September 2020

Dear Members and Friends of the Historical Society of Michigan,

Welcome to the Update annual report for our operating year that ended on June 30, 2020. What a year it was—with an unusual number of highs and lows. But, thanks to your help, we are always moving forward, advancing our mission of history education about the great state of Michigan and the lessons of its past—be they good or bad.

The pages of this report will give you details about what was accomplished this past year. Here are some highlights:

- In early July 2019, the Historical Society of Michigan (HSM) moved into a new headquarters building in the Lansing area that doubled our square footage and gave us four education rooms—all with state-of-the-art communication technology—instead of the one in our old office.

- Later that month, HSM received a significant financial gift from The Meijer Foundation to assist with the purchase and renovation of what has now been named the Meijer Center for Michigan History (dedicated on November 13, 2019).

- We had a fabulous Michigan History Conference in Ludington in September 2019, not knowing then that we would be forced to cancel our next two conferences due to the COVID-19 pandemic—Michigan in Perspective: The Local History Conference in March and the Upper Peninsula History Conference in June.

- The health crisis led us to deliver all of our education programming online. We were pleasantly surprised to see attendance dramatically increase for our virtual History Hounds® lectures, History Skills Workshops® sessions, and Michigan History Alliance® meetings. The move to a virtual Michigan History Day® allowed nearly 400 students to compete with their history projects, and for some to advance to National History Day, despite the inability to hold a large event in our state.

- The spring and early summer of 2020 also brought a reminder that not all of this nation’s history—or our state’s—is admirable, especially in the area of justice for all people. That makes it all the more important to understand our history and put it in perspective so we learn from it. That is exactly what HSM’s history education work has always sought to do.

- Coming full circle, in June 2020, we sold HSM’s old office, and proceeds were applied to the mortgage on our new headquarters.

Thank you again for all you do to support the critical mission of the Historical Society of Michigan. You are making a positive difference in this great state that we share.

Sincerely,

Larry J. Wagenaar
Executive Director and CEO
Historical Society of Michigan
The Historical Society of Michigan’s 2019-2020 fiscal year began with a massive move of all staff, furniture, and other materials from the south side of Lansing to a building on the west side of town with twice the amount of square footage to house the nonprofit, nongovernmental organization’s operations.

The year ended with the sale of the former office, which had served HSM well for nearly a decade and helped reduce the outstanding mortgage on the new building.

In between came a significant grant from The Meijer Foundation to help with the cost of the purchase and renovation of the building, which led to its naming as the Meijer Center for Michigan History.

It turns out that this move—which quadrupled HSM’s online communication technology—positioned the organization perfectly to cope with the unanticipated COVID-19 pandemic that hit nine months later. Suddenly, all programming—lectures, workshops, and other meetings—had to be virtual, and the Meijer Center was set up to do just that. Times four.

Success in this transition gave HSM the confidence to hold its first 100 percent virtual Michigan History Conference on October 2 & 3, 2020. What makes this possible is the ability to “stream” more than one program or speaker at the same time, something our old office could not accommodate.

The expression from Roman philosopher Seneca that “luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity” describes very well the past year for HSM.
Seven Michigan students received special honors at this year’s virtual National History Day competition, which took place June 14-20, 2020—including a second-place finish and two special prizes.

Allison Tate of Whitehall High School in Whitehall, sponsor Jan Klco, placed second in the nation for the Senior Division Individual Exhibit category with her entry, “Brownie Seals the Deal: Tupperware Parties Break Economic Barriers for Women.”

Zackary Howey of Richards Middle School in Fraser, sponsor Tara Fugate, received the United States Marine Corps History Prize for his Junior Division Individual Documentary, “Black Angels: Breaking Down Barriers and Fighting for the Right to be Marines.” The award is sponsored by the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation.

Alison Chen of Whitehall High School in Whitehall, sponsor Jan Klco, received the Senior Division of the Asian American History Prize with the individual performance, “Cracking the Bamboo Ceiling: Anna May Wong Increases Representation of Asian-Americans in Media.” The award is sponsored by the National Park Service. Chen placed fifth in the nation for the Senior Division Individual Performance category.

Amelia Chen of Whitehall Middle School in Whitehall, sponsor Jan Klco, received the Junior Division Outstanding Affiliate Award,
Despite the challenges the students faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, six projects finished in the top 10!

Michigan History Day is an affiliate of National History Day, which was established in 1974 and offers yearlong project-based learning that engages more than half a million middle and high school students around the world annually. History Day provides a fascinating opportunity to move beyond routine learning. Based on an annual theme, students choose to explore and research a local, national, or international historical topic. Students then present their work in one of five categories: performances, exhibits, papers, websites, and documentaries.

Lead sponsors of Michigan History Day 2020 are The Meijer Foundation and the Frederick S. Upton Foundation. Other sponsors include the Bob Scripps Community Fund of the Scripps Howard Foundation, Sally Adler, Wilbur and Ruth Wright Charitable Foundation, and the Holland Area Historical Society.

Laura Thielman’s documentary was showcased at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture. Only 35 of the 212 documentaries submitted were selected for inclusion.

To learn more about Michigan History Day, watch a short video on our website at hsmichigan.org/mhd or call (800) 692-1828.

“Michigan History Day changed my daughter’s life.”
–Mother of award-winner Claire Parish of Ada

Laura Thielman from Whitehall Middle School in Whitehall participated in the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture virtual showcase with her documentary, “Breaking into the Billboard Hot 100: How Motown Got Everybody ‘Dancing in the Street.’” Only 35 of the 212 documentaries submitted were selected for inclusion in a special collection of the Smithsonian Learning Lab made available for public online viewing. Thielman was sponsored by Jan Klco and placed seventh in the nation for the Junior Division Individual Documentary category.

Myles Daugherty and Nic Sheppard of South Haven High School in South Haven, sponsor Julie Sheppard, received the Senior Division Outstanding Affiliate Award, designating them as best-in-state, for their group exhibit entry, “From Bicycles and Birdwatching to Changing the World—The Wright Brothers: Breaking the Barrier of Flight.” Daugherty and Sheppard placed seventh in the nation for the Senior Division Group Exhibit category.

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HSM Helps Member Organizations After Disasters

On May 19, 2020, catastrophic flooding in Midland County devastated large parts of Midland, Sanford, and other areas.

As we did in 2018, when floodwaters devastated the Houghton area in the Upper Peninsula, HSM launched a GoFundMe campaign to help raise emergency disaster funds for two museums in Midland County. The Houghton and Midland GoFundMe efforts raised more than $20,000.

When rain caused dams along the Tittabawassee River in Midland County to give way on May 19, 2020, water rose to heights never seen before at Heritage Park, the historical complex of the Midland County Historical Society.

Much of it was under five feet of water for three days at the height of the flood. The basement of the Bradley Home was completely full of water, which came up through the floorboards to destroy the wood floor on the first level of the home.

The GoFundMe effort sponsored by the Historical Society of Michigan raised more than $5,000 to help with restoration work.

The Sanford Centennial Museum—with its campus full of local history, preserved historic buildings, railroad cars, and a museum—was closed for more than a month due to damage to nearly a dozen buildings caused by the May flooding.

The society lost signage, floors, a hot-water heater, a refrigerator, and artifacts. Some documents, rugs, and dresses were damaged. Historical books and records are being freeze-dried in an effort to preserve them.

The Sanford Area Historical Society received more than $5,000 from the GoFundMe campaign sponsored by the Historical Society of Michigan to help with restoration work.

Copper Range Historical Museum & Houghton County Historical Society—Two Years After Flood Damage

Heavy rains on Father’s Day in June 2018 caused damaging flooding at the Copper Range Historical Museum in South Range in the Upper Peninsula.

“A financial donation of $2,000 from the Historical Society of Michigan was a welcome gift as it was used to help pay for the furnace,” said Jean Pemberton, president of the Copper Range Historical Society and Museum.

Financial support from the Historical Society of Michigan to the Houghton County Historical Society (HCHS) in Lake Linden came in the form of an $8,000 check from money raised statewide from individuals and groups who donated to the GoFundMe online fundraising campaign.

“We have set aside the money that was raised for revitalizing the office building, which is the one that was flooded,” said George West, president of HCHS.
Since 1917, Michigan History magazine has shared the Great Lakes State's diverse history through feature articles and special sections. A popular history magazine geared toward professionals and enthusiasts alike, Michigan History offers a wide variety of subject matter, time frames, and perspectives while inspiring, educating, and entertaining its readers. Every issue explores the state's most fascinating historical facets and celebrates the history and heritage of all Michigan's peoples.

Here are a few stories recently featured in Michigan History...

- Connected With the Sky: The Constellations of the Neshnabé
- Our Fieldstone Heritage
- Michigan's African-American Pioneers
- We Can Do It! Rosie the Riveter at Willow Run
- The “Eyes” Have It: U.P. Potatoes
- Keep ’Em Fighting: Chris-Craft’s Contributions to WWII

Issued quarterly, Chronicle magazine contains articles that celebrate Michigan's history and the preservation of the state's diverse cultures and heritages. In addition, Chronicle's special sections provide promotion and awareness for the Society's organizational members and offer ideas and inspiration for individual history advocates.

Here are a few stories recently featured in Chronicle...

- East Meets West: Michigan's Silkworm Fever
- A Dangerous Experiment: U-M's First Female Students
- Hopes, Half-Measures, and Hypocrisies: Desegregating Kalamazoo Public Schools
- Lumberjacks, Unite! The Timber Strike of 1937

“My grandson, who is 12, and I both love history, as does his dad, my son. I was reading the latest issue (March/April 2020) and showed my grandson the picture of Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse. We both love visiting the Mackinac area. He took the magazine and found the article on fieldstone buildings. And there is the Catholic church in our town of Lapeer. His next favorite page is the Made in Michigan—he had fun guessing. He scrolled through the whole magazine before it was time for school. Maybe I have a budding Michigan history buff!”

—Cheryl Cattane of Lapeer (HSM member and magazine reader)
The Historical Society of Michigan organizes and hosts three annual conferences.

- Held in the spring in the metro Detroit area, the Michigan in Perspective: The Local History Conference, the largest of our three conferences, is open to anyone interested in state or regional history.
- The Upper Peninsula History Conference pays particular attention to U.P. history topics and themes and moves to a different location in the Upper Peninsula each year to explore that area’s heritage.
- The Michigan History Conference moves to a different location each year. This conference celebrates all aspects of Michigan’s history and offers a closeup look at the heritage of the host area.

We had an unprecedented, record-setting number of attendees at the 2019 Michigan History Conference, which took place in Ludington. Pictorial highlights from the conference can be seen to the right. The capstone event for the conference was a dessert tour aboard the SS Badger.

Unfortunately, the coronavirus pandemic forced the cancellation of the 2020 spring Michigan in Perspective: The Local History Conference and the summer Upper Peninsula History Conference.

We also moved our 2020 Annual Meeting and Michigan History Conference to a virtual platform. Our first-ever online conference will take place Friday & Saturday, October 2 & 3, 2020. Attendees will experience two days filled with behind-the-scenes virtual tours, a wide variety of sessions on diverse topics, time to spend with exhibitors, online workshops, a virtual “happy hour,” State History Awards presentations, and more! All from the comfort and safety of their home.

HSM members receive special pricing for all three conferences.
Visit hsmichigan.org or call (800) 692-1828 for more details.

“Over the last year or so, I’ve attended the Historical Society of Michigan’s excellent conferences around the state. I really enjoyed the Upper Peninsula meeting in Escanaba in late June.”
—Ann Garvin, Ann Arbor
If you enjoy “sniffing out” and exploring fascinating historical subjects, the Historical Society of Michigan’s History Hounds® lecture series now offers weekly in-depth presentations, allowing attendees to curl up with a myriad of historical topics.

**History Hounds Has Grown!**

Our original History Hounds lectures are presented on the second Wednesday evening of every month from 7 to 8 p.m. Michigan’s history is so diverse—here is your chance to dig up a bone or two of new appreciation to take home.

**History Hounds Has Grown!**

Our NEW Off the Leash History Hounds lectures come to you on the first and third Tuesdays of every month from noon to 1 p.m. Take a lunch break, and join us to take a bite out of some intriguing facets of our state's history.

**History Hounds®**

Visit our website at hsmichigan.org for the full lineup!

**“What a wonderful program! So informative, terrific pictures! I felt like I had been on a freighter trip. Thank you, Roger LeLievre and the Historical Society of Michigan.”**

—Lynne Millies of Grosse Pointe Woods

**“Really enjoying these History Hounds presentations. My compliments to Blaire for a wonderful, educational presentation. Thank you and the rest of the staff for providing this program.”**

—Mike Woloszyn of Chesterfield
If your family has owned and operated a Michigan farm for 100 years or more, that is a significant accomplishment. HSM helps celebrate that milestone by offering certification through its Michigan Centennial Farm program—which celebrates Michigan’s oldest family farms. Nearly 140 signs were placed in the 2019-2020 fiscal year. To be designated as a Centennial Farm through the Michigan Centennial Farm program, a property must be a working farm of 10 or more acres that has been continuously owned by the same family for at least 100 years.

Milestone Awards

The Historical Society of Michigan’s Milestone Awards program celebrates businesses, organizations, and municipalities that have reached their 50th, 100th, 150th, or 200th anniversaries with a custom-made Milestone Awards plaque. Eight markers were placed and dedicated this past fiscal year. An official Milestone plaque is an excellent way to commemorate local history, and it will remind both new and longtime patrons, members, and/or residents of the rich heritage of their community.

Celebrating heritage, longevity, and endurance.
To find out more about the Milestone Awards and Centennial Farm programs, visit hsmichigan.org or call (800) 692-1828.
In the summer, I took two well-organized trips with the Historical Society of Michigan. One was to the beautiful Hudson River Valley (Hyde Park, FDR Home and Library, a Vanderbilt home, and a number of beautiful mansions on the Hudson, including Olana, the unique home of painter Frederic Edwin Church). The second HSM tour was to Wisconsin and Illinois. We visited the Frank Lloyd Wright museum and homes (including Taliesin), churches, and other buildings designed by him. Some of these buildings are now UNESCO sites…

—Ann Garvin, Ann Arbor

Our excursions are not “cookie cutter” tours. Each and every trip is planned and executed by Robert Myers, HSM’s own director of education, along with the help of other HSM staff. Bob has had decades of experience in the history field and has led scores of motor coach tours, so he knows what history enthusiasts look for in their road trips. Bob also gives his personal attention to every aspect of the outings, and as the tour leader, he makes sure your history experience meets your expectations. You may find other tours out there, but none are going to give you the history-filled adventure that Michiganders on the Road provides.

Recent Tours Include…

✓ America’s Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright Tour
✓ Gateway to the West Tour
✓ Painters and Patriots: Hudson River Valley Tour
✓ Magnolias & Mint Juleps: Savannah and the South Tour

Upcoming Tours Include*…

*Please note that these tours are planned for 2021 but may be impacted due to COVID-19 pandemic safety measures.

✓ The Michiganders Are Coming! An American Revolution Tour
✓ Vive L’histoire! Québec City & French Canada Tour
✓ Lake Michigan Adventure Tour
The Michigan History Alliance® is a regionalized program of the Historical Society of Michigan that helps our member organizations preserve and promote history by providing training for their staff and volunteers, fostering collaboration, and sharing information and best practices.

The alliance meetings—which are open to representatives of HSM member organizations—consist of a networking session and a featured speaker. The speaker offers insights on a topic of concern or opportunity, and the networking and collaboration portion allows for conversations among the region’s historical organizations.

At the time of this printing, HSM is holding only virtual meetings because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Upcoming Michigan History Alliance Virtual Meetings...
- Thursday, October 29, from 10 a.m. to noon
- Thursday, November 12, from 10 a.m. to noon

History Skills Workshops®

These training opportunities help historical organizations and interested history advocates gain skills that can be applied in museums, organizations, and personal collections. We held 34 sessions in fiscal year 2019-2020.

Our new Doubleheader sessions offer a workshop in the morning and another in the afternoon on related topics. Attendees can sign up for either the morning or the afternoon OR register for the whole day at a discount to double their training experience.

At the time of this printing, all workshops are remote-only until further notice.

Upcoming Workshops...
- Friday, October 9—A Stitch in Time: Identifying and Preserving Quilts
- Friday, October 23—My Old House Doubleheader
  - Morning—Respectful Rehabilitation of Your Historic House
  - Afternoon—If These Walls Could Talk: Researching Your Historic House

HSM’s educational programming includes Michigan History Day®, History Skills Workshops®, History Hounds® Lecture Series, Michiganders on the Road™, Michigan History Alliance®, three annual conferences, and more.

Visit hsmichigan.org for more details.
The Historical Society of Michigan extends a hearty thank-you to those members and friends who have played a key role in the growth and success of the Society this past fiscal year. Thanks to their support, we can continue to preserve and promote our state’s history in our five mission areas: publications, educational programs, conferences, awards and recognition, and assistance for local organizations. It is only with the support of our donors that HSM is able to keep Michigan’s history at everyone’s fingertips.
Silver
$100 and above

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Central Michigan University
Delta College History Department
Friends of the Ray Township Library & Historical Society
Grand Valley State University History Department
Historical Society of Caseville
Lake Superior State University
Michigan Oral History Association
Michigan State University
Michigan Women’s Historical Center & Hall of Fame
Saginaw Valley State University History Department
Undergraduate Admissions, Oakland University
University of Detroit Mercy History Department
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Wayne State University
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Rodger Zeller  
Dennis Zimmerman  

**Copper**  
$35 and above

- Ada Historical Society  
- Heddon Museum  
- Mackinaw Woman’s Club  
- Michigan Barn Preservation Network  
- PayPal Giving Fund  
- Pointe aux Barques Lighthouse Society  
- Shell Oil Company Foundation Matching Gifts Program  
- Floyd Andrick  
- Dennis Andrejek  
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Edward Winczner  
Kirk Wright  

**In Honor and Memorial**

- William & Frances Daniel in honor of Johanna & Ron Balzer  
- Marlene Dahlin in memory of Patrick Dahlin and the Castagna/Dahlin Family  
- Julie McMurtry in honor of Timothy Baughman
The Historical Society of Michigan has begun counting down to the bicentennial of its founding date—a milestone it will reach in 2028.

One of the important ways we are doing that is setting a goal of having 200 members of HSM’s Legacy Circle by our 200th birthday in order to add greater financial stability to the next 200 years for the nonprofit, nongovernmental organization.

Created in 2013, the Legacy Circle is made up of people who have told HSM that they will remember the organization with a gift in their estate plan. That can be done via a specific bequest in a will, a gift of assets such as stocks, naming HSM as a beneficiary of an insurance policy or a retirement savings fund, or one of many other options. An estate planner can help you determine what is right for you.

We do not need to know the details—just telling us you will remember HSM as part of your legacy makes you a Legacy Circle member.

With seven new members in the most recent fiscal year, Legacy Circle membership is growing and has hit 10 percent of our ambitious goal of 200. We hope you will become part of this momentum and consider joining the HSM Legacy Circle this year.

There is no minimum level of support required, and no donation needs to be made at this time since you would be pledging a future gift to support the history education mission of HSM.

Join us as we count down to 200 and strengthen HSM in the future!

HSM recommends that you consult a tax professional or attorney to understand the tax impact of making donations to nonprofit organizations such as the Historical Society of Michigan.

For more details on the Legacy Circle, visit hsmichigan.org/about/legacy-circle
The COVID-19 pandemic forced many changes at HSM. Our educational programming became 100 percent virtual, and the staff had to adjust to working remotely. But, as you can see, the team learned to make the best of a challenging situation!
Michigan History Moment™

Michigan History Moment™ is a weekly three-minute radio program that focuses on people, places, and events in Michigan's past. The program is written and recorded by the Historical Society of Michigan staff and airs on radio stations throughout the state.

Are you enjoying Michigan History Moment on your favorite radio station?

- WAUS in Berrien Springs
- WKZO in Kalamazoo
- WNMI in Marquette
- WZTK in Alpena
- WPHN in Port Huron
- WTCM in Traverse City
- WSGW in Saginaw/Bay City
- WLDN in Ludington
- WMLQ in Manistee

We would like to see Michigan History Moment airing in all regions of the state, so if you want us to approach your favorite station, e-mail us at hsm@hsmichigan.org, and we will reach out to that station.

There is no charge to the radio station to air Michigan History Moment!

Content for Michigan History Moment is inspired by the articles in HSM’s magazines.

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