



Impact Report

FY 2024-2025



WENHAM
MUSEUM
Generations at Play

Preserving Stories Connecting Generations

Every generation leaves behind stories — of who we are, what we value, and how we live. At Wenham Museum, our work is to ensure those stories are preserved, protected, and passed forward, so that future generations can learn from the past while shaping their own future. Managing this institution for the long term means balancing stewardship of our collections with the creativity and innovation needed to keep history alive for years to come.

We safeguard history through our collections, bring it to life through exhibitions, and pass it forward through our educational programs. From intergenerational play in our galleries to storytelling traditions and programs that connect grandparents, parents, and children, Wenham Museum is a place where the past meets the present — and together, we shape the future.

This year, we embraced our role as both caretakers and storytellers. We witnessed grandparents and grandchildren exploring side by side, students uncovering history in hands-on ways, and visitors of all ages finding joy in both memory and imagination. These intergenerational moments remind us why Wenham Museum matters — as a vibrant resource, a place of learning, and a trusted keeper of community memory.

None of this would be possible without you. Your support makes it possible for us to preserve, protect, and share the stories that make our community unique. Because of you, the Wenham Museum is not just thriving today — it is building a foundation that will ensure these stories live on for generations to come.

With gratitude,

Sarah Sosa-Acevedo

Sarah Sosa-Acevedo
Executive Director



Walter C. Meibaum, III

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Board Chair



Year in Highlights

Preserving Stories, Connecting Generations

Who benefits from Wenham Museum?

A whole lot of people!



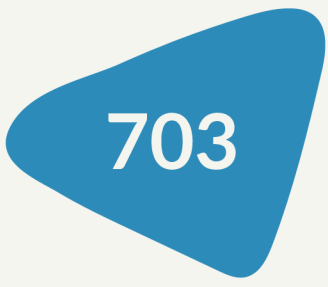
32,153

32,153 guests visited the Museum – nearly an 8% increase over last year



1,615

1,615 babies came through our museum



703

703 families enjoyed **museum memberships**—an increase of 21% over last year



2,722

2,722 guests celebrated in the museum during one of **63 museum rentals**, including baby showers, birthday parties, and business gatherings



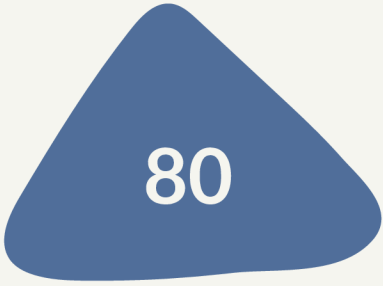
314

314 visits were made to the museum through free or reduced-price **Access for Everyone** programs



1,485

1,485 schoolchildren, chaperones, and other participants played during **25 visits from schools** and other groups



80

80 life-long learners came to our **10 Brown Bag Lunch** programs.

Children's Programming

FY2024–2025 Highlights

Stories were our spark this year: little ones listened, built, danced, and discovered their own voices while connecting with community history, nature, and culture. Across weekly drop-ins, school-day adventures, and big, joy-filled celebrations, we invited families to make memories—and to carry these stories forward. Here, we share a few highlights.

HARRY POTTER PARTY (NOVEMBER 2)

A museum-wide wizarding takeover featured a sold-out magic show, potion labs, crafts, photo op, and a sock drive honoring Dobby—high-impact, mission-aligned fun with a service twist.

KIDS' COUNTDOWN TO NYE (DECEMBER 31)

We rang in “midnight” at noon with music, movement, hats, face painting, and a balloon drop—our biggest family party of the year.



HUB MODEL RAILROAD (JANUARY 18-20)

Regional model railroaders filled Burnham Hall with intricate layouts—including a beloved Thomas & Friends Sodor scene—for deep, imaginative play.

DINO DANCE BBQ MEMBER EVENT (MARCH 28)

Members boogied at a dino dance party, excavated eggs, and crafted together—strengthening community and loyalty.

Children's Programming

FY2024-2025 Highlights



SPRING INTO NATURE FESTIVAL (JUNE 7)

Families and community partners celebrated the season with hands-on crafts, garden activities, and insights from local experts on beekeeping and Victory Gardens. In partnership with the HW Garden Club, the festival invited all to learn, play, and connect with nature, and strengthened community ties.

MORNINGS AT THE MUSEUM (ONGOING)

This new drop-in series for children ages 0-5 quickly became a favorite for families, offering a joyful, enriching way to start the day with themes around Arts & Making, Movement & Music, and Language & Literacy. Free with admission, Mornings at the Museum makes early learning accessible and welcoming for all.



Together, these programs turned stories into touchable, buildable, sing-along experiences—connecting generations through play, history, and imagination.

Adult Programming

Brown Bag Lunch Program

Stories come alive not only through artifacts and exhibitions, but also through conversations that connect past and present. The Wenham Museum's adult programming, including the Brown Bag Lunch Series, created opportunities for adults to gather, learn, and share stories. This free monthly program featured speakers on local history, culture, and contemporary issues, ensuring stories are preserved and passed on to future generations.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

ALL ABOUT BEEKEEPING

October 11

Local apiarist **Nora Neale** shared the art and science of beekeeping, offering visitors a taste of the vital role bees play in our communities. Lupine Lane Apiary products were also featured in the museum shop.

HOW TO WRITE ANCESTRAL STORIES YOUR RELATIVES WILL WANT TO READ

November 15

Genealogist and writer **Pam Vestal** guided participants in transforming family research into compelling narratives that relatives would want to hear and read.

THE HISTORY OF CHOCOLATE IN MASSACHUSETTS

December 13

Dorchester Historical Society President **Earl Taylor** traced the history of chocolate in Massachusetts, highlighting the Baker Chocolate Company's influence.

AUTHOR TALK: WRITING ACROSS GENRES

January 10

Author **Karin Gertsch** discussed her experiences writing across nonfiction, fiction, and children's literature, sharing insights into the creative process.

ENSLAVED PEOPLE AND WENHAM

February 7

Historian **Robert Corcoran** presented his research on Wenham's enslaved community, giving voice to names and stories often left untold.



Adult Programming

Brown Bag Lunch Program

EVACUATION DAY AND THE REVOLUTION

March 14

Local historian **Gordon Harris** reflected on Boston's Evacuation Day and the early battles of the American Revolution.

A CONVERSATION WITH ANITA DIAMANT

March 29

Bestselling author **Anita Diamant** joined Kristin Czarnecki to discuss *The Boston Girl*, weaving together themes of women's history, Jewish life, and the Iron Rail Vacation Home for Girls.



FROM THE GROUND UP: SHOES IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

April 11

Dr. Kimberly Alexander explored the role of footwear in Revolutionary America, revealing how everyday objects shaped history.

WHAT CAME AFTER: ESSEX COUNTY MILITIA AFTER LEXINGTON

May 9

Assistant Curator **Stacey Fraser** examined the critical months between the Battle of Lexington and the Battle of Bunker Hill, focusing on the role of Essex County soldiers.

CLIMATE CHANGE: WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

June 13

The **Hamilton-Wenham Climate Action Team** closed the series with a timely discussion on climate change and practical actions community members can take.

We are grateful to Institution for Savings for sponsoring the Brown Bag Lunch Series. With their partnership, we preserved stories of the past and ensured they are shared widely, enriching our community's cultural life.

Exhibits

FY2024–2025

PRESERVING STORIES THROUGH EXHIBITIONS

Each exhibition this year told a unique story—whether from history, art, play, or imagination. Together, they carried forward the museum’s mission of preserving stories and ensuring they remain available to future generations. Through hands-on discovery, historic collections, and community creativity, visitors of all ages connected across time and place.



IRON RAILS & HAPPY TRAILS: HELEN CLAY FRICK & THE MILL GIRLS *Thompson Gallery | Opened Spring 2025 – Ongoing*

This exhibition shares the story of Helen Clay Frick’s Iron Rail Vacation Home, which offered Massachusetts mill girls a rare chance at rest, recreation, and play. Visitors explore historic photographs, a recreated cabin, and hands-on activities including a slide, seesaw, and ping-pong.



ALL ABOARD FOR TRAIN TIME *Thompson Gallery | Fall 2024 – Spring 2025*

Timed with the 20th anniversary of *The Polar Express* film, this exhibition presented four train layouts, including festive winter scenes and bustling cityscapes. Families enjoyed holiday fun and hands-on train activities throughout the gallery.



IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD *Thompson Gallery | Spring 2024 – Fall 2024*

This exhibit explored how Wenham’s downtown neighborhood evolved over 350 years—from homes and workshops to trolleys and landmarks. Visitors of all ages enjoyed hands-on fun, from stacking “ice blocks” in the Wenham Lake Ice House to imaginative play at the Tea House and other interactive stops inspired by life in a New England village.

Exhibits

FY2024-2025

Ads R Us

Osgood Gallery | Spring 2025 - Ongoing

Playtime: Push-Pull-Roll-Slide

Thompson Ext. Gallery | Spring 2025 - Ongoing

Pattern Play

West Gallery | Spring 2025 - Ongoing

Draw Me a Story

Egbert Gallery | Winter 2025 - Ongoing

Construction Junction

Ayer Gallery | Winter 2024 - Ongoing

Bennett E. Merry Train Gallery

Permanent

William B. Osgood Toy Soldier Collection

Permanent

Dino Safari

Family Discovery Gallery | Winter 2025 - Fall 2025

What to Wear? Dolls and Their Wardrobes

Osgood Gallery | Fall 2024 - Spring 2025

Tin Toy Story and Tin Things

West & Thompson Ext. Galleries | Fall 2024 - Spring 2025

If You Give a _____ a _____

Family Discovery Gallery | Fall 2024 - Winter 2025

Aftermath: Portraits and Reflections of Veterans in Recovery

Egbert Gallery | Spring 2024 - Fall 2024

Kidstuff

Osgood Gallery | Spring 2024 - Fall 2024

Gone Campin'

Family Discovery Gallery | Spring 2024 - Fall 2024



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FY2024-2025

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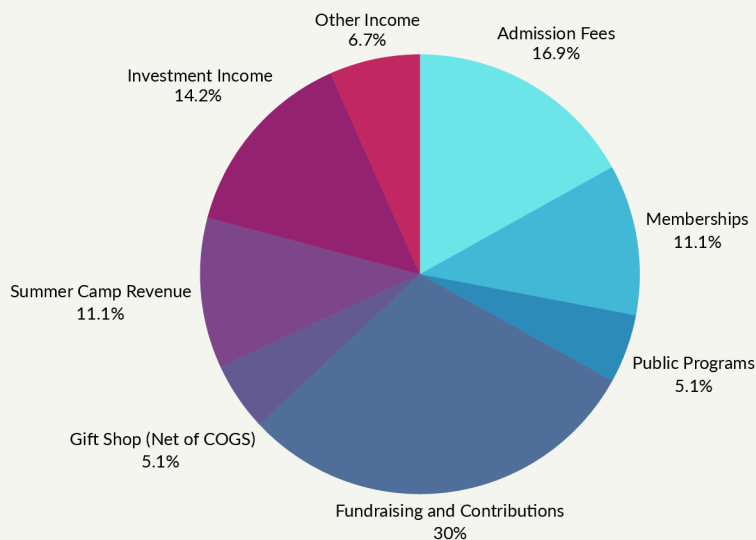
Financial Report

FY2024-2025

Behind every exhibition, program, and gathering at the Wenham Museum are the resources that make these stories possible. Our financial stewardship ensures that the stories of the past are preserved and that new stories continue to be shared with future generations. Through careful management of our resources, the Museum balances the needs of today with the promise of tomorrow. The following charts illustrate our operating revenue and expenses for FY24-25, reflecting the broad community support and thoughtful investments that sustain our mission.

TOTAL OPERATING INCOME

\$736,982



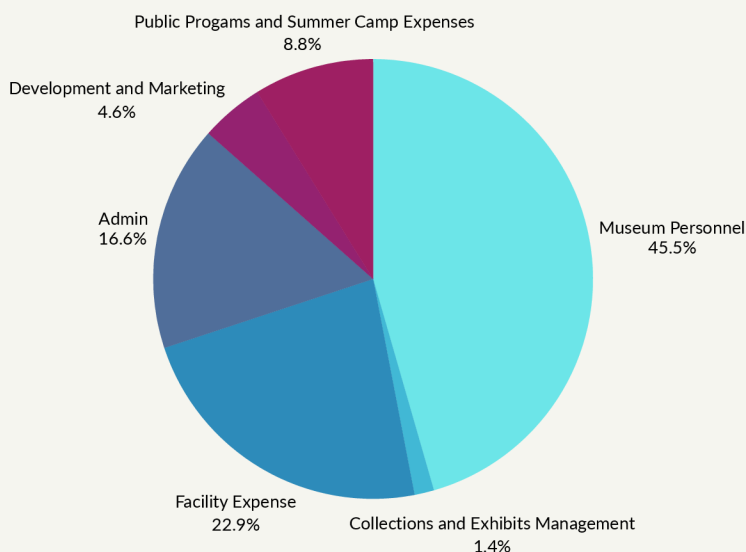
ENDOWMENT

The Museum maintains a diversified investment portfolio to help ensure long-term sustainability. Our investments are managed in accordance with board-approved policies, with an emphasis on preserving capital, generating steady income, and supporting the Museum's mission. This year, our portfolio experienced stable growth, providing resources that strengthen operations and future initiatives.

The Museum holds two endowment funds through Charles Schwab — including the Loring Endowment and the Board-restricted Endowment fund — with a combined fair value of \$1,031,647, generating distributions for FY26 of \$33,822 under a 4% spending policy. In addition, the Museum maintains a Reserve Fund, which began the fiscal year with a balance of \$60,000. To meet operating needs in FY24-25, a portion of this fund was utilized, leaving an ending balance of \$3,000.

TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES

\$835,655



Fundraisers

FY2024-2025



HARVEST DINNERS IN THE HISTORIC HOUSE *November 15 & 16*

Guests stepped back in time for an intimate harvest dinner inside the historic Claflin-Gerrish-Richards House. The evening celebrated the season's bounty with dinner from Relish Catering and Events and a dessert course by treat baking company, while supporting the museum's mission to preserve history and inspire the community.

SPRING & SUMMER SPORTS SALE

February 27 - March 1

The Spring & Summer Sports Sale continued the museum's tradition of community resale events, offering gently used sporting equipment at affordable prices. Bringing together families, athletes, and neighbors, the fundraiser supported the museum while promoting active play and sustainability across generations.



MARCH IS MEMBERSHIP MONTH DRIVE *March 1 - 31*

The March is Membership Month campaign rewarded new and renewing members with special perks, including an extra month free. Additional campaign highlights included a Member Appreciation Coffee with the new Executive Director and a members-only Dino Dance BBQ celebration.

TRAIN GALLERY FUNDRAISER

February 6 - April 30

The All Aboard the Giving Train fundraiser invited visitors to support updates to the museum's beloved Train Gallery. By selecting and personalizing a paper train with a donation, participants helped fund new flooring, lighting, and signage, as well as a reimagined train-themed hallway and ongoing model train maintenance.



BACKYARD SAFARI ADVENTURE RAFFLE *May 1 - 31*

The Dino Safari Raffle brought the excitement of the museum's popular exhibit home for one lucky winner, while supporting Wenham Museum. The \$500 adventure-ready prize bundle featured a Safari Truck Climber, plus a dino-themed backpack filled with museum goodies.

Recognizing Our Donors

Wenham Museum gratefully acknowledges those donors who made gifts, pledges, or pledge payments of \$250 or more during the fiscal year 2024 to 2025 (July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025).

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BEQUEST

We remember with appreciation the following generous donors whose gifts through bequests from their estates were received this year.

Mrs. Felicia A. Connolly

MEMORIAL AND COMMEMORATIVE GIFTS

The following were honored by their families, friends and other donors to Wenham Museum this year.

Harold and Shirley Boothroyd
Timothy Burke
John Cadigan
Amy Curtis and Tanya McKeen
Morgan Harland
Rupert Lillie
Ben Merry
Carol R. Mori
William B. Osgood
James Stavits
Ruth S. West

WENHAM MUSEUM LEGACY SOCIETY

The Legacy Society honors those who carry on tradition by making legacy gifts, such as bequests, trusts, gifts of retirement plans or donations through other planned gifts.

The Estate of Harriet Davis
Michael and Pat Lucy
Mr. Walter C. Meibaum, III

We make every effort to ensure accuracy; please let us know if we have made an error or inadvertently omitted your name.

Members

Our members are at the heart of the Wenham Museum's story. Each of the more than 700 member households who joined or renewed their membership in FY2024-2025 has helped preserve history, support discovery, and create spaces where stories come to life for all ages. We gratefully acknowledge their commitment, which ensures the stories we safeguard and share continue to inspire and connect generations.

Arielle and Nancy Adler
Emily and Brian Ahearn
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Generations at Play

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