



WISCONSIN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

COLLECTING, PRESERVING
AND SHARING STORIES *Since 1846*

SPECIAL
ISSUE

COLUMNS

THE NEWSLETTER *of the* WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Legacy Circle

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Contributions totaled over \$4.3 million and provided another year of strong support for Society collections, programs and services.

FULFILLING THE SOCIETY'S MISSION AS ALWAYS – WITH YOUR SUPPORT



ELLSWORTH H. BROWN
The Ruth and Hartley Barker Director

COLUMNS

MICHAEL TURNER, EDITOR

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COLUMNS
Wisconsin Historical Society
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THIS SPECIAL ISSUE OF COLUMNS is an opportunity to thank *you* for your support and present a few of the year's many successes to indicate the impact your contributions enabled. We are also delighted to recognize the work of our partners at the Wisconsin Historical Foundation and provide statistics that highlight key achievements of the past fiscal year.

For sixty years the Wisconsin Historical Foundation has provided indispensable support for the Society. Under the current leadership of Foundation Board President Chris Berry and Managing Director Dave Wilder, a skilled team of seventeen works with energy and imagination to advance our cause.

In addition to its responsibility for all matters related to membership and donor relations, the Foundation also manages the Society's marketing program. These efforts provide vital benefits to the Society, since fully forty percent of our nearly \$25 million annual budget comes from gifts, grants and earned income. We rely upon these funds to remain one of our nation's leading historical institutions.

Collecting is at the core of the Society's mission. To this end, the Society recently formed a partnership with The Water Council. This dynamic organization was formed seven years ago in Milwaukee to bring partners in industry, government and academia together to create innovative solutions to the world's water problems. The Council is a recognized global leader, and they now house a Society archivist to guide documentation and preservation of their records and lead outreach efforts in the state's largest city. This initiative is a continuation of the Society's long commitment to collecting history as it happens.

Preservation ensures our collections will remain as a record of our past, and the scope of this effort is significant. Last year alone, 5,540 titles and over 1,100 cubic feet of state and local government documents and manuscripts were accessioned into the Society's holdings. An indirect extension of our preservation effort is to digitize select items. Digital files provide unlimited online access to collected materials, reducing wear and tear and helping to preserve originals. A noteworthy example was digitization of over 900 maps comprising more than 8,000 electronic files. This project increased access to a collection that includes rare and historically significant treasures.

Two important projects were launched this year to advance the Society's ability to share Wisconsin's story. The third generation of the main website wisconsinhistory.org was deployed to create a dramatically improved experience for our online visitors. Also, the *Wisconsin History Tour* was launched in June and has traveled to seven communities to date. The *Tour* is a remarkable exhibition of displays, programs and activities that allow visitors to explore our state's history and experience historical content customized for each host community. The *Tour* will visit a new location every 6-8 weeks into 2016.

This year's Freedom Summer Exhibition; continued success of the statewide National History Day program for middle and high school students; a new tram for Old World Wisconsin; and award winning books and publications from the Wisconsin Historical Society Press are accomplishments also made possible through your generous membership support and gifts.

On behalf of everyone at the Society, I offer our deep and heartfelt gratitude.

EHB

YOUR IMPACT by the numbers

2013-2014 at a glance

You are among

11,941 members

of the Wisconsin Historical Society as of June 30, 2014. Members are from all **72** Wisconsin counties, **50** states and **8** countries.



Accomplishments you made possible:

- The **Wisconsin History Tour** was launched to share stories statewide
- A second new tram was purchased for Old World Wisconsin and a major matching grant challenge was met
- Nearly 10,000 students from across the state participated in National History Day in Wisconsin
- **wisconsinhistory.org** was relaunched with improvements to the layout, text, imagery and search functions to dramatically enhance the experience of nearly 1.5 million annual site visitors



16.5% of members made a special gift above and beyond their membership dues. This crucial added support enables the Society to maintain the excellence of programs and services it provides.



872

gift memberships were given last year . . . a 53% increase over 2012-13!

(Hint: a gift membership is an excellent way to show you care.)



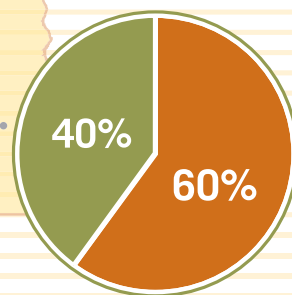
189 people have given gifts to the Society for 25 or more years consecutively!

(See page 7.)



The Society's Historic Sites and Museums had another year of increased visitation. Donor support helped us to host nearly

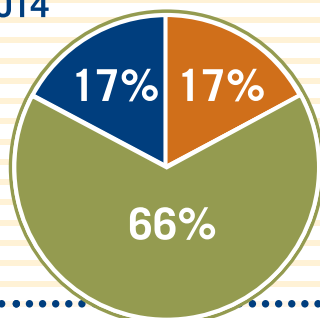
230,000 visits



Total Amount Raised Through Private Donations from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014

4,340,661

- Membership
- Capital projects
- Gifts and grants for Society programs



23,693,362

Wisconsin Historical Society
2013-2014

Total Revenue and Support

- Gifts, grants and earned income
- State funding

Thank You Donors!

2013-2014

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"Wisconsin History Tour" visitors



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Society supporters from Associated Bank with Terri Richards (far right)

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The Wisconsin Historical Foundation is pleased to acknowledge those who have contributed consecutively for 25 years or more.

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ON THE COVER:

- 1- Gordon and Helen Smith at the opening of an exhibit at the Reed School historic site.
- 2- Cover close-up of "Wheel Fever"—a very popular Wisconsin Historical Society Press book and exhibition at Old World Wisconsin.
- 3- One of several maps from Wisconsin Historical Society collections featured in the exhibition: "Marginalia in cARTography" at the Chazen Museum of Art.
- 4- The *Wisconsin History Tour* launched in June. The exhibition of state and local history will travel statewide through 2016.
- 5- Jerry Apps, celebrated rural historian, Wisconsin Historical Society Press author and Society advocate.

6- An interpreter demonstrates spinning during "The Great River Road Festival" at the Stonefield historic site.

7- A young *Wisconsin History Tour* visitor enjoys a hands-on history program.

8- The first of two new trams was delivered to Old World Wisconsin.

9- A close up screen capture of the redesigned main website: wisconsinhistory.org

10- The Society formed a partnership with The Water Council to document and archive their progress as a world leader in water research and management.

11- Student participants at the 2014 National History Day national competition in Maryland.



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MAKE A PLAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE CREATE A LEGACY

“I’ve proudly contributed to the Wisconsin Historical Society for years. I also created a plan to provide a legacy of support through a bequest in my will.

I did this as a sign of the deep regard I have for all that Society staff and volunteers do to collect, preserve and share our state’s stories. I believe passionately in the value of history and the need to share these stories for many generations to come. My planned gift will provide reliable future support for the Society and ensure resources are available for the organization to maintain the high level of excellence it has achieved throughout its long history.”

— John Evans



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