Resources, Great Lakes Fisheries Commission, Pewabic Pottery, Jodi Branton (Awishinaabe Consulting), BuildON, and Wayne RESA.
- In August at the Dossin, 37 students aged 8-11 attended the 2nd annual Camp Detroit to learn about the history of the Detroit River, its people, wildlife, and natural surroundings. Field trips included our neighbors the Oudolf Garden and Belle Isle Aquarium, as well as the River Raisin National Battlefield and Education Center, the Ambassador Bridge, J.W. Westcott mail boat dock, and Cullen Plaza park.
- In September, we hosted an inaugural celebration of Constitution Day for Detroit high school students with Detroit City Council, Wayne State University, and WSU's Levin Center for Legislative Oversight and Democracy.
- We engaged community, students, volunteers, and staff with programs connected to the Detroit River in our continuing partnership with the Detroit River Storylab, run by the UM College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



The new Camp Detroit Scholars program welcomed pre-school aged visitors to the Dossin.

- For MLK, Jr. Day, storytellers Sharon E Sexton and Sheryl Pryor shared firsthand remembrances, members of our Black Historic Sites Committee and City of Detroit Historian Jamon Jordan led a panel on activist Viola Liuzzo, and a panel of students from Renaissance High School shared the importance of remembering Dr. King and Liuzzo.
- We hosted 300 visitors, 20 vendors, a magician, cartoonist, and ice carvers for Shiver on the River in February at the Dossin. Formerly held at the Belle Isle Casino by Friends of the Detroit River, this is our second year hosting the event in our space.
- On the Shoulders of Giants expanded to two weekends in February, with panel discussions, student presentations, and a vendor fair at the Detroit Historical Museum. High schoolers from Detroit Community Schools and Davis Aerospace High School joined us to portray historically significant African Americans.
- In March, we hosted the annual Michigan History Day District 10 contest, with 220 students from 20 Wayne County schools sharing projects on the theme "Rights and Responsibilities in History." More than 60 students attended the state competition and 34 made it to the nationals, where three of our students received special awards!
- Earth Day in April featured a performance by Madelyn Porter personifying the Detroit River and a craft for families to decorate take-home seed cups. We saw 200+ people at the Dossin for the event.
- On Juneteenth, Renaissance High School students helped present our annual program with a peer-led discussion about the holiday and its history. Families joined by contributing a personally meaningful drawing to a "community quilt."

EXHIBITIONS & CURATORIAL:

- The 1951 "Macauley" Packard Panamerican, a custom-built show car, opened in the *Automotive Showplace* in September.
- *Alvin's & Ralph Rinaldi's Letterpress Art* opened in *Motor City Music*, featuring prints from longtime volunteer and printmaker, Ralph M. Rinaldi, many from local music venue Alvin's Finer Delicatessen.
- *Travelin' Man: On the Road and Behind the Scenes with Bob Seger*, with photographs and artifacts from Tom Weschler, closed in *Motor City Music* in March.
- *Black Bottom Archives: 10 Years Back, 10 Years Forward* was featured in *Center Stage*.
- *Gridiron Heroes: The Detroit Lions* opened in the *City of Champions Gallery* in August, highlighting the franchise's storied history and recent triumphs.
- *Heroes vs. Villains: Detroit's Comic Book Story* opened in *Wrigley Hall* in early May. It tells the story of how local creatives entertained millions while enthusiasts built modern fandom from the ground up.
- *1984 World Series Street Portraits: Photography by Carlos Diaz* continued its run in the *Detroit Artists Showcase* through May, when *Black, Queer, Proud: 30 Years of Hotter Than July* opened, recognizing the world's second oldest Black Queer Pride event.
- Handprints by Greg Kelser, Huel Perkins, and Mickey Redmond were added to *Legends Plaza* in July.
- *Kresge at 100: A Century of Impact, A Future of Opportunity* told the story of the Kresge family, Kresge Foundation, and Kresge stores through February in *Wrigley Hall*. It also included enhanced storytelling in the Kresge 5 & 10 Store in *The Streets of Old Detroit*.
- *Arising from the Ashes: Twenty-Five Years of Detroit 1967-1992* ran during the summer in the *Auditorium Showcase*, created by Curatorial Associate Taylor Claybrook as part of her WSU master's thesis.
- *Grand River WorkPlace* ran in the *Auditorium Showcase* from October to January, celebrating 10 years in the Grandmont Rosedale community,
- Shown once before, we brought back *Come Out! In Detroit* as a sister exhibit to *Heroes Vs. Villains*. It tells the story of Christopher Street Detroit '72, Michigan's first LGBTQ+ pride event, in comic book format.
- *The Robert and Mary Ann Bury Community Gallery* featured an exhibition in partnership with The Detroit Chapter of the LINKS, Inc., *Toy Town* for the holiday season, *If History Were Taught As Stories, It Would Never Be Forgotten*, in partnership with Professor Craig Wilkins, and the WSU Student Scholarship Show with Detroit Artists Market.
- The pop-up exhibition *It's Rust or Us!* told the story of Ziebart's 65 years of business in *America's Motor City*.
- *Detroit Diesel Power* remained open for FY25 in the *Motor City Showcase*. It was nominated for a MotorCities National Heritage Area Award.
- At the Dossin Great Lakes Museum, *The Ship Model Showcase* featured the newly repaired *Munson* and *Mayflower* along with *Greater Detroit*.
- We partnered again with the WSU Intro to Public History class to create two summer exhibitions at the Dossin Great Lakes Museum, featuring stories of urban farming and powerboat racing.
- In the *Robert M. Dossin Gallery*, *Challenge These Waters: A Century of Sailing from Detroit to Mackinac Island* celebrated the race's 100th consecutive running in July 2024, in partnership with Bayview Yacht Club.
- Our interactive Engage by Cell content saw 6,352 engagements in FY25, including 3,270 in the *Streets of Old Detroit* and 610 in *Gridiron Heroes*.
- The Wayne County History Project kicked off with an exhibit on Redford, Westland, Livonia, Garden City, Inkster, and Wayne at the Guardian Building in June.
- We opened an on-site exhibition celebrating 100 years on the first floor of the Westin Book Cadillac Hotel that ran October-April.
- We loaned a large number of paintings to the David Whitney Hotel that has become a Detroit Painting exhibition on their mezzanine level.



Toy Town was a hit for the holidays, and the restored Mayflower was featured in the Ship Model Showcase.



RETAIL & VISITOR SERVICES:



The museum store showcased Detroit Monopoly and Toy Town with holiday decor and merchandise.

- During the holiday season, the online store did \$85,000 worth of sales, with \$26,000+ and 419 orders attributed to marketing efforts. This is nearly double the sales we saw over the same period in 2023.
- For the opening weekend of *Toy Town*, the Retail and Visitor Services team incorporated themes from the exhibition into the Detroit Historical Museum store by decorating displays and fixtures with holiday lights, gift boxes, and faux snow. A local artist painted the store and front desk windows to create vintage toy shop visuals.
- In a joint effort with Programs & Events, Retail and Visitor Experience team members programmed and managed the On the Shoulders of Giants vendor fair with 16 local vendors. Responsibilities included initial vendor outreach, creating layouts for the event, coordinating vendor spotlights on Fox 2 news, and assisting with load-in and load-out.
- Team members hand-selected items for sale at the Michigan in Perspective: Local History Conference at Oakland University in March. Free souvenirs, educational and promotional materials, and unique merchandise generated \$1,200+ in sales across two days and illustrated the department's ability to effectively curate a selection of merchandise.
- We created and worked alongside Marketing and Exhibitions to promote a Blow-Out Sale at the Detroit Historical Museum (May 17-18). The event generated \$2,500+ in retail sales across two days.
- We curated a specialized assortment of merchandise for the 2025 Detroit Grand Prix (May 30-June 1) including popular sports apparel items, as well as Grand Prix items with images sourced from the Detroit Historical Society archives, resulting in \$8,000 in retail sales.

MUSEUM RENTALS:

- Facility Rentals recorded \$127,710 in revenue, with \$58,430 in outstanding balances. As the majority of revenue has already been secured and contracts are confirmed for the Fall and Winter seasons, we are well positioned for strong growth heading into FY26.
- We renewed many preferred catering contracts, ensuring consistency for clients, while new vendors like Folk Detroit (trial service), Common Pub, The Mirage, and Someday expand options. Newly approved bar services Brydie's Bar and Sumptuous Spirits add flexibility and help clients streamline their planning.
- We re-signed a multi-year contract with the Parade Company for Thanksgiving 2025. The partnership not only strengthens community ties but also highlights the Detroit Historical Museum as a trusted venue for large-scale, high-profile events.
- Holiday season success! Our first 2025 holiday party booking was secured in April, with many more in the works. Holiday rentals are historically among the most profitable bookings, bringing in both corporate and private clients.
- High-profile corporate and community events included Accenture International Women's Event (March), Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity meeting (April), Detroit Chapter NAACP pop-up meeting (May), Detroit Regional Chamber Leadership Conference (returning clients, September), and the Asian American Foundation's two-day conference (July).
- New long-term contracts like the Detroit Bourbon Festival bring in new audiences and expand our visibility. These contracts highlight our appeal as both a corporate and cultural venue.
- Weddings, proms, and corporate celebrations were all executed successfully, building our reputation for exceptional service. Employee rental inquiries further demonstrate trust and interest in using Society facilities for internal events.

The Dossin's private riverfront patio is a popular choice for wedding clients.



MARKETING & INTERNAL EVENTS:

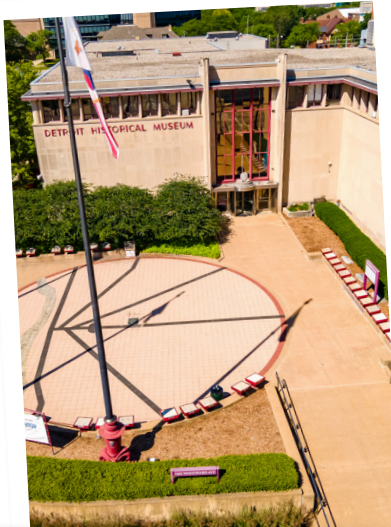
- Both museums earned Certified Autism Center certification from IBCCES. Comprehensive sensory guides for both museums and sensory bags are now available for guest use.
- We hosted four Late Nights at the Detroit Historical Museum (May-Aug) with 1,000+ in attendance. Free admission was supported by the William Davidson foundation.
- During Educator Appreciation Month in August, 370 school and library employees visited our museums for free, and we offered a book and tote giveaway.
- *Gridiron Heroes* opened in grand style at the Detroit Historical Museum on August 23 with a private event featuring the Lions mascot, drum corps, cheerleaders, and a live performance of the team fight song. Sponsors Visit Detroit and Gilbert Family Foundation supported an outdoor display, which was also reprised for the public opening the following day.
- We had strong attendance at both museums in December, with 1,733 visitors during our four Free Holiday Sundays and 3,999 paid visitors between Christmas and January 5. Many visitors cited *Toy Town*, the new Monopoly game, and family outings as the reason for their visit.
- In conjunction with their exhibition, we offered eight free admission days at the Detroit Historical Museum supported by the Kresge Foundation. Total attendance in our run of Kresge Free Second Sundays was 3,768 people.
- We kicked off our series of *Tales from the D* premieres on Friday, February 14 with a full house for the Johnny B episode and performance. Events also took place in March, April, and May.
- The *Travelin' Man* photography exhibition concluded with a silent auction on March 15 that earned \$8,100+ on Tom Weschler's original photographs.
- With the return of museum wedding and event bookings, we reactivated digital advertising for rentals. Our Facebook and Instagram ads sent 5,600+ clicks to the event rentals landing page.
- Our Google keyword ads for rentals also performed well with an average click-through rate of 11%, delivering \$12,000 worth of advertising value for free through Google's Nonprofit Ad Grant.
- This year, we automatically added 5,285 new email contacts to our marketing list who registered for an event, visited a museum, signed up for a membership, or made a donation thanks to the Omatic Altru-Constant Contact email integration.



***Tales from the D* brought four red carpet premieres and live performances to the Detroit Historical Museum.**

- We finished FY25 with 848,918 email opens, a 53% increase from last year, even as we saw our social media engagements dip. This reflects a larger trend of people favoring email over social media for more direct and reliable updates.
- We advertised in the 2025 *HOOR Detroit* hotel guest guide, Metro Detroit's only in-room visitor guide, which was distributed in 12,000+ rooms at 75+ local hotels, reaching an estimated 1.43 million guests.
- Fiscal year-over-year attendance at both museums was up about 16.5%, with especially good numbers coinciding with the Detroit Lions exhibit (Aug-Dec), year-end media coverage, and our seasonal radio ad campaigns.
- We renewed our sponsorship of the Michigan in Perspective: Local History Conference, receiving recognition as a presenting sponsor, advertising in the conference brochure, and a booth in the exhibit hall at Oakland University.
- We kicked off the Wayne County History Project with a VIP reception and community open house in June at the Guardian Building.
- We launched the new Detroit Historical Society website in late May, consolidating four separate sites onto one versatile and up-to-date platform and managed through one backend CMS.
- In addition to being mobile friendly and responsive, the site meets Web Content Accessibility Guidelines at Level AA and is data privacy compliant with a cookie and consent banner, privacy policy, and location-sensitive terms and conditions pages.
- The new site brings our 47,000-object digital collection, previously hosted on third party platform PastPerfect, onto our main website, making it much more discoverable. The collection search page is our most visited page so far.

OPERATIONS:



The Detroit Historical Museum received several upgrades and readied for more next year, including all new windows.

Thanks to capital expenditure support from the City of Detroit and individual donors, we continued to make progress in maintaining and upgrading our two museums and the Collections Resource Center (CRC).

At the Detroit Historical Museum:

- An “air curtain” was installed in the Kirby Lobby to better maintain temperature for guests and staff, particularly in cold months.
- The parking lot was resealed and striped and a new easier-to-use parking lot kiosk was installed.
- The former DeRoy conference room space facing Woodward was upgraded to an “industrial feel” with a raised ceiling and additional lighting, making it an excellent addition to *America’s Motor City*.
- Essential projects to enhance safety and efficiency included new exit doors and key HVAC upgrades.

Several projects begun in FY25 are slated for completion in FY26, including:

- A specially designed quiet room at the Detroit for neurodiverse visitors that need a break.
- The Exhibition Design Studio in the Carriage House will undergo an extensive change in layout and functionality to create more storage and a better working environment.
- Finally, through a grant from the America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), we are able to replace the Detroit Historical Museum’s original 75-year-old windows with 21st century energy efficient windows, while maintaining the building’s mid-century modern look.

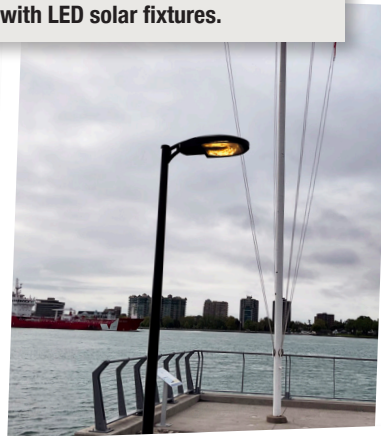
At the Dossin Great Lakes Museum:

- We replaced parking lot and promenade lighting with an upgraded solar-powered LED fixture, providing a fully lit parking area adjacent to our outdoor exhibits. Other work included HVAC and electrical repairs.

Additionally:

- A comprehensive study from Honeywell provided at no cost through a referral from City Council Member Scott Benson focused on utilities, HVAC, and our roofing systems to create a road map for future maintenance.
- A complete safety review of our buildings led to basic safety for staff through an online program with Mineral, the purchase of a scissor lift for installing exhibits or making building repairs, and retooling the Exhibition Woodshop with up-to-date and safe equipment.
- With funding from the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan, we contracted with engineering firm Buro Happold to assess the CRC and establish a starting point for working with the City of Detroit and future options for the building.

Lighting in the Dossin parking lot and promenade was upgraded with LED solar fixtures.



Our on-site exhibition at the Westin Book Cadillac opened with media tours and a curator chat.

MEMBERSHIP:

- Membership milestones! This year we celebrated our 5,000th member (Lisa Paisley of Troy), achieved the highest member revenue in 11 years, and recorded the highest number of paid memberships in Society history
- We delivered on our brand promise of access, information, best-in-class member experience:
 - ▶ Added Reciprocal Organization of Associated Membership (ROAM) as a new member benefit, providing access to free admission to even MORE museums.
 - ▶ Refined monthly member events (11 total attended by 358 members) and exhibition previews.
 - ▶ Added four businesses to the Membership Plus program that provides discounts to members.
- We grew in numbers and revenue as paid memberships increased by 32% in FY25 (from 928 to 1,229), Detroiters memberships increased by 4%, membership dues revenue increased by 9% (\$103,586 to \$112,908), and we maintained a membership dues revenue per member rate of >\$90.
- We engaged new audiences: 213 guests joined us at two innovative events targeting new audiences.
- We engaged with hundreds of Detroit residents at 10 tabling events through our "In the Community" framework, with event partners including Black Tech Saturdays, Celebrating a Healthier Detroit (McKinney Foundation), Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, Detroit Riverfront Conservancy, Eastside Community Network, Eastside Roasterz, Hustle Exhibition Winner Sherrie Savage/The Coloring Museum, TechTown, and The Congregation.
- We launched a new Corporate Membership program with two corporate members and \$8,500 in revenue.
- We collaborated with Gilbert Family Foundation, Connect Detroit, and Detroit Excellence in Youth Arts on a grant-funded Culture Pass Detroit membership program and secured a \$27,875 commitment for a second year.
- We reimagined and began recruitment efforts for the Detroit 313 Leadership Affinity Group.
- We soft-launched a new trivia series designed to increase in-person and virtual member engagement.
- We continued working with the Trustee Membership Workgroup that was established last fiscal year.

PUBLIC RELATIONS:

- We partnered with the Westin Book Cadillac to promote the hotel's 100th anniversary and our on-site exhibit with a call for artifacts, media tours, and a public opening reception in October.
- The Detroit Historical Museum was featured on the game board for the new Detroit Monopoly game, and we hosted the debut party on November 8.
- Detroit Monopoly and the *Toy Town* exhibition were big draws for pre-holiday crowds and generated steady media coverage over November and December.
- NBC Sports filmed *America's Motor City* at the Detroit Historical Museum for a segment that aired during the January 5 Lions-Vikings game. The highly anticipated matchup was the highest rated *Sunday Night Football* season finale since 2012, drawing an estimated 28.5 million viewers.
- An unveiling ceremony for the 2025 American Innovation dollar was held on April 8 at the Detroit Historical Museum. The MotorCities National Heritage Area, Michigan History Foundation, and Michigan State Numismatic Society hosted the event.
- The Michigan State Capitol Commission filmed two interviews in *The Streets of Old Detroit* for a series of short films on Michigan's capitol for the building's upcoming 150th anniversary.
- We've fielded many media inquiries on the county's upcoming 250th anniversary. Curatorial staff and our collections content will continue to be in demand as we approach the anniversary in 2026.
- We had wide media coverage of the *Heroes vs. Villains* exhibition, which opened in May.
- The Vietnam Veterans exhibit *Welcome Home* debuted in the *Community Gallery* on June 26 with 100+ people in attendance for a ribbon cutting and opening celebration. The *Detroit Free Press* also featured the exhibit in a story that day.



Detroit Lions cheerleaders and Roary delighted guests at the *Gridiron Heroes* opening.

COLLECTIONS & DIGITIZATION:

- The Mission Committee accepted 119 individual donations, resulting in 1,660 new items for the collection.
- Some highlights were a Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Detroit March Poster, 1963; Olympia Stadium Blueprints, 1926; Downtown Detroit Hudson's Animatronic Holiday Elves, c. 1955; and an NFL Draft Stage Piece, 2024.
- Collections and Curatorial staff delivered 40 Speaker's Bureau presentations to Metro Detroit libraries, community centers, and more.
- 17 new artifact loans were made in FY25, with 280 total objects loaned during this period. Borrowing institutions included Ford Piquette Plant Museum, Hamburg Township Historical Society and Museum, IQHub (St. Johns, MI), Macomb Community College, Michigan Department of Transportation, Trenton Historical Commission, Wayne State University Museum of Anthropology & Planetarium, The War Memorial, WDIV TV, and Williams International LLC.
- We continued ongoing loans of 227 total objects to 31 borrowing institutions, such as Detroit Public Library, Detroit Tigers, Detroit Urban League, Grand Circus Park Conservancy @ The David Whitney, Manoogian Mansion, Marshall Fredericks Museum (Bay City, MI), Mariners' Church, Meadow Brook Hall, Michigan Maritime Museum (South Haven, MI), and U.S. Senator Elissa Slotkin's office.
- Six interns worked on projects at the Collections Resource Center during FY25, totaling 660 hours.
- We created two custom exhibitions for Bloomfield Township Public Library – in August 2024 and February 2025.
- Three traveling exhibitions were shipped: *Jerome Beiderman Automotive Illustrations* to Haggin Museum in Stockton, CA; *Fighting on the Home Front: World War II Propaganda Posters* to High Plains Museum in Goodland, KS; and *Michigan in the Civil War* to Orion Township Public Library.
- Cars from our collection traveled to events:
 - ▶ 1963 Ford Mustang II to Cobble Beach Concours, Kemble, Ontario; Buffalo Motorama, Buffalo, NY; and Troy Traffic Jam, Troy, MI.
 - ▶ 1963 Ford Cougar II to Buffalo Motorama.
 - ▶ 1963 Chrysler Turbine to Sloan Auto Fair, Flint, MI..
- The Collections and Digitization teams recorded 97 sales of digital reproductions of image/video collections material: 70 static photo requests and 27 orders of :30 second collections video clips.
- Total Revenue generated for Collection and Exhibition Services was \$98,290, relative to a budget of \$55,050.
- We sent our 1st Michigan Cavalry Civil War Battle Flag to a conservator who painstakingly reconstructed it over a period of several months. The restored flag was then returned to the collection, where it awaits an opportunity for display.

HUMAN RESOURCES:

- Employee census: We concluded FY25 with a total of 80 employees, 47 full-time and 33 part-time staff—including 7 part-time interns from the University of Michigan, Wayne State University, University of Michigan–Dearborn, and Western Michigan University.
- FY25 focused on updating and creating key policies, including bereavement, COVID, and severe weather protocols.
- New tools and compliance: We launched a new time and attendance system to align with legislative updates and streamline payroll processing; ensured volunteer compliance with background checks and creating a code of conduct; and transitioned I-9 forms to an electronic format.
- We successfully completed the first round of performance reviews using a new platform (FY24) and delivered key training sessions, such as sexual harassment, OSHA compliance, IBCESS recertification, and incident reporting.
- We began the strategic search for a new Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to strengthen our executive leadership team, as our current CFO Matthew Greenough prepares to retire. This process will involve close collaboration between HR, the President & CEO, and members of the Board of Trustees.
- We enhanced employee experience with events like the Holiday Party at Roostertail, Employee Appreciation Day, and by creating the Employee Resource Group (ERG). The ERG meets regularly, discussing ideas and feedback for a best in class workplace.
- Future of HR: The HR team remains in “mission mode,” with a continued focus on strengthening foundational processes and driving strategic initiatives that support both organizational growth and employee development.

DEVELOPMENT:

- Camp Detroit was awarded major funding support by Detroit-born, New Hampshire-based donor Alberta Elder. In FY25, Mrs. Elder made the decision to underwrite the full cost of the camp in perpetuity. For one week each summer, children ages 8-11 receive a wonderful experience at the Dossin Great Lakes Museum with hands-on learning, history lessons, and fun-filled field trips. The camp is free and includes a nutritious lunch and healthy snacks each day. (Thank you, Mrs. Elder!)
- Our Development and Membership teams collaborated to create our Corporate Membership program.
- In September, the annual Course of History Golf Classic returned to the Country Club of Detroit. The highly anticipated event has been supported by 25+ corporate sponsors over the previous two years.
- The Glancy Family finalized a \$100,000 pledge to the Society in FY25. Payable over two years, the gift will provide maintenance and upgrades to the iconic train exhibition. *The Glancy Trains* exhibit continues to be a favorite for young and old alike!
- The Development team launched a Planned Giving program in November 2024. Named for the couple who in 2012 awarded the Society with its first ever planned gift, The Terence and Jennifer Adderley Society recognizes those who wish to see the Society thrive for future generations and who have included the Detroit Historical Society in their estate plans.
- The Annual Society Ball on April 4 hosted more than 260 guests at the historic Roostertail and raised nearly \$110,000 in support of vital initiatives like our Oral History Project, essential school tours, and the ongoing care of our collection.



37 students attended the 2nd annual Camp Detroit, which has been supported in perpetuity by Mrs. Alberta Elder.



The Glancy Trains received a significant new pledge of support from the Glancy Family.

DONOR PROFILE: DONNA AND PAUL ATKINS



Plymouth residents Paul and Donna Atkins recently decided to add the Dossin Great Lakes Museum to their estate plan to create a maritime legacy for Donna's father, Matthew J. Apt, and recognize a friendship with the Detroit Historical Society that extends beyond the financial.

Matthew Apt began sailing on Great Lakes freighters for the Pittsburgh Steamship Company in 1930. He left the lakes in 1940 to work in a Warren tool and die shop but felt compelled to serve his country in the U.S. Merchant Marine when the United States went to war in 1941. While on leave in 1943, he married his fiancé, Gertrude. When the war in Europe ended, rather than transfer to the Pacific, he asked to be discharged from service and left as a Lieutenant Commander and First Assistant Engineer. The way Donna tells it, "Dad asked Mom about transferring to the Pacific Theater because he only needed 100 more hours to qualify for Chief Engineer, but Mom said, 'No, you've done enough.'" Matthew returned to his tool and die job and worked there until he retired in 1973.

When Matthew Apt passed away in 1993, Donna and her mother discussed possible recipients for memorial gifts. Donna remembered how much her father had liked a print of the *S.S. William Clay Ford* she had purchased as a gift from the Detroit Historical Society. Since he had sailed by the site of the Dossin Great Lakes Museum many times during his Great Lakes career, linking his memory to the museum seemed very appropriate. They decided that donations made by friends and family in his memory would be directed to the Dossin.

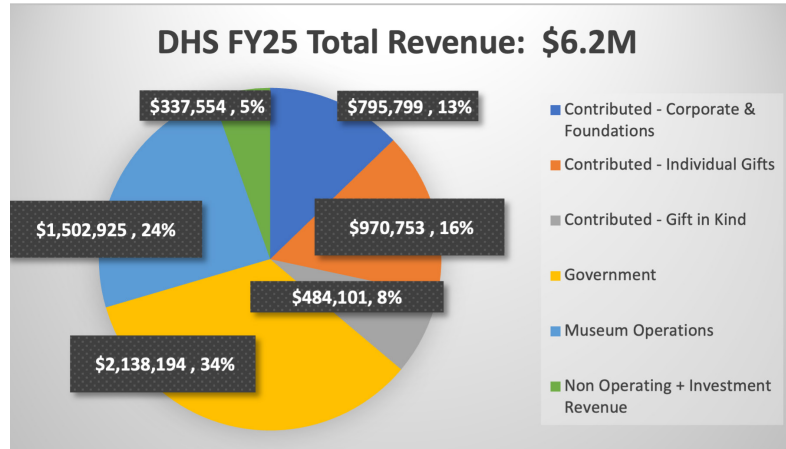
The Society added their gift to funds that supported the recovery of the *S.S. Edmund Fitzgerald's* anchor from the Detroit River by the Great Lakes Maritime Institute. The anchor now rests on the Dossin grounds. The family was notified that Matthew Apt's name (with others who had made the recovery possible) was added to the anchor's identifying plaque should they ever wish to see it. Donna says that they were honored by the unexpected gesture and emotionally moved when they saw his name. This established a fondness for the Dossin that has continued for more than 30 years.

When they decided to update their estate plan, Donna and Paul remembered what the Society did 30 years earlier and decided on a further planned gift to the Dossin Great Lakes Museum.

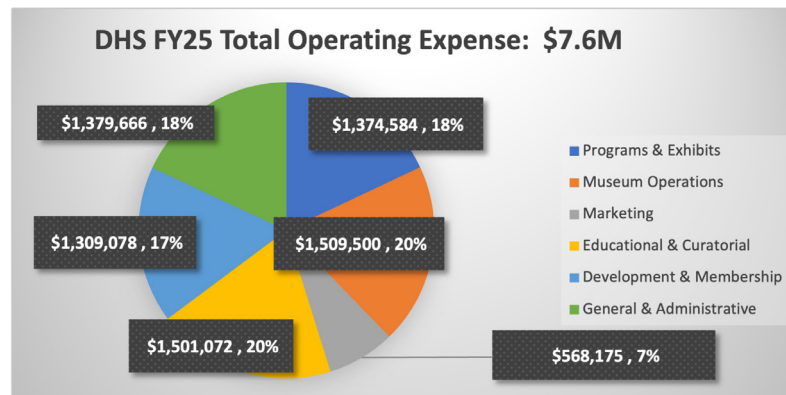
DETROIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Combined Revenue and Expense information for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2025.

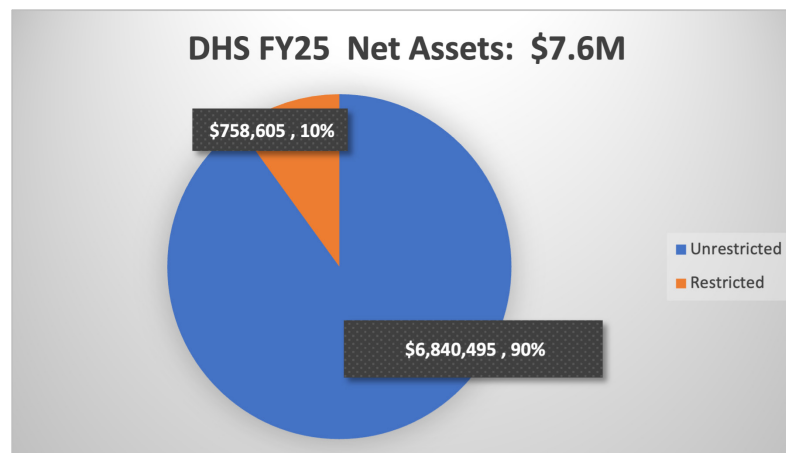
REVENUE



EXPENSES



NET ASSETS



GOVERNMENT, CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION DONORS

\$1,000,000- \$3,000,000

City of Detroit

\$100,000- \$999,000

Community Foundation for
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University of Detroit Mercy
Library
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Kresge at 100: A Century of Impact, A Future of Opportunity highlighted the nationwide work of the Kresge Foundation.



The 2025 Society Ball was held in April at the Roostertail on Detroit's riverfront.

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*7 people gave anonymously
totaling \$3,685*

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We couldn't have done it without you.

Thank you!

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The Detroit Historical Society tells Detroit's stories and why they matter.

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To be an integral part of Detroit's present and future by providing meaningful experiences that preserve and share its past.

detroithistorical.org



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313.833.1805



Dossin Great Lakes Museum
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