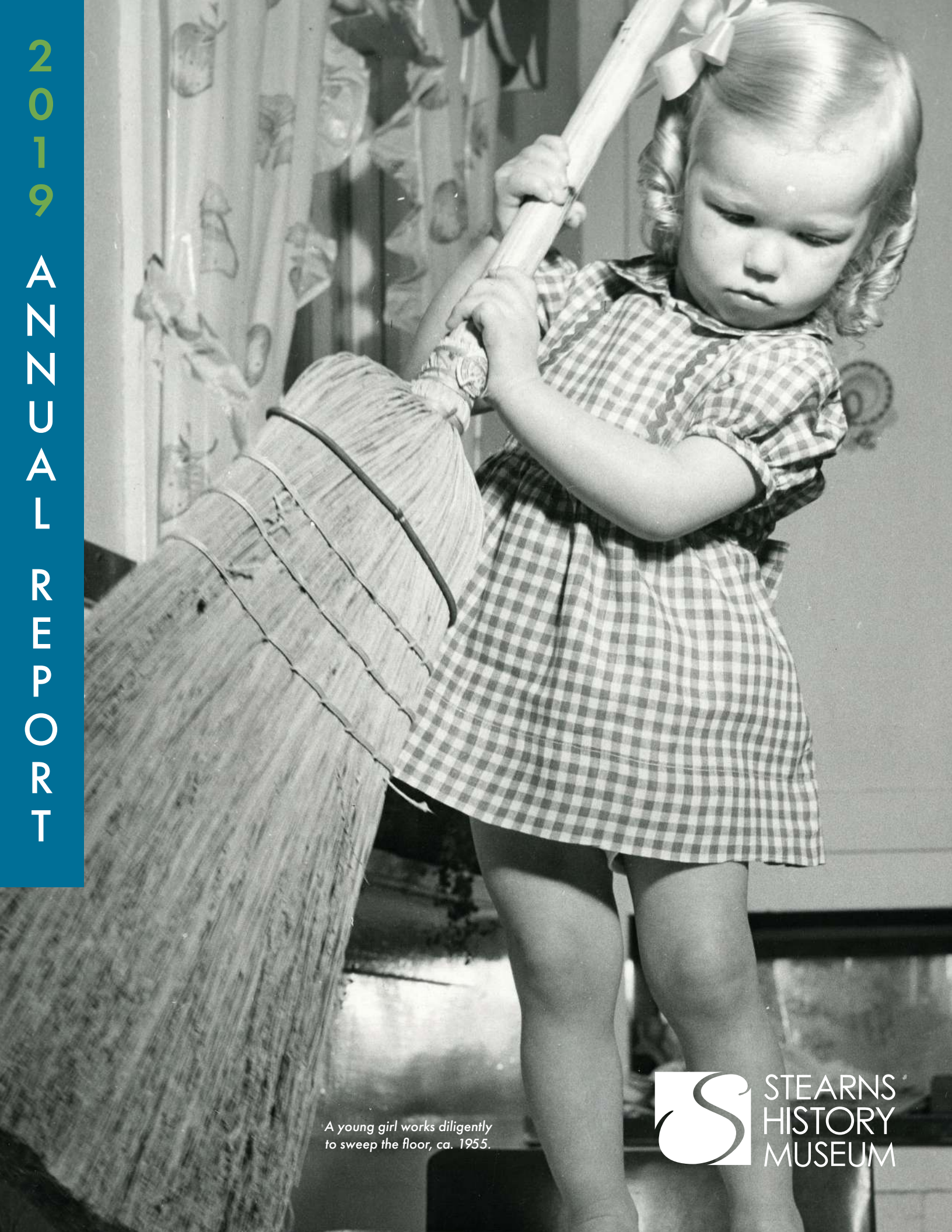


2019 ANNUAL REPORT



*A young girl works diligently  
to sweep the floor, ca. 1955.*



STEARNS  
HISTORY  
MUSEUM



## MISSION

The Stearns History Museum connects people through the power of history and culture.

## VISION

The Stearns History Museum offers a premier cultural heritage experience in Central Minnesota.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*As of January 2020*

#### OFFICERS

Dorraine Larison, chair  
George Rindelaub, vice chair  
Patricia "Pat" Webber, secretary  
Susan Palmer, treasurer

#### DIRECTORS

Annette Atkins  
John Bodette  
Barb Carlson  
Stephanie Peterson  
Chuck Rau  
Elizabeth Reisinger  
Mark Sakry  
Bruce Skalbeck  
Philip Terry  
Dan Tideman

#### EX OFFICIO

Jeff Mergen

### MUSEUM STAFF

*As of January 2020*

Joanie Albers, visitor & member services coordinator  
Caitlin Carlson, program & visitor services manager  
Eric Cheever, director of exhibits & curatorial  
John Decker, archivist  
Amy Degerstrom, development director  
Carie Essig, executive director  
Gena Hiemenz, communications  
& donor relations associate  
Heather Nissen Hall, curatorial assistant  
Steve Penick, head of archives & research  
Rod Runge, finance coordinator  
Jessie Storlien, archivist



*Staffers Caitlin Carlson and Eric Cheever pose in front of a 1948 Chevrolet Fleetline on display during At War and At Home: The WWII Experience in June 2019.*

## A WORD FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

### Dear Museum members and supporters,

The board of directors is committed to achieving the Museum's key vision items: Preserve. Engage. Thrive.

### 2019, Board and the Museum staff highlights:

- **NEW STRATEGIC PLAN.** We've updated our vision and mission statements. The plan identifies four target audiences we hope to grow: families with children, young adults, researchers, and retirees. The plan includes five priorities and a section on how we will pay for the initiatives. There are clear directions given and assignments on who will champion each part of the priorities.
- **GOVERNANCE.** We created a succession plan. Dorraine Larison has started her two-year term as board chair. George Rindelaub began his two-year term as vice chair. We are working with the nominating committee to firm up committee chair and vice chair positions. Another achievement: Welcoming Chuck Rau to the board.
- **COMMUNICATIONS UPGRADE.** The board approved a redesign of the website. Please visit [www.stearnshistorymuseum.org](http://www.stearnshistorymuseum.org). We also have upgraded the design and content of our social media offerings and Crossings, our quarterly magazine.
- **OUTWARD FOCUS:** The board wants the Museum to go out into our communities. Having the Museum take part in Summertime by George, St. Cloud Art Crawls, and bus tours in the county are part of our outreach. We want to continue fostering close working relationships with our partner museums in Stearns County.
- **MORE PROGRAMS, EVENTS.** Successes include the World War II Living History Event last summer and the annual gala honoring Stearns County women in sports. There has been a welcome increase in businesses, clubs, and organizations holding meetings or events at the Museum. The Museum is a happening place with programs for researchers, retirees, children, and families.



John Bodette

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John L. Bodette Jr.".

2019 Board Chair  
Stearns History Museum



## A WORD FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Gratitude abounds at the end of a busy year. This report will share the stories of our program, research, and preservation efforts throughout 2019. We celebrated the success of our first annual living history event focused on the World War II-era in Stearns County. We engaged new audiences at the Annual History Maker Gala. We launched a four-year initiative to honor and highlight Stearns County women in sports. The research and interpretation we're doing now will culminate with a celebration of the 50th anniversary of Title IX in 2022.

2019 ended on a high note with the traveling exhibition *Righting A Wrong: Japanese Americans and World War II*, from the Smithsonian Institution. We were fortunate to complement the national story with *Minnesota's Secret Language School* produced by the Twin Cities' Japanese American Citizens League. Details about all of this and more can be found on the following pages.

The construction project for Costco finished and they opened in July. We have seen a steady increase in visitors now that the streets are open. The City of St. Cloud's skate park will wrap up completion in 2020. The portion of the construction project that has been most impactful? The aging parking lot was repaved and expanded at no cost to the Museum. Park visitors and Museum-goers alike will be able to take advantage of the new lot.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the generous contributions from our members and donors. We are grateful for your support, enthusiasm, and commitment to history.

This year, the Board of Directors adopted a new strategic plan to guide us into the future. Central is an updated mission and vision. Also included are commitments to community partnerships, a culture of inclusivity, and the identification of five priorities. These priorities will guide our planning and initiatives to ensure the future of the Museum is on solid ground. Highlights of the new Strategic Plan are:



### STEARNS HISTORY MUSEUM MISSION

The Stearns History Museum connects people through the power of history and culture.

### OUR VISION

The Stearns History Museum offers a premier cultural heritage experience in Central Minnesota.

The Stearns History Museum

- Preserves a rich and diverse history by collecting and curating archival materials and three-dimensional objects
- Engages all of us who live in and visit Stearns County and Central Minnesota
- Inspires people to think about our past, present, and future through the lens of history and
- Thrives by maximizing opportunities for innovation

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

The Museum is committed to learning from our communities. We want to serve them better and change the way we do business to support all people in Stearns County, those who live here and those who visit.

### OUR CULTURE

Stearns History Museum is not just a place; it's us. Our actions speak louder than our words. We live by a set of values or expectations that determine the way the Museum feels.

- Staff and volunteers are dedicated to using the power of history and culture to connect people. We will succeed when we create a workplace where everyone can thrive.
- We maintain the highest professional standards and continue being recognized for this achievement through the American Alliance of Museums.



- We show our respect for each other and our community through our words and actions.
- We acknowledge and appreciate one another's knowledge, experience, and expertise, and build relationships upon trust.
- We achieve the best results when we collaborate, and our diverse perspectives and skillsets come together.
- We are open to new ideas and continuously seek to improve.
- We are accessible to everyone.
- We are one county.

#### OUR PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS ARE TO:

- Preserve the "Future Past" – focusing on the facilities, assuring that the buildings we house our collections can support our current collections, and the collections we have yet to acquire.
- Update and integrate most current technology into our daily experience for both staff and guests.
- Fund the "Future of the Past" – assure the financial future of the organization.
- Engage our community through programs and exhibits that reflect our past and present.
- Create new space for learning, celebrating, and working.

The complete Strategic Plan is available upon request. I look forward to speaking with you about the future of history. Sincerely,



**Carie Essig, Executive Director**

P.S. I completed the first draft of this letter long before we intended to publish it. So much has changed since then that I needed to write an update. Everything about our Museum life has changed, except for our mission. We connect people through the power of history and culture. How, when, and where we do it doesn't look like what we had planned in 2020, but our commitment to telling our Stearns County stories remain strong.

**We look forward to the many ways we tell the stories of our past now and in the future.**



#### **SOMALI MUSEUM DANCE TROUPE**

Comprised of high school and college students from the Greater Twin Cities area, the troupe performed traditional dances from all regions of Somalia.

#### **Partnering Museums Included:**

Benton County Historical Society & Museum  
Sherburne History Center  
Morrison County Historical Society

*The Somali Museum Dance Troupe takes a break from performing at the Stearns History Museum on Feb. 23, 2019.*

## BALANCE SUMMARY 2019 - NOT AUDITED

### CURRENT ASSETS

Bank accounts	72,860.11
Accounts receivable	1,061.00
Other current assets	381,840.09
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>455,761.20</b>

Fixed assets	903,780.07
Other assets	0.00
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>1,359,541.27</b>

### LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities	
Current liabilities	
Accounts payable	12,557.77
Credit cards	0.00
Other current liabilities	13,891.01
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>26,448.78</b>
Long-term liabilities	126,490.00

<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>152,938.78</b>
Equity	1,206,602.49
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>1,359,541.27</b>

## PROFIT & LOSS COMPARISON JANUARY - DECEMBER 2019

### INCOME

County Appropriation	600,000
Admissions & Program Revenue	28,761
Memberships	44,698
Special Events	49,390
Annual Giving	62,259
Grant Revenue	10,105
Rental Income	16,145
Other Income	7,136
In-Kind Donations	58,128
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>876,623</b>

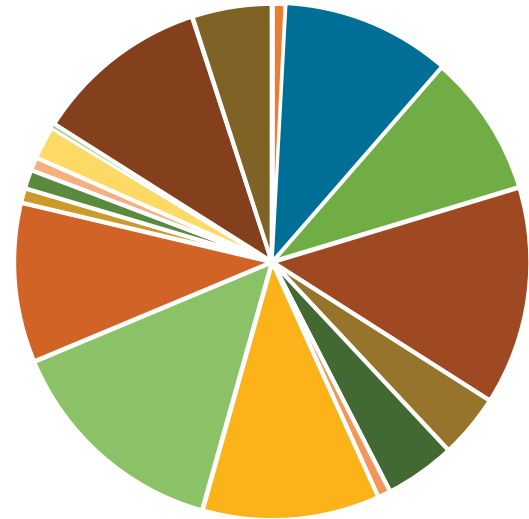
### EXPENSES

Museum Store	2,735
Exhibit Gallery	15,130
Program	10,795
Research & Archives	9,871
Collection & Preservation	1,044
Publications	9,974
Affiliate Funding	2,180
Membership & Donor Program	15,607
Marketing & Fundraising	54,417
Wages, Benefits & Insurance	589,582
Professional Fees	8,269
General Office Expenditures	10,724
Dues & Subscriptions/Continuing Ed. Travel	7,455
Equipment & Service Contracts	18,597
Equipment Purchases	2,531
Building Maintenance	79,393
Utilities	45,405
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>883,710</b>

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

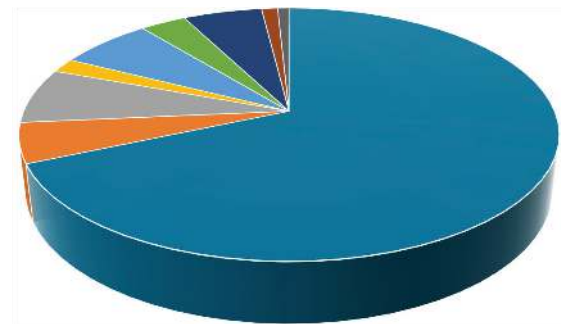
### EXPENSES

*\*staff wages and benefits are included in their program areas*



- Museum Store
- Exhibit Gallery
- Program
- Research & Archives
- Collection & Preservation
- Publications
- Affiliate Funding
- Membership & Donor Program
- Marketing & Fundraising
- Admin Salary & Benefits
- Professional Fees
- General Office Expenditures
- Dues & Subscriptions
- Continuing Ed. Travel
- Equipment & Service Contracts
- Equipment Purchases
- Building Maintenance
- Utilities

### REVENUE



- County Appropriation
- Memberships
- Annual Giving
- Rental Income
- In-Kind Donations
- Admissions & Program Revenue
- Special Events
- Grant Revenue
- Other Income

*For a copy of the 2019 Audit, please contact the Museum. The audit is usually completed in July.*

## COLLECTIONS & EXHIBITS

2019 has come and gone. And what a year it was. From little adjustments to massive changes, 2019 saw the collections and exhibits departments, as well as the Museum, shed its chrysalis and emerge as a whole new form.

Much of the early part of the year was consumed by the continuation and subsequent recovery from the massive renovation projects which began the previous year. January saw the removal of the wooden second floor in the large collection storage room. Several thousand artifacts were removed, recorded, and stored temporarily in the offsite storage building. Shelving units were then rebuilt, reinstalled, and renumbered. Next began the task of reshelfing and recording box after box of displaced artifacts. It took the better part of a year to accomplish. While this was taking place, objects moved by the fire suppression and lighting project also were being reshelfed in the storage building.

New artifacts continued to come in the door. Collections accessioned 541 objects over the year. Of course, these items needed to be boxed and shelved as well. A new registrars' workspace was constructed in the large collections room to facilitate the processing.

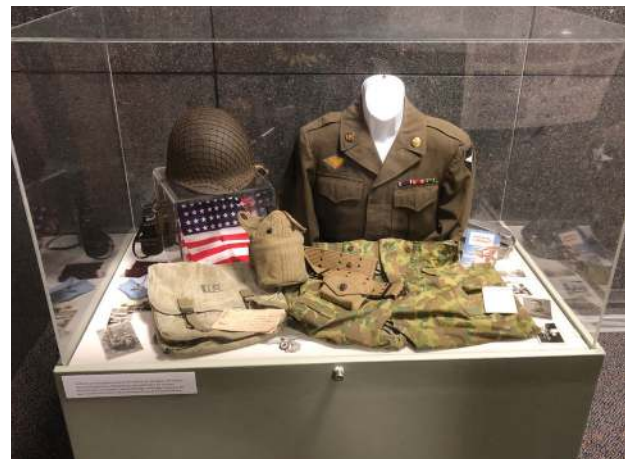
New exhibits appeared in 2019. Bucket Brigade started the year in the main Gallery. It was joined in April by The Toys We Loved in the lower walk through space. In June, we constructed a temporary WWII exhibit to coincide with the "At War and At Home" living history event. We struck the Fire exhibit in July, with Righting a Wrong, a traveling exhibit from the Smithsonian, taking its place through the end of the year. Righting A Wrong was complimented by a fantastic exhibition on the WWII MISLS Japanese Language School put together by the Twin Cities Japanese American Citizens League.

The WWII Living History event, which we held for the first time in June, was successful and was scheduled to return for year two in June 2020.

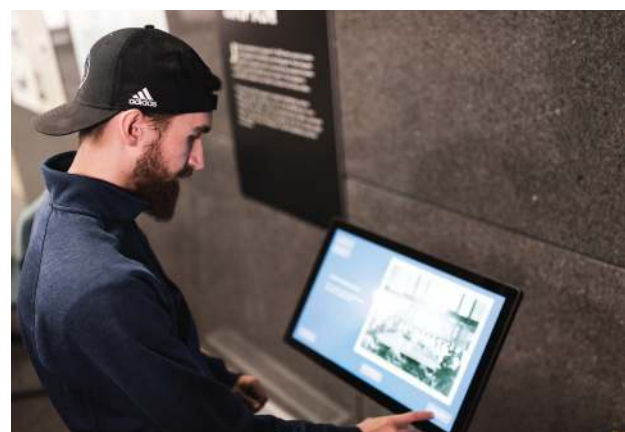
We began a second radio segment on WJON, covering historic buildings and architecture. It tied in well with the State Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) Conference, which took place in St. Cloud in September.

**Looking back over 2019, I am struck by how much has changed and, more importantly, just how much was accomplished in one short year.**

**By Eric Cheever**  
Director of Exhibits & Curatorial



*World War II clothing and artifacts were displayed during the living history event, At War and At Home: The WWII Experience, in June 2019.*



*A Museum patron checks out the interactive video for Righting a Wrong: Japanese Americans and World War II.*



*A 1982 Atari gaming system is one of the artifacts in The Toys We Loved exhibit that opened in April 2019. The game cartridge features Swordquest: Fireworld, part of an unfinished series of video games produced by Atari.*



## 2019 was an exciting year for programming,

one that I looked at as sort of a transition year for the Museum. The most significant swing we took was to bring the 1940s to life in June, with our living history event, titled "At War and At Home: The World War II Experience." We brought history to life by hosting reenactors, military vehicles, authentic period tents, and equipment, while also providing special activities about the Minnesota home front, for children and adults alike. We continue to get positive feedback about this event from the community.

We were able to design programs around the Smithsonian exhibition which was on display the last quarter of 2019. It included two special presentations, from Hannah Semba, who spent time detailed in the Tule Lake Camp with her family, and Edwin "Bud" Nakasone, who attended the Minnesota Secret Language School at the tail end of the war. The programs brought new people to the Museum, and it was great to see the building bustling on a Saturday.

We hosted school groups of all ages, and the Smithsonian exhibition brought in several high school and college students that had not visited the Museum before. It was fun to introduce them not only to our temporary exhibits but our more permanent ones as well.

2019 was my first full year at the Stearns History Museum. It really allowed me to try a few new things, and also gauge what works and what we could do better. At the end of the year, I was able to take that knowledge and use it to plan an ambitious but exciting slate of new programs of events for 2020.

**By Caitlin Carlson**  
Program & Visitor  
Services Manager



*Clockwise from top left: Edie enjoys a snack while working on a craft project during Halloween Historia in October 2019. A student fills out a worksheet on Central Minnesota wildlife and habitats. A World War II veteran shares a story with reenactors during the living history event, At War and At Home: The WWII Experience, in June 2019. Executive Director Carrie Essig poses with Dr. Patrick Tosetti, Hannah Semba, and Laura Sember. Hannah spoke about her time at Camp Tulelake, a Japanese American internment facility in California during War War II, during a Museum presentation in October 2019.*



I began working as your development associate during the first week of 2019 on a part-time basis. My focus at that time was researching grant prospects and applying for those that may be a good fit for the Museum.

**It was a great year filled with lots of learning for myself and the staff in terms of our strengths, our goals, and our process to seek and ask for funding.**

We had some early success with a grant from U.S. Bank to support our family programming. We continued our work on Women in Sports via a research grant from the Minnesota Historical Society thanks to the Legacy Amendment and you, our taxpayers. We also generated strong regional and national support for the Smithsonian's Righting a Wrong: Japanese Americans and World War II traveling exhibit with the help of Falcon Bank, the Dick and Mimi Bitzan Charitable Fund, and the Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation out of New York state.

In November 2019, I became the development director at full-time status. My new position allows me to focus on friend-raising! While continuing to work on grant funding, I also get the opportunity to connect more directly with all of you as members and donors. We have some exciting plans to grow our membership and renew or reinvigorate relationships in 2020.

We're also reviewing our plans for endowment, planned giving, and sustaining donors for our annual operating expenses. I look forward to helping to support our mission of connecting people through the power of history and culture by working on our core value to thrive...through membership, donor relations, and broader access for all via our updated online resources. In the meantime, I hope to see you at the Museum and thank you for the warm welcome to Stearns County.

**By Amy Degerstrom**  
Development Director



*Clockwise from top left: Community members visit with each other during the St. Cloud Chamber of Commerce's Business After Hours at the Museum in September 2019. Construction starts on the Museum parking lot in May 2019. Vicky Nelson and Elvera "Peps" Neuman attended the History Maker Celebration, highlighting Central Minnesota Women in Sports, in May 2019. Max and his friend Hudson learn by playing in the Children's Room, which is supported through funding by the Central Minnesota Noon Optimists and U.S. Bank Foundation.*

Our projects progressed over the last year through the efforts of Research Center staff, volunteers, and interns.

Here are some highlights.

## GRANTS

- \$10,000 from a Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) legacy grant for a micro reader scanner.
- \$600 from the Central Minnesota Library Exchange (CMLE) covered archival supplies and speaker fees for the 2020 Family History Conference.
- \$10,000 MHS legacy grant written by the Development Associate supported the Women in Sports Research Project.

## PARTNERSHIPS

- Staff worked with the Diocese of St. Cloud and their Catholic Century Farms Award to enroll farmers in SHM's Century Farm Program.

## PROGRAMS

- We partnered with Sauk Centre and Melrose Historical Societies to welcome German researchers.
- St. Cloud State University facilitated student experiences at the Museum, from shared curriculum projects to library research.
- Our association with St. Cloud Area Genealogists and (CMLE) continues to be mutually supportive.

## OUTREACH

Our archival collections reached a broad spectrum of users last year.

### Examples include:

- Mpls.St.Paul Magazine, KSTP, WCCO, Crow River Watershed District documentary, CMLE podcast, Stearns County License Center, Stearns County Sheriff's Department, and WJON Radio.
- Staff wrote articles for the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce publication, Business Central.
- Presentations by staff reached audiences at the Family History Conference in Moorhead, and Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums in Red Wing.
- Our collection materials appeared in publications such as St. Cloud's Music Man, Central Minnesota Beer Book, and Evidence of V: A Novel in Fragments, Facts and Fictions.

## PROJECTS

- Staff received bids to migrate and launch a new catalog.
- Work with Sonant History on the Oral History Pilot was completed. Interviews/videos will serve as a funding catalyst for the next phase: agriculture.
- Other departmental undertakings included a map inventory, St. John's Cantius Neighborhood Research Project, Century Farms research, and World War II veterans project.

## COLLECTIONS

New archival collections include Zapp National Bank, United Cerebral Palsy of Central Minnesota, Electrolux, McConnell Family, Fingerhut, and numerous family histories.

## 2020 PLANS

The Research Center will continue working on the Family History Conference, library inventory, processing collections, and supporting SHM projects.

By **Steve Penick**,  
Head of Archives  
& Research  
& **Jessie Storlien**,  
Archivist



*The Museum in July 2019 flew the German flag on the plaza to welcome its overseas visitors.*

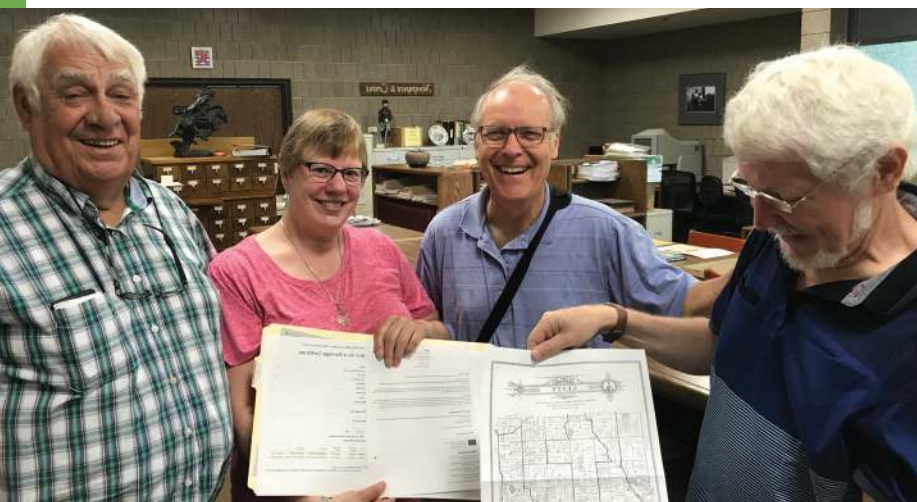




The Stearns History Museum participated in Breakfast on the Farm in June 2019. The event took place at Mill Creek Dairy in Maine Prairie Township near Pearl Lake, owned/operated by Tom and Donna Gregory.



The Schiffler Family of Krain Township near Albany was happy to receive their new Century Farm sign.



German visitors from Nortrup, Germany, came to visit the Research Center in July 2019. They were researching the Loxterkamp, Hagermann, Hoffmann, Klaphake, and Uphoff families of Stearns County. Left to right are: Researcher Hermann Welp, Beverly Finley and Kent Cutkomp from the German Genealogical Society, and researcher Bernhard Struckmann.



Volunteer Bernie Ostendorf talks with a visitor. There are several volunteer opportunities available at the Museum. Bernie helps out at the front desk and in the gardens.



The Stearns County Surveyor Department donated the 19th Century Field Book of Milton Noel to the Museum in October 2019.



The Research Center collects the Spanish language newspaper, La Voz Libre.



# 2019 DONORS & SPONSORS

## \$5,000+

Bayer Built Woodworks  
DeZurik  
Robert K Eddy  
Max & Victoria Dreyfus Foundation  
Stearns Bank  
Falcon National Bank

## \$1,000 - \$4,999

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Bruce & Cheryl Skalbeck  
Spee Dee Delivery Service  
St. Cloud Antique Auto Club  
St. Cloud State University Athletics  
Stearns Electric Association Trust  
Philip & Harriet Terry  
Think Tourism!  
Twin Cities Japanese American  
Citizens League  
U.S. Bank Foundation  
UBS Financial Services

Ramona Wuertz  
Women's Fund of the Central MN  
Community Foundation  
Edward Zapp

## \$250-\$999

Annette Atkins  
Joe Bayer  
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Costco Wholesale  
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Downtown Kiwanis Club  
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Kelly & Neil Fandel  
Granite Equity Partners  
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Jim & Beverly Pehler  
Kal Perry  
Stephanie & Jeff Peterson  
Lillian Phillipp  
Elizabeth & Eric Reisinger  
Frank & Rosemary Roehl  
Lenore Salinas  
Marilyn Savage  
Judy Sevada  
St. Cloud Area Sertoma Club  
St. Cloud Financial Credit Union  
St. Cloud Area Genealogists Inc.  
St. Cloud Reading Room Society  
St. Cloud Technical & Community  
College  
Paul W. & Elizabeth Steil  
Dr. Thomas & Ann Stone  
James Studer  
Tony & Joyce Tillemans  
Jerry & Ione Torborg  
Paul & Rosemary Winch  
Gary Zieglmeier



SHM Board Member Annette Atkins greets history professionals during the Minnesota History Whatever! conference at the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis in March 2019.



## \$101-\$249

Barkalow Appraisals, Ltd.  
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 Gene & Mary Margaret Bjorklun  
 Peg Brenden  
 Harold & Marilyn Brinkman  
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 John & Mary Linnemann  
 Jacqueline Lundstrom  
 Jerry & Maureen McCarter  
 Dave & Lu Meemken  
 Jeff & Nellie Mergen  
 Franklin Meyer  
 Mark & Kathy Middendorf



*Eric Cheever, director of exhibits & curatorial, passes out clipboards to students during an history activity.*

Patrick & Jane Mitchell  
 Edward Moeller  
 Michael Moran  
 Katherine Mrozek  
 Northland Capital Financial  
 Services  
 John Olinger  
 Bernie Ostendorf  
 Jane Ellison & Glen Palm  
 Lee & Kristine Pflipsen  
 Roger & Gloria Plombon  
 Mary Ann Reischl  
 Marian Rengel  
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 Jacqueline Rogan  
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 Leroy & Joann Schmitz  
 Sonant History  
 St. Cloud Sprinkler Co.  
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 Gary & Pat Webber  
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 & Tim Wensman

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 Wayne Williams  
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## \$100 & UNDER

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 Betty Lou Berg  
 Bruce & Cindy Berghorst  
 Lori Bernick  
 Roy Bernick  
 Jan Beste  
 Thomas & Sondra Beuning  
 Debra & Chuck Beutler  
 Bernice Blacksher



*Staff was allowed to tour the Electrolux facilities several times to take photos and choose items of significance for the Museum's collections. The company also gave the Museum its last freezer off the assembly line before it closed its doors on November 1, 2019. This is an interior shot of the plant.*

Mr. & Mrs. Marvin Bookin  
Jo McMullen-Boyer  
Michele Braun-Heurung  
Barbara Brausen  
Gail Bremel  
James Brick  
Bertel Budd  
Evelyn Budde  
Ruth Ann Bueckers  
Walter Buerman  
Ralph & Lori Buettner  
LaRita Callahan  
Tom & Shelly Carlson  
Nick Chanaka  
Henry Chirhart  
Lynda Christman  
Jeanette Clancy  
Ginny Clark  
Jonathan Clark  
Lorraine Cofell  
Gail & Steve Conrad  
Rosie Court  
Francis Court  
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Beth & Stephen Cragle  
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*Archivists John Decker and Steve Penick share a laugh and information with students visiting the Museum's Research Center.*

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Above: Caitlin Carlson, program & visitor services manager, speaks to students before starting their activities. Right: What's your spirit animal? Curatorial Assistant Heather Nissen Hall is ready to tell those who dare to know during Halloween Historia in October 2019.



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Left: Santa visits with two young patrons during KringleFest in December 2019. Above: A traveling exhibit celebrating Women in Sports made its way around Stearns County, making appearances in the lobbies of Stearns Bank branch offices, Gabriel Media, and St. Cloud State University.