

THE FUTURE OF HISTORY

SEPTEMBER • VOL. 26 • ISSUE 3 • 2026

Our mission is to tell the story of Muskegon County by collecting, preserving, and interpreting the history of its people and natural environment.



**LAKESHORE
MUSEUM CENTER**



Drawn from Nature.

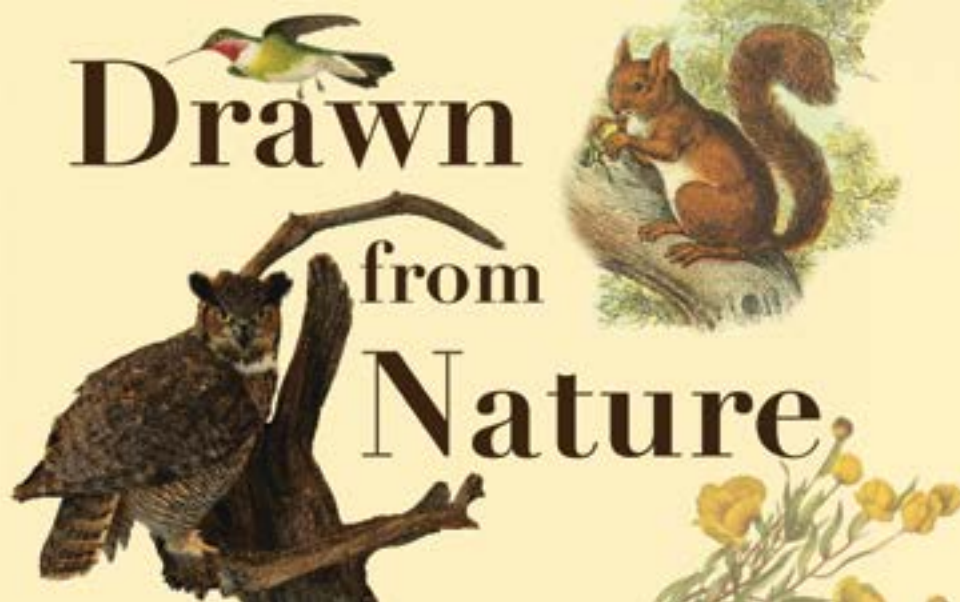


Exhibit opening on October 5

MUSEUMS MAKE YOU.

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DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Powered By Supporters

03

A museum belongs to the community it serves, and our members demonstrate that ownership through their ongoing support. That's why the theme of this quarter's newsletter is **Powered by the People**.

My thoughts went in lots of different directions when I was thinking about what to write. First, our organization is powered by the people through membership. Those membership dollars, in turn, become programs, exhibits, and restoration. An example of this was our July members-only event where we highlighted the Hackley & Hume Historic Site porch restoration. We provided a custom tour showcasing never-before-seen documents from our new Hackley & Hume collection transferred from Michigan State University. It was a memorable evening filled with appreciation for our shared history and stories.

As we move into fall, I want to mention some exciting things to watch for. First, the Hackley porch and chimney restorations will be wrapping up. We will be moving on to the Hackley porte cochère and the Hume back porch, along with a chimney restoration on the Hume House. At the Muskegon Museum of History & Science, we will be opening a new exhibit called *Drawn from Nature*, and of course we are preparing for our annual fundraiser, Lumber Barons Ball Presents: Night at the Museum. Please consider joining us or supporting the event by purchasing a raffle ticket at lakeshoremuseum.org/night-at-the-museum. This event helps fill in funding gaps for our general operations and education programming.

Thank you for your membership and for continuing to make the Lakeshore Museum Center thrive and grow.



Melissa Horton
Executive Director



Image 1: Hackley & Hume document recently transferred from Michigan State University.
Image 2: Invitation to Lumber Barons Ball Presents: Night at the Museum.

**Scan the QR code to grab your tickets to the
Lumber Barons Ball!**



ARCHIVE & COLLECTION

Recent Acquisitions



The Lakeshore Museum Center actively collects objects and archival material relevant to Muskegon County's natural and cultural history. These items are reviewed by the Acquisitions Committee and the Board of Trustees for their condition, their relevance to Muskegon County, and the LMC's ability to care for the objects. We are grateful to our donors for their ongoing contributions to the Muskegon County Archive & Collection.

In the second quarter of 2026, the LMC was offered 57 objects. The following objects were accepted into the collection:



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Archives:

- Scrapbooks commemorating the Tempting Tables events, 1997-2019
- DVD of a pictorial history of the Humes by George Hume
- DVD of the Hume family gathering for Thomas Hume's memorial, 2007
- Sailing school manual from White Lake Yacht Club

Objects:

- Shaw Walker 8600 Series desk manufactured in 1950, owned by Ira Wyant
- Muskegon Township firefighter's hat and helmet worn by Clarence Radel [\[Image 01\]](#)

Special Delivery



Alyssa Vargas and Nicola Perry with the Hume sewing chair.

In July, a sewing chair donated by Katharine Pierce returned to its original home at the Hume House. Katharine was the great-great-granddaughter of Thomas Hume. Her grandmother, Virginia Hume Perry, received the chair after her parents' passing.

Katharine believed the chair belonged in the home where its history began. Tragically, Katharine passed away in March 2026. Her sister, Nicola Perry, took on the task of delivering the chair to Muskegon.

The chair traveled from Tennessee to Muskegon and was delivered back home by Nicola and Katharine's daughter, Alyssa Vargas.

We are so grateful to Katharine, Nicola, and Alyssa for their generous donation. The sewing chair is now on display in the parlor of the Hume House.

WHAT'S ON VIEW?

Donors Power Our Exhibits



At the Lakeshore Museum Center, we strive to bring our visitors quality, informative, engaging exhibition experiences. Exhibitions, whether developed in-house or rented from the touring circuit, require resources. This undertaking would be impossible without the support of our generous donors.



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Muskegon Museum of History & Science

Onward and yonward, *Nature Cat!* After a fun-filled summer at the Muskegon Museum of History & Science, *Nature Cat* will be traveling to its next location. Traveling exhibits are costly to produce and rent, but they often bring our visitors experiences that go beyond our in-house production capacity. Exhibitions like *Nature Cat* would not be possible without support from sponsors like Consumer's Energy, Kuerth's Disposal, and WGVU Public Media.

Over the summer, the Discovery Center received a new video microscope. Visitors can place samples under the lens and view them through the viewfinder on the microscope or on a display monitor. Karen and John Wells made this project possible and also funded the purchase of touch screens and media players. With these devices, we will be able to create digital interactives in our temporary exhibits.

The next time you visit *Coming to the Lakes*, it might look slightly different. Through the John Max Busard Trust, donor Andy Busard provided funds to build a protective acrylic enclosure around the Continental Beacon and the American Bantam Jeep. The new casework is accompanied by a minor graphics update and a wider traffic path.

What's Next?

Get your tickets to Lumber Barons Ball Presents: Night at the Museum to get the first look at our next temporary exhibit, *Drawn from Nature!* This exhibit will feature natural history illustrations, taxidermy mounts, fossils, shells, insect specimens and more. Look at slides under a microscope and try to sketch like a naturalist. *Drawn from Nature* will open for Lumber Barons Ball guests on October 3 at 6:30 p.m. and to the public on October 5.

The Muskegon Heights Alumnae Chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority celebrates its 50th anniversary in December. Join us in celebrating the history, achievements, and community impact of the organization with an exhibit running November 2026 through April 2027.



04

Image 1: The last day to visit *Nature Cat* at the Muskegon Museum of History and Science is September 12.

Image 2: The new video microscope and monitor in the Discovery Center.

Image 3: The new exhibit enclosure surrounding the Continental Beacon and the American Bantam Jeep.

Image 4: A concept sketch for the Muskegon Heights Alumnae Chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority 50th Anniversary exhibit.

MUSKEGON HISTORIC SITES

Celebrating 40 Years with the Lakeshore Museum Center

06

The power of the people has shaped the Hackley & Hume Historic Site from the very beginning. This July 1st, we celebrate 40 years as part of the Lakeshore Museum Center, a milestone made possible by generations of Muskegon residents who refused to let history disappear.

In 1971 and 1972, the Hackley Heritage Association stepped in when the homes faced demolition. Their advocacy saved the structures, secured their place on the National Register of Historic Places, and launched the first restoration efforts. Their determination created the foundation the Lakeshore Museum Center continues to build upon today.

That legacy of preservation is alive and well. In recent years, major exterior projects have strengthened the site, and this summer we are actively working on two significant efforts: the Hackley Front Porch Restoration Project and the Hackley North Chimney Project. With the skilled partnership of Grand River Builders, Inc., these restorations honor the craftsmanship of the past while protecting the homes for the future. None of this is possible without the power of Muskegon County residents, whose continued support of the museum millage every ten years ensures that preservation remains a shared, community-driven mission. Thanks to you, these historic homes will stand strong for generations to come.



Hackley Heritage Association



Repairs to the Hackley House

Erin Schmitz, Historic Sites Director

Community Action Saves History



Sophia Zemke



Repairing the foundation of the Scolnik House of the Depression Era

Muskegon's historic gems would not exist without passionate advocates for preserving our heritage. In the early 2000s, the Muskegon Heritage Association and Hackley Heritage Association recognized the historical value of the former Zemke residence on Clay Avenue and saved the 1890s house from becoming a casualty of the wrecking ball.

The two associations later gifted the house to the Muskegon County Museum, with a vision of restoring it to reflect the Great Depression era. Our donors quite literally helped lift the museum. The deteriorating foundation was repaired, the porch and windows replaced, and the interior stripped to the studs for a full restoration. None of this would have been possible without generous community support.

Today, the Scolnik House of the Depression Era is enjoyed by visitors of all ages and is the only museum of its kind in the country. This hands-on museum reflects the economic hardships and resourcefulness of everyday people during the Great Depression.

Through efforts of the people, generations to come will enjoy learning the rich history of Muskegon, Michigan. With the commitment and support of our community, we can protect the future of our heritage by preserving our past.

Hillary Jones, Historic Sites Program Manager

MUSKEGON MUSEUM OF HISTORY & SCIENCE

It Takes a Community

07

Working at the museum means wearing a lot of hats at all different times. We're thankful that we also have a lot of heads to wear those hats—in the form of our amazing volunteers. Every year our volunteers help us accomplish far more than we ever thought we could, thanks to their dedicated help. Volunteers this past year reached out into our community with programs and information booths, and assisted school and homeschool groups with programs and tours. They helped research for upcoming exhibits and podcasts, and assisted with special evening programs such as Friday Family Fun Nights. Without their support the museum's reach would be less great, so thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers!

Chemistry Day Returns October 10

Two years ago, the museum attended a Science Olympiad event at Grand Valley State University (GVSU), where we had a booth with a science activity and information about our museum. As it happened, just down from us was the GVSU Chemistry Club and American Chemistry Society (ACS) booth. In conversation with us, they mentioned that they were looking for a space to host their annual Chemistry Day, and we thought the museum could be a great partnership. In October 2025, ACS was able to host Chemistry Day at the museum, bringing in science experiments, demos, and even a live chemistry show. In recognition of this partnership, the LMC was honored in July with a Salute to Excellence award from the American Chemistry Society and an invitation to join them at a West Michigan Whitecaps game. We are happy to say that Chemistry Day will be back at the museum again on October 10. Join us to see this great partnership and event in person!



LMC staff Patrick Horn, Kimberlynn Carlson, and Jennifer Reeths enjoying the Whitecaps game with American Chemistry Society

Pat Horn, Program Manager



Volunteer helping with museum day camp, Enviroworks



Volunteer helping with Play & Learn



Volunteer at a community outreach booth

MUSKEGON HERITAGE MUSEUM OF BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

Hands-On History: Recreating a 19th-Century Dock Walloper's Apron

08



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In 1945, the newly established Muskegon County Museum launched a unique contest designed to expand its inaugural collection. The Museum invited both city and rural school children to locate and submit the most historically significant artifacts within Muskegon County. The submissions were evaluated on historical relevance by judges Charles Yates and Lewis Torrent. The Museum offered a \$25 War Bond to the winning entry, alongside the distinction of having the object accepted into the museum's collection. By February, students had submitted entries including lumbering tools, household utensils, photographs, and a pair of spectacles belonging to local pioneer Minerva Dill. Ultimately, the grand prize was awarded to Joyce Larson, a student at Froebel School. Larson submitted a dock walloper apron worn by

her grandfather, Carl Erick Larson (1854-1933). He was a Swedish immigrant and one time employee of Thayer Lumber Company in Muskegon.

Muskegon County's fortunes were built on forest products. The first sawmill on Muskegon Lake was built in 1837. Within two years, the first shipment of lumber left the channel bound for markets outside of West Michigan. This was an era before cargo containers, forklifts, or electric gantry cranes. Every board had to be loaded on sailing schooners, barges, or steam freighters by hand. The dockside workers responsible for this daily labor were usually called stevedores or longshoremen. A lesser-known name for the trade in the 19th century was dock walloper.



02

Larson's dock walloper apron has been a cherished part of the museum's collection. It was featured in the exhibit, *The Shipwreck of The Thomas Hume*. Following that display, it was exhibited at the City Barn. In 2021, the apron needed to rest and it was taken off exhibit to limit its exposure to light and UV radiation. While in storage, the object received a custom storage box with supports to hold the curved shape it formed from years of use.

In 2026, Kirk Bunke, Site Manager, decided to replicate the apron for the Muskegon Heritage Museum of Business & Industry Community Day on September 5. Adult- and child-sized versions of the apron were reproduced. A close examination of the object gave some clues to the manufacturing process. The leather is approximately 3/16 inches thick. Both legs of the split front apron are set to the curvature of the owner. This could have been done at the time the apron was built or through years of use. It is a good indication that the leather was vegetable tanned.

A unique feature was a fringe along the upper edge that is wet-molded into a roll. While constructing the replica, Bunke determined, now from experience, the fringe makes the apron more comfortable when bending at the waist. A patch on the upper left thigh covers a hole worn through heavy use. It also indicates that Larson was left-handed. The top edge of the patch is fed through a slit and riveted in place on the backside with three copper rivets and burrs. This was likely done to prevent a sharp transition that might catch lumber in use.

To begin the reconstruction, we secured a pre-stained saddle skirt side of the appropriate weight and hardware. Our prototype is a hypothetical reconstruction of how the apron may have looked when first used. The belt was left longer than the original to accommodate a wider variety of modern waist sizes. Lessons learned in building the initial reproduction were applied to a second adult-sized apron. This version included the alterations seen in the artifact. Three child-sized versions were produced using lighter weight leather. This project has provided insight on Larson and his fellow dock wallopers. It allows this apron to enjoy its rest while visitors can see, learn from, and, now, wear a similar piece.



03

Image 1: Unidentified dock wallopers, vessel loaders, posed on dock in front of stacks of lumber. Many have their leather aprons rolled up and have metal pails in their hands. Date unknown.

Image 2: Carl Larson's apron in a custom box for storage.

Image 3: Three of the reproduction aprons modeled by staff and an Enviroworks camp participant.

MUSEUM ENGAGEMENT

The 1937 Legacy Society: Celebrating the Museum’s Founders & Sustainers

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At the Lakeshore Museum Center, we call our planned giving program the 1937 Legacy Society. This is in honor of the original board of directors from 1937, when the museum was founded. These community members joined together with vision and fortitude to collect and preserve the history of Muskegon County, each with a deep understanding of why it was (and is) important. Over the years, many others have recognized the vision and supported the organization by becoming employees, volunteers, members, and advocates. Additionally, many people give financially.

When asked about his membership in the 1937 Legacy Society, Board President Michael Brower shared, “As someone who cares deeply about Muskegon and its future, I believe we also have a responsibility to preserve and share the stories that shaped this community. The Lakeshore Museum Center does far more than preserve buildings and artifacts. It helps our community understand where we came from and gives young people a connection to the people, industries, and events that shaped Muskegon County. Because of that, I’m confident that including the Lakeshore Museum Center in my planned giving is a way to ensure that those stories, places, and educational opportunities remain available for generations to come.”



Michael Brower, Lakeshore Museum Center Board President

Are YOU interested in leaving an impact on Muskegon’s history? To learn more about joining the 1937 Legacy Society, contact [Morgan Witmer at morgan@lakeshoremuseum.org](mailto:morgan@lakeshoremuseum.org) or 231-766-6072.

Morgan Witmer, Development & Office Administrator



Powered by You

Reciprocal exchanges allow our members to explore museums across Michigan. I love all the messages you send telling stories and sharing photos of the places you visited for free using your LMC membership card. Keep them coming! We could not do the work we do without your support, and I am always humbled and thankful for you.

Don’t forget: all our members get to enjoy at least 10% off all purchases in our gift stores. We are always adding new merchandise, so be sure to check it out on your next visit.

If you have any questions or comments about your membership, or to request a new membership card, please contact [Graciela Alberino-Stidham at 231-722-0278](mailto:graciela@lakeshoremuseum.org) or email me at graciela@lakeshoremuseum.org.

Graciela Alberino-Stidham, Guest Relations Manager



The above businesses have shown commitment to the museum’s mission by providing major sponsorships for exhibits and programs over the past year. Thank you!

MUSEUM ENGAGEMENT

Our Members as of July 24, 2026:

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MUSEUM ENGAGEMENT

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MUSEUM ENGAGEMENT

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MUSEUM ENGAGEMENT

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PLAN YOUR VISIT

Calendar of Events

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Muskegon Museum of History & Science



All Sites Closed

September 7 - Labor Day
October 3 - Lumber Barons Ball
November 26 -Thanksgiving Break
November 27 -Thanksgiving Break
December 11 -Staff Training

September 5

Community Day: Ships & Ports
11:00am-4:00pm

September 10

Play and Learn
10:00am

September 11

*After Dark Tour
9:00pm-10:00pm

September 11

*Clue: LIVE!
Session 1: 6:00-7:00pm
Session 2: 7:30-8:30 pm

September 12

*Last Day of *Nature Cat: Backyard and Beyond*

September 12

*Clue: LIVE!
Session 1: 6:00-7:00pm
Session 2: 7:30-8:30 pm

September 18

*All Access
7:00-8:30pm

September 24

Play and Learn
10:00am

September 25

*Hackley Attic Escape Room
5:00-6:30pm

September 26

*Hackley Attic Escape Room
5:00-6:30pm

October

FREE on the WEEKENDS FOR MUSKEGON COUNTY RESIDENTS

October 2

*After Dark Tour
9:00pm-10:00pm

Muskegon Historic Sites



October 3

*Lumber Barons Ball: Night at the Museum

October 3

Community Day: Air Travel
11:00am-4:00pm

October 5

Drawn From Nature Exhibit Opens

October 8

Play and Learn
10:00am

October 9

*Flashlight Tour
8:00pm-9:00pm

October 10

Chemistry Day at the Museum

October 10

FREE ADMISSION for Muskegon County Residents
11:00am-4:00pm

October 16

Friday Family Fun Night Smashing Pumpkins
5:30-7:30pm

October 16

*Obituary Tour
Session 1: 6:00-8:00pm
Session 2: 8:30-10:00 pm

October 17

*Obituary Tour
Session 1: 6:00-8:00pm
Session 2: 8:30-10:00 pm

October 17

FREE ADMISSION for Muskegon County Residents
11:00am-4:00pm

October 21

*Whooo's That? Blandford at the Museum
6:00pm

October 22

Play and Learn
10:00am

October 23

*Hackley Attic Escape Room
5:00-6:30pm

October 24

*Hackley Attic Escape Room
5:00-6:30pm

Muskegon Heritage Museum of Business & Industry



October 24

FREE ADMISSION for Muskegon County Residents
11:00am-4:00pm

October 31

Last Open Day for the Classic Touring Season

October 31

FREE ADMISSION for Muskegon County Residents
11:00am-4:00pm

October 31

Tiny Tots Trick or Treat
11:00am-4:00pm

October 31

Last Day of the 2026 Season

November 12

Play and Learn
10:00am

November 12

*Margaret Drake Elliot: Muskegon's Naturalist
6:00pm

November 20

Pioneer Night
5:30-7:30pm

November 28

Holiday Tours & Kickoff Event
3:00-7:00pm

December 5

*Snowball Tea
11:00-2:00pm

December 5

*Holiday Tours
3:00-7:00pm

December 10

Play and Learn
10:00am

December 12

*Holiday Tours
3:00-7:00pm

December 19

*Holiday Tours
3:00-7:00pm

*Program has a cost to participate, please visit our website calendar at www.lakeshoremuseum.org for details.

Muskegon Museum of History & Science

430 W. Clay Ave., Muskegon
231.722.0278

Hackley & Hume Historic Site

484 W. Webster Ave., Muskegon
231.722.7578

Fire Barn Museum

484 W. Webster Ave., Muskegon
231.722.7578

Scolnik House of the Depression Era

484 W. Webster Ave., Muskegon
231.722.7578

Muskegon Heritage Museum of Business & Industry

561 W. Western Ave., Muskegon
231.722.1363

www.lakeshoremuseum.org



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