Holland Museum

Cappon House

CELEBRATING 150 YEARS
1874–2024

# YOUR COMMUNITY MUSEUM

# ANNUAL REPORT

## JULY 1, 2023 – JUNE 30, 2024











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# News from the Executive Director



Dear Friends,

FY 2024 (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024) was another inspirational and productive year at the Holland Museum. We engaged with our community in new and innovative ways through a robust schedule of programs, events, tours, and creative exhibitions. Each day, our dedicated staff, volunteers, and Board of Directors worked tirelessly to bring our mission of "Preserving our Past and Imagining our Future" to life.

Our exhibitions this year were particularly noteworthy. First, *Cabinets of Curiosities: Origins of the Modern Museum*, curated by our talented summer interns, showcased some fascinating never-before-seen objects from the Museum's collection and explored the evolution of Museums from small personal collections displayed in "Curiosity Cabinets" to the grandeur that is the modern museum. We are proud to work with these bright young people, introducing them to all aspects of museum work and community engagement each summer.

*Black Eden: Idlewild Past, Present, and Future* highlighted the rich history and cultural significance of this unique haven for African Americans seeking respite, leisure, and community. The supporting programs, including "My Idlewild" a juke-joint musical performance as well as conversations with current Idlewild residents explored the essence of this resort town. *Black Eden* celebrated Idlewild's history, from its vibrant era of bustling tourism to its remarkable journey of revival and rejuvenation.

*Newsflash! The History of Journalism in Holland* reflected on the history of local media outlets including the Holland Sentinel and WHTC and explored the evolution of journalism and its important role in Holland's development. We were thrilled to be able to share so many photos and objects donated to the museum by the family of local photographer, journalist, and historian Randy Vande Water. *Newsflash!* also connected us with GVSU's Department of Journalism and featured voices from Holland's journalism community, past and present.

2024 marked the 150th anniversary of the Cappon House, the home of Isaac Cappon, Holland's first mayor and his family. This year-long celebration opened with a talk discussing Isaac Cappon's entrepreneurial spirit as a newly arrived Dutch immigrant. Ensuing programs discussed the home's West Michigan-based furnishings, the process to restore the house to its original appearance, as well as programs that discussed Victorian life, including an "in-depth" examination of Victorian undergarments! Our Cappon 150-themed exhibitions explored the architectural evolution of the home from its 1874 construction into the 1970s and shared the story of Lavina Cappon, Isaac's daughter, who left an indelible mark on Holland and the history of Tulip Time. But even after this year-long celebration concludes, visitors will continue to enjoy an improved family tree installation and a video introduction, with a script drafted by our summer interns and staff, and narrated by past director, Ricki Levine.

This year, we welcomed 7,179 items into our collection, responded to 150 archival research requests, and made 23,301 records available online through our website. The collection is a living, growing, and constantly evolving entity, held in trust for the community. The Holland Museum staff and Board of Directors take the preservation of Holland's history seriously, it is the reason we are here.

In December 2023, we were honored to receive the Social Justice Award in Education from the City of Holland in recognition of our ongoing efforts to welcome all and tell everyone's stories through our Cultural Lens program series and exhibitions. While we are proud of this achievement, we acknowledge there is still much to do to diversify our collection, and we are dedicating time, effort, and resources towards those goals.

On June 30, 2024, we bid farewell to Ricki Levine, who led this institution for the past seven years, strengthening our programs and broadening community relationships. Cultural Lens, our series of thought-provoking programs and visually stimulating exhibitions that explore culturally relevant historical and contemporary topics, was born under Ricki's leadership. The staff and board are committed to continuing this series of exhibits, talks, performances, family programs, and panel discussions that further support the museum's inclusive mission.

We are now in a time of transition with new staff and board leadership. The Holland Museum's future is intrinsically tied to the community of Holland. Your support through community partnerships, corporate sponsorships, individual donations and memberships, but also the sharing of your histories, is what make this museum special. We are committed to building a stronger museum that does more and is more for this community.

Thank you for entrusting your history with the Holland Museum. Your Home. Your Stories. Our collective history lives here.

With gratitude,

Michelle

Michelle Stempien

## SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARD




Holland Museum was awarded the City of Holland Human Relations Commission 2023 Social Justice Award in Education for telling the stories of all individuals, families, and communities that make up Holland.

# YOUR COMMUNITY MUSEUM

ANNUAL REPORT | JULY 1, 2023–JUNE 30, 2024

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Officers

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Chanda Miller | Chair Emeritus
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Jen Griffith | ecretary

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**Michelle Stempien**
Executive Director



**Kate Leighton-Colburn**
Development & Communications Associate Director



**Loren Stevens**
Curator of Learning and Community Engagement



**Maddalena Frissora**
Exhibits Curator



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**Paula Dunlap**
Accounting Administrator



**David Hawley-Lowry**
Facilities Manager



**Mary Elhart**
Collections Assistant



**Danial Jones**
Visitor Services Coordinator and Custodian



**Samuel Vega**
Visitor Services Associate



**Jen Louks**
Registrar's Assistant


**Sponsor Contact: Kate Leighton-Colburn**
Development & Communications Associate Director
(616) 796-3322 | kate@hollandmuseum.org
31 W. 10th Street, Holland, MI 49423
hollandmuseum.org | 616-796-3329


## MISSION

Preserving our past, imagining our future.

## VISION

To be a cultural leader and community collaborator inspiring the next generation of leaders, thinkers, and innovators.

## VALUES

**Community**
We strive for interactive relationships with everyone.

**Curiosity**
We encourage exploration and discovery.

**Education**
We value life-long learning opportunities.

**Inclusion**
We welcome everyone and their stories.

**Stewardship**
We uphold the highest standards in maximizing and preserving the resources we are given.

**Impact**
We inspire community change and innovation through refle tion upon the past and collaboration for the future.

## Thank you!

A special thank you to the generous companies and foundations for their Sponsorship, Grant Support and In-Kind Donations to the Holland Museum, FY23/24.

### SPONSORS

Nelis' Dutch Village
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Catherine Ristola-Bass and Andy Bass
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
MACC Community Enhancement Program
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Long Road Distillers
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The Gilmore Piano Festival
Tulip City Brewstillery
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Waypost Brewing Co.
WGVU PBS & NPR

2024

# 150th Anniversary of the Cappon House!

We celebrated throughout the year with new programs, exhibits, and tours that highlighted the rich history and cultural significance of this his oric home, offering fresh ways to engage with the legacy of the Cappon family and the Victorian era.






## PROGRAMS TO CELEBRATE THE ANNIVERSARY

### JANUARY
Tales from the Archives: Isaac Cappon: Holland's First Major Industrialist

### FEBRUARY
Victorian Valentines at the Cappon House

### MARCH
Tales from the Archives: Lavina Cappon, Suffrage, and Women's Rights in Midwest Dutch America

### APRIL
Tales from the Archives: Restoring the Cappon House, A Dutch-American Time Capsule

### MAY
Mentioning Unmentionables

### JUNE
Fashionable Furniture and the Cappons

We carried the celebration of the Cappon House Anniversary into Fiscal Year 24/25. Be sure to check next year's annual report for highlights from the remaining programming.

## CAPPON HOUSE VISITOR CENTER UPDATE

### New Permanent Exhibit

Previously featured in the Holland Museum Lobby Gallery, the exhibit, "Authentically Victorian: Reflecting on the Cappon House Restoration" will move to its new permanent home at the Cappon House Visitor's Center.

This exhibit highlights the architectural projects undertaken to restore the 1874 historic home to its 1902 appearance, and explores the Cappon House's cultural and architectural significance to the City of Holland.

### Cappon Family Tree Upgrade

In time to celebrate the Cappon House's 150th anniversary, the Holland Museum has created a new Cappon Family Tree located in the Visitor's Center. Learn more about the members of the family with additional information and pictures.

### New Visitor Center Video

Guests now experience a new introductory video in the Visitor's Center prior to touring the Cappon and Settlers Houses. This engaging video provides a brief history of the Cappon Family and their home, enriching the visitor experience.

The creation of this video was made possible through the generosity of donors and grant funding.







**Scan the QR Code or click the link below to learn more about the Cappon House and the Cappon Family**

https://hollandmuseum.org/cappon-house-150th-anniversary-celebration/

# Looking Back




**Ice Cream Social**

July brought the annual Old Fashioned Ice Cream Social at the Cappon House. Guests were able to visit both the Settlers and Cappon Houses while enjoying lawn activities and ice cream! This is a fun free event for the whole family. July 8, 2023.




**The Music and Performers of Idlewild**

Lazaro Vega of Blue Lake Radio led a music-filled journey back in time as he discussed some of Idlewild's great performers. Using music clips and conversation, visitors learned about the talents of Lilian Armstrong, Lionel Hampton, and others who graced the stages of Idlewild's clubs and juke-joints. September 14, 2023.




**Tales from the Archives: Behind the Scenes of Holland's Lighthouse**

The Holland Harbor Lighthouse, known as BIG RED, was not always BIG, not always RED, and not always a LIGHTHOUSE. Valerie van Heest, local maritime historian and author; John Gronberg, president of the Holland Harbor Historic Lighthouse Association; and Bill Tazelaar, commission board member and maintenance advisor shared their insider's look into the history of Big Red as well as its current restoration and on-going maintenance. November 9, 2023. ***Click to watch the video.***

JULY 2023 ▸ | AUGUST | SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER | NOVEMBER | DECEMBER




**Idlewild Today: A Discussion with Idlewild Residents**

Chris CJ Kingdom Grier, Black Eden exhibition Guest Curator, and Idlewild resident and historian, led a panel discussion with current Idlewild residents. Together, they discussed Idlewild's historical past with stories of music, faith, and community building; its current story of revitalization and growth; and how Idlewild's residents will continue its rich traditions into the future. August 3, 2023 ***Click to watch the video.***




**Born Free and Equal: Michigan's Colored Regiment**

Maurice Imhoff covered the story of the 1st Michigan Colored Regiment, otherwise known as the 102nd United States Colored Troops, discussing its early authorization to present-time remembrance.

Following the Emancipation Proclamation, the U.S. military formed the United States Colored Troops. Even as black soldiers fought and died, their citizenship status remained uncertain. Racist policies limited wages and opportunities for black soldiers. October 19, 2023. ***Click to watch the video.***




**Chat with Holland's Media Personalities, Past and Present**

The news media is an integral part of any community and Holland is no different. Local media personalities Cassandra Lybrink, Lupita Reyes, Gary Stevens, and Paul Van Kolken discussed their careers, important news stories they have covered, and the challenges and joys of covering the news in Holland. December 7, 2023. ***Click to watch the video.***




**MLK DAY 2024: How Can You Change the World**
Our annual free day honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy with crafts, scavenger hunts, and take-home packets. Guests listened to Dr. King's Detroit speech, watched *Our Friend Martin*, and enjoyed story times with community leaders. January 15, 2024.




**Tales from the Archives-Isaac Cappon: Holland's First Major Industrialist**
Steve VanderVeen, local journalist, author, and professor, discussed why Dutch immigrants left the Netherlands and Isaac Cappon's impact on Holland's history. January 25, 2024.




**Heroes of the Homefront: Rosie the Riveter and the Women Who Helped Win the War**
Rosie the Riveter symbolized millions of women who joined the workforce, filling jobs left by men fighting in WWII. Deb Wake, as tribute Rosie, discussed how the government convinced these heroes to leave their homes, roll up their sleeves, and help get the job done. She also presented the challenges these women faced in the workforce and in society, their contributions in West Michigan and beyond, changes on the home front, and what happened to Rosie after WWII. March 21, 2024.




**Free Second Monday: Brazilian Drumming Performance**
A lively evening of rhythm and community celebration with a performance by The Holland Samba School directed by Prof. Christopher Fashun. Sponsored by The Meijer Foundation. May 13, 2024.




**Mentioning Unmentionables**
Historian Kim Parr reviewed 18th and 19th century underclothing, demonstrating the order a lady would dress, while explaining how and why undergarments changed over time. May 16. 2024. ***Click to watch the video.***

JANUARY 2024 ▸ | FEBRUARY | MARCH | APRIL | MAY | JUNE




**Collaborative Journalism as a Means to Counter Misinformation and Build Trusted Communities**
Although people around the world are aware of misinformation's often devastating consequences, they often have fewer ideas about the possible solutions. GVSU Journalism Professor Jeff Kelly Lowenstein offered thoughts about the possibilities collaborative journalism presents to help counter misinformation and create trusted communities for people to receive and discuss accurate information. February 15, 2024. ***Click to watch the video.***




**Tales from the Archives: Restoring the Cappon House, A Dutch American Time Capsule**
Joel Lefever, former Holland Museum President and Curator, now Executive Director and Chief Curator of the Old York Historical Society in Maine, reminisced about the decade-long process of comprehensively restoring the exterior and interior of the Cappon House to its 1902 appearance. April 11, 2024. ***Click to watch the video.***




**The Silenced Killer: AIDS Then and Now**
The Holland Museum and Out on the Lakeshore hosted a 6-person panel that discussed the AIDS Crisis past and present including its impact here in Holland, as well as personal lived experiences, and how treatments have developed over the past 40 years. June 17, 2024. ***Click to watch the video.***

## FEATURED EXHIBITIONS

Black Eden: Idlewild Past, Present, and Future
July 28–October 23, 2023
***Click to learn more.***

NEWSFLASH! The Story of Journalism in Holland
November 17, 2023–April 8, 2024
***Click to learn more.***

A Stitch in Time: Lavina Cappon's Tulip Time Legacy
April 25–September 16, 2024
***Click to learn more.***

# By the Numbers

## Engagement

The Museum continues to reach new audiences through visits to the Museum, Cappon and Settlers Houses, Smithsonian Spark!Lab, education initiatives, programs, and community outreach. Thanks to all of our members, guests, donors, and sponsors, the Museum continues to grow.

**TOTAL ATTENDANCE**
**7016**
Holland Museum

**DONORS**
**336**
Households

**MEMBERS**
**338**
Households

**CORPORATE SPONSORS AND GRANTS**
**24**
Local Organizations

**SMITHSONIAN SPARK!LAB VISITORS**
**632** Adults **1,180** Children

**SECOND FREE MONDAY**
**1,173**
Total Visitors

**MUSEUMS FOR ALL***
**163**
Attendees

*National program that offers discounted admission to EBT or WIC card holders.

### TOP 5 VISITING STATES

1. Michigan
2. Illinois
3. Indiana
4. Ohio
5. Wisconsin

### TOP 5 VISITING COUNTRIES

1. The Netherlands
2. Canada
3. United Kingdom
4. Mexico
5. Germany



*Heroes of the Homefront*, March 2024

## **Thank You**, Ricki Levine, for Your Leadership



In June 2024, we said good-bye to Ricki Levine who retired after serving as Executive Director for seven years. Ricki took the helm at a challenging time for the Holland Museum and led the institution through the Covid shutdown, strengthening the museum's DEAI policies and its community relationships. Her other accomplishments included re-accreditation by the Alliance of American Museums, expanding staff, programming, and exhibits, and developing a five-year strategic plan to guide the future of the Holland Museum. Thank you, Ricki for all that you have done for the Holland Museum and congratulations on your retirement!

# Educational Programs and Outreach Numbers

The Education Department continues to engage new participants.

## Education Department Connections: Programming, Events, Tours, Outreach

**7,049** Total number of participants




Spark!Lab Wizard of Oz program

### Total Programs: 37

- General/Community Programs: 5
- Exhibition Programs: 5
- Cultural Lens Programs: 12
- Family Programs: 10
- Cappon House 150th Anniversary Programs: 6

### Total number of participants: 3,155

### Exhibition Openings: 3

Total participants: 165

### Tours: 74

Total participants: 1,389

### Outreach Events: 12

Total participants: 2,340

## Exceptional Exhibits

The Museum hosted dynamic exhibitions over the last year with a variety of related programming to enhance visitor experiences. Each exhibit inspired new partnerships and new opportunities for attendees.

**Black Eden: Idlewild Past, Present, and Future**
*July 28 – October 23, 2023*

Idlewild, Michigan, founded in 1912, emerged as a haven for African Americans seeking respite, leisure, and community, drawing in middle-class professionals throughout the midwest. Partnering with local expert, Chris CJ Kingdom Grier, the museum exhibit highlighted Idlewild's rich history from its vibrant tourism days to its inspiring revival.

**NEWSFLASH! The Story of Journalism in Holland**
*November 17, 2023 – April 8, 2024*

*Newsflash! The Story of Journalism in Holland* highlighted the history of local media outlets including the Holland Sentinel and WHTC. Featuring items from journalist and historian Randy Vande Water, the exhibit explored journalism's role in shaping Holland.

**A Stitch in Time: Lavina Cappon's Tulip Time Legacy**
*April 26 – September 16, 2024*

This Cappon 150th celebration exhibit shared the story of Lavina Cappon, a former Holland Public Schools home economics teacher who forever influenced the unique aesthetic of Tulip Time through strict dress protocol.




*Black Eden Exhibition*




*NEWSFLASH! Exhibition*




*A Stitch in Time Exhibition*

# Engaging Our Community

## Collection Highlights

Our Collection's highlights are the stories they tell. In 180 categories, featuring 23,000 objects, Holland's past and present has a voice.





## Holland's First Junior Miss Pageant– The All-American Girl

In 1966, Cheryl Hooker won Holland's first Junior Miss Pageant. She was a student at West Ottawa High School at the time. It was here that she met Michael Eastman, and they were married on August 22,1970. Cheryl taught for 30 years, spending time at Van Raalte, Lincoln, and Lakeview Elementary.

The Holland Junior Miss Pageant was sponsored by the Holland Jaycees.

As with national pageants, the Holland Junior Miss Pageant was searching for that "All-American Girl".

## Collection Data

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Records available to the public on June 30, 2024 | **23,301** | Items donated during the fiscal year 23-24 | **7,179** | Archival Research Requests | **151** |

## Community Collaborators

We made great strides with our community partners, increasing and deepening those relationships.

- Alliance for Cultural and Ethnic Harmony (ACEH)
- Big Read/ Little Read
- Blue Lake Public Radio
- City of Holland
- Disability Network Lakeshore
- Explore Hope
- Grand Rapids Public Museum School
- Grand Valley State University
- Harbor Humane Society
- Herrick District Public Library
- Holland Chorale
- Holland Garden Club
- Hope Academy of Senior Professionals (HASP)
- Hope College
- Humanity for Prisoners
- Idlewild Historic Preservation
- Latin Americans United for Progress (LAUP)
- Mediation Services
- OAISD/Future Prep'd and IChallengeUth
- Ottawa County Health and Human Services/Meet Up and Eat Up
- Out on the Lakeshore
- Promesa/Ferris State University



Volunteer Holiday Party, 2023

## Volunteers

| | |
|---|---|
| **112** Total Volunteers | **6** Interns |
| **60** Committee Members | **13** Board Members |

**1,920** TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS

# Financial Impact



History Mystery Trivia Night Fundraiser, 2024

## $761,382

### TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE

**49%**_____Contributions
**17%**_____Grants
**13%**_____Earned
**12%**_____Government
**9%**_____Investments

## $962,317

### TOTAL EXPENSES

**59%**_____Programs & Exhibitions
**25%**_____Management
**16%**_____Fundraising







*Black Eden: Idlewild Past, Present, and Future* exhibition related program, 2023



*MLK Day Celebration: How Can You Change the World?*



Museum on Tap Fundraiser, 2024

# Members and Donors

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# Sneak Peek into What's Happening in FY 2024-2025

## FUTURE EXHIBITIONS & CELEBRATIONS




**Waves of Pride: The Impact of Out on the Lakeshore**

February 28–June 30, 2025

*Out on the Lakeshore* is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting the LGBTQ+ community in West Michigan. Celebrating its 10-year anniversary in 2025, this exhibit will showcase the organization's rich history and explore the vibrant stories of the local LGBTQ+ community.



**All Hands On Deck! Life Aboard the Georgian Bay Line**

July 18–November 17, 2025

In summer 2025, the Holland Museum will present an interactive exhibition on the Georgian Bay cruise line, offering a behind-the-scenes look at the ships' operations and celebrating the vital role of the crew in its historic success.

8TH ANNUAL
**MLK DAY**
CELEBRATION

How can **YOU** change the world?




**JANUARY 20**
10:00 am–2:00 pm
Holland Museum
**FREE** Family Event

Cultural Lens Sponsors:
MillerKnoll FOUNDATION
Corewell Health

**FREE SECOND MONDAYS**

free admission monthly

**4:00–7:00 p.m.**

Sponsored by The Meijer Foundation

## FUNDRAISERS




**Museum On Tap: Beer, Cider, Wine Tasting**
February 7 | 7:00-9:00 PM
Holland Museum



**History Mystery Trivia Night**
July 12 | 5:30-8:30 PM
Holland Armory



Spring Break
**DISCOVERY CAMP**
For 2nd-5th Graders
April 8, 9, 10
10:00-3:00 pm
$120/Child

Our annual Spring Break Discovery Camp is for 2nd–5th graders and will be 3 days of history, experimenting, and fun!

Afternoon snack and all supplies included. Students will bring their own lunch.

*Click to learn more!*

Holland Museum
laup LEARN TODAY LEAD TOMORROW



**Day of the Dead**

**DIA DE LOS Muertos**

Saturday, October 25
FREE Family Event | Holland Armory

**Holland Museum**
31 W. 10th St.

**Cappon House**
228 W. 9th St.

**Settlers House**
190 W. 9th St.

**Holland Armory**
16 W. 9th St.

**(616) 796-3329 | hollandmuseum.org |**

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