HAVE YOU HEARD THE BUZZ?

Here are some of the rave reviews of our Museum from visiting media over the last year!

“Have you heard the buzz? To get a lay of the land, check out The Buffalo History Museum, a National Historic Landmark dating back to the 1901 Pan-American Exposition. The interactive exhibits show where this remarkable city has been—and where it’s heading next.”

- FORBES ADVISOR

“Throughout my travels through New York and beyond, I’ve visited dozens of great local history museums, both in big cities and small towns. However, I don’t know that any of them have been as fantastic as the Buffalo History Museum.”

- UNCOVERINGNEWYORK.COM

Dear Members and Friends,

Early in my career, a valuable lesson came to me at the hands of my daughters. Around age 3, they became obsessed with the 1939 classic The Wizard of Oz. During this same time, our “Spirit of the City” to commemorate the centennial of the 1901 Pan-American Exposition was the Museum’s freshest exhibit experience. Our 9-foot tall, architect’s model of the Electric Tower drew guests into the State Court and the girls fell for the bait. Skirting across the limestone floor in their sequined ruby slippers, they dashed towards the Exposition’s beacon, exclaiming, “Mommy, Mommy, look, it’s the witch’s castle!”

The Pan-Am historian in me was about to set them straight. “Oh…no, girls. This is the Electric Tower. It shined light over the Pan-American Exposition a long, long time ago.”

Their eyes glazed over, and they flitted along. Of course, they saw the witch’s castle. Everything in their lived-experience and memory centered on Dorothy’s adventures in Oz. It colored our days. I remember being disappointed in myself for not going with it. I was so caught up in telling them the real story of the tower, that I lost the opportunity to appreciate it from their toddler perspectives.

We used to do this a lot at the Museum. We would tell people what they needed to know about local history. Labels in exhibits were long. Sure, they were well-researched and fact-filled, but they were usually authored by a single “expert.”

Our aspiration to “experience history with you” has re-focused us and now informs how we engage with individuals and communities to share their histories— from their perspectives. We work to tell less and share more. A culturally competent museum is constantly learning about their own worldview and biases, the worldviews of others, and the ways we all see things differently.

As you explore this recap of 2023, we hope you appreciate this shift in action, from our treasured community partnerships to our Junior History Buffs children’s programming and our contemporary collecting initiatives. Continue helping us to make The Buffalo History Museum a place where you and the many communities of Western New York can explore story-filled exhibits, dive into unexpected collections, discover hidden gems of research, and SHARE memorable experiences with others.

All my best,

Executive Director
EXPERIENCING HISTORY WITH YOU IN 2023

DEBUT OF THE BLIZZARD OF 2022 COLLECTING INITIATIVE

Soon after the snow stopped, we set out to preserve the community’s memories from the historic and deadly Blizzard of 2022. Since launching the initiative, we’ve collected more than 100 photos, videos and objects donated by the community, which will help future generations of Buffalonians better understand this extraordinary storm.

10TH ANNUAL BUFFALO CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

Thousands gathered in our Museum and in the Japanese Garden to enjoy Western New York’s premier celebration of spring. The 10th anniversary provided us with an opportunity to reflect on the festival’s blooming growth since 2014, a testament to a successful and longstanding partnership between our Museum, the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, Music is Art, and the Friends of the Japanese Garden.

“SAY THEIR NAMES: HONOR THEIR LEGACIES” EXHIBIT OPENING

The Uncrowned Queens Institute’s exhibit featured portraits, biographies and video interviews that captured the stories of a group of Buffalo’s community elders. Buffalo’s Uncrowned Queens Institute works to preserve the histories of African American women and men across the country.

JUNE: RETURN OF PARTY ON THE PORTICO

Our signature summer concert series overlooking Delaware Park attracted hundreds of guests throughout the summer with the help of a new community partner, Music is Art, which booked the 2023 lineup with an array of local talent.

JUNE: RETURN OF PARTY ON THE PORTICO

One of the most iconic pieces in our collection – a masterwork from a nationally significant artist – was back on exhibit here for the first time in over a decade. “The Trial of Red Jacket” exhibit represented our latest effort to provide more access to our extraordinary collection.

DEBUT OF STAINED GLASS EXHIBIT

We partnered with the Stained Glass Association of America to host “On the Shoulders of Giants: Innovation in American Stained Glass,” which paid homage to generations of stained-glass artists who pushed the boundaries of the medium. We welcomed new audiences through this dynamic partnership with the SGAA.

DEBUT OF JUNIOR HISTORY BUFFS

We’re always looking to inspire the next generation of Buffalonians with an appreciation of history! Junior History Buffs, which engages children in age-appropriate history lessons, songs, stories, crafts and games, has developed an avid following since debuting last fall.

RETURN OF “THE TRIAL OF RED JACKET”

For more than 65 years, we’ve recognized change makers and trail blazers who have consistently showed up for our community with The Red Jacket Award. This year’s Red Jacket Award winners were Mary Wilson and the late Alfred Price. We also recognized Melissa Dunlap and Thomas Regstad with the Owen B. Augspurger Award, and The Tonawanda-Kenmore Historical Society & Museum with the Daniel B. Niederhander Award.

THE RED JACKET AWARDS

Look back with us through a year of exciting new exhibits, dynamic programming, and compelling collecting initiatives.

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In 2023, we collaborated with partners and co-creators from across Western New York to produce exhibits and programs that shared our region’s rich, complex and diverse history. By investing in long-term partnerships with key community organizations, we’ve sparked connections and collaborations leading to new audiences, support, and deeper insights.

These partnerships included hosting the Uncrowned Queens Institute’s new exhibit, “Say Their Names, Honor Their Legacies,” which shared the stories, wisdom and portraits of a group of Buffalo’s senior Black community builders, and the Stained Glass Association of America’s exhibit “On the Shoulders of Giants: Innovations in Stained Glass,” which paid homage to generations of stained-glass artists who have pushed the boundaries of the medium.

In October, we worked with the Hispanic Heritage Council to bring the sights and sounds of “Festival De Cuatro” to our auditorium. We also hosted the Colored Musicians Club’s Sunday Night Jam Sessions throughout the year while the Club undergoes an expansion.

While we collect stories that go back hundreds of years, we also recognize that history continues to unfold today. Our contemporary collecting initiatives assure that evidence of our times will be preserved for generations to come. In 2023, we launched the Blizzard of 2022 Collecting Initiative to document memories and experiences from the extraordinary and deadly Blizzard of 2022. We’ve since collected more than 100 photos, videos, audio recordings and objects donated by the community from the storm.

In addition, as a member of the 5/14 Buffalo Massacre Community Memory Coalition, we continue our collaboration to combat white supremacy by collecting, documenting, and preserving an intentional and authentic record of the May 14, 2022 racist massacre on Buffalo’s East Side. This growing network of survivors, community members, and heritage-based professionals will create a repository of collective memory that will include, but not be limited to, oral history recordings and the preservation of mementos.

These efforts will help ensure that future generations of Buffalonians will better understand the events, stories, experiences and challenges currently affecting our city.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>FORGING KEY PARTNERSHIPS</th>
<th>COLLECTING FOR TOMORROW</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>35</th>
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<tr>
<td>New Exhibits</td>
<td>Programs Hosted</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>30,654</th>
<th>1,688</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Museum Visitors</td>
<td>Two and three dimensional artifacts catalogued in 2023</td>
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<tr>
<th>7,668</th>
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<tr>
<td>Artifacts Digitally Preserved and Accessible</td>
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Our website and podcast attracted thousands of new visitors in 2023 who explored our ever-growing variety of digital offerings. Our effort to develop more blog content, redesign our homepage, digitally preserve more of our collection and boost our search rankings through the Google for Nonprofits program drew 115,000 visitors to our website in 2023, an increase of more than 60 percent from 2022. And our podcast’s in-depth storytelling continued to gain a following in 2023, attracting 16,873 downloads in 2023, nearly 2,000 more than in 2022.

We’re continuing to generate excitement and awareness about our Museum through increased marketing and public relations. In 2023, we garnered 59 earned media placements, both in local news outlets and on out-of-town travel websites and blogs, an increase of nearly 50 percent from the year before. And the expansion of our marketing department to include a digital media specialist helped us ramp up our presence on social media and create more posts, stories and short form videos than ever before. Last year, we added more than 1,300 followers on Instagram, and 2,700 fans on Facebook, to create a combined social media audience of more than 31,000.

We’re continuing to invest in our staff, adding several new team members in 2023 who will continue to position our organization for long-term success. Those additions included Tala Harden, our digital media specialist who is taking our social media presence to the next level. Caroline Gass, our membership and volunteer coordinator, is placing a renewed emphasis on connecting with some of our most important ambassadors. Lauren Kausner, our education coordinator, has re-energized our relationship with local schools and ramped up our children’s programming. In addition, Michelle Harris joined us in the fall as our new senior director of collections and is tasked with leading the preservation and care of our extraordinary collection. Welcome, all!

Throughout the year, we sought new ways to make Buffalo’s history more relevant to students and children. In October, we debuted the Junior History Buffs program on M&T Third Fridays. The program engages children from age 4 to 9 in history lessons, songs, stories, crafts and games. Since its debut in October, Junior History Buffs has attracted hundreds of children and their families to learn about important historical figures like Margaret St. John, Louise Bethune and Ely Parker.

We placed a renewed focus last year on reconnecting with and expanding our team of volunteers. In the final months of 2023, we hosted a volunteer meet-and-greet and a holiday party, scheduled bi-monthly training sessions for new and existing volunteers, and created new opportunities for our volunteers to share their time, talent and expertise. Email Membership and Volunteer Coordinator Caroline Gass at cgass@buffalohistory.org to become a volunteer today!
FINANCIALS

**Revenue**

- **2023**
  - Earned: $1,202,730
  - Private: $555,433
  - Public: $472,500

21% Earned
54% Private
25% Public

**Expenses**

- **2023**
  - Administrative: $531,026
  - Advancement: $534,916
  - Collections: $524,462
  - Library: $111,677
  - Visitor Experience: $111,677

23% Administrative
25% Advancement
23% Collections
24% Library
5% Visitor Experience

STAFF & BOARD

**Administrative**

- Executive Director: Melissa Brown
- Director of Development: Megan Hahn
- Membership and Volunteer Coordinator: Caroline Gass

**Development**

- Director of Development: Megan Hahn
- Membership and Volunteer Coordinator: Caroline Gass

**Communications**

- Director of Communications: Brian Hayden
- Digital Media Specialist: Tala Harden

**Collections**

- Senior Director of Museum Collections: Michelle Harris
- Director of Library and Archives: Cynthia Van Ness
- Registrar: Rebecca Justinger
- Greg D. Tranter Collection Manager: Kristin Glassy
- Archives Associate: Rachel Nicolosi

**Programs & Education**

- Director of Exhibits and Interpretive Planning: Anthony Greco
- Education Coordinator: Lauren Kausner

**Operations & Facilities**

- Director of Operations: Robin Foley
- Administrative Assistant: Desiree Peacock
- Guest Services and Retail Manager: Kelsey Reed
- Guest Services Associates: James Lester, Kara Purpura, Danielle Panaro, Facilities: Jill Leturgy, Ethan Pedone, Johnny Salmeni

**Board of Managers**

- President: Kevin Brady
- Vice-Presidents: Cassie Irish, Mark L. Martin, Dr. Barbara Seals Nevergold, William O’Donnell, Alexander Schimert, Mark Taylor
- Secretary: Anne Conable
- Treasurer: Brian Dempsey
- Managers: Gaile Amigone, Dr. Lisa Marie Anselmia, Rosario Chetta, Christopher Copeland, Noel Emerling, Terry Gilbridge, Julian Looney, Michael Quinnney, Stuart Rockefeller, Sandra Starks, Hon. Penny Wolfgang, Lisa Yaeger

**Life Trustees**

- Hon. Carl Bucki, Shonnie Finnegan, Kenneth Friedman
- Sue S. Gardner, Sally Gioia, Dr. Ellen Grant Bishop
- Philip Kadet, Richard Lippes, Allie Loesch
- Hon. Henry Nowak, Richard Penfold, David Rumsey, Catherine Schweitzer, Richard Wiesen

as of December 31, 2023
Thank You For Your Support!

We also count on hundreds of individual donors that support the Museum through membership and personal philanthropy. If you would like to learn more, contact Megan Hahin, Director of Development, at mhahin@buffalohistory.org.

Contact Us

Online
Buffalohistory.org

Email
Reception@Buffalohistory.org

In Person
One Museum Court
Buffalo, NY 14216

Social Media
#Buffalohistory

Testimonials

Our exhibition at the Buffalo History Museum was a remarkable opportunity for the Stained Glass Association of America, featuring contemporary works that build on a strong historical foundation. The museum staff’s contributions to fundraising, marketing, and programming were vital in bringing this collaboration to fruition, underscoring the importance of history and education in fostering appreciation for our region’s incredible collection of architecture. We are profoundly grateful to have such dedicated partners in our hometown.”

Casimiro D. Rodriguez Sr., President & Founder, Hispanic Heritage Council of Western New York Inc.

Honored to work alongside the Buffalo History Museum on multiple occasions, highlighting our community’s cultural arts and history. The Museum’s welcoming atmosphere facilitated the capture of treasured moments for families, friends, and the community as a whole.”

Megan McElfresh, Executive Director, The Stained Glass Association of America & SGAA Foundation

Government and Foundation Support

The County of Erie
County Executive Mark Poloncarz
Senator Sean Ryan
Assemblyman William Conrad
Legislator Michael Kooshian
National Endowment for the Humanities
Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation
Arts & Culture Initiative
The Baird Foundation
Bank of America Charitable Foundation
The City of Buffalo
Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo
The Conable Family Foundation
Greater Hudson Heritage Network
Humanities New York
J. Warren Perry and Charles Donald Perry Memorial Fund
James H. Cummings Foundation
Joseph R. Takats Foundation
Linton Foundation
M&T Bank Charitable Foundation
Marjorie and John Buyers Foundation
New York State Council on the Arts
Tower Family Fund
Vogt Family Foundation
The Western New York Foundation

Corporate Support

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Community Beer Works
Davis-Ulmer Fire Protection
Douglas Development
Hadley Exhibits
Hodgson Russ LLP
Frey Electric Construction Co.
Keenan Communications Group
RP Oak Hill Building Company Inc.
Seneca Gaming Corporation
Schneider Development
Stanley Steel Service Corporation
Thermo Fisher Scientific Corporation
Try-It Distributing
Wegmans

Community Partners

Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy
Hispanic Heritage Council of Western New York
Michigan Street Heritage Corridor
Seneca Iroquois National Museum
Uncrowned Queens Institute