



# 2024 Annual Report



VOTE



MONARCH  
BUTTERFLY



BARBARA

VOTE



DEER

# 2024 Highlights



## First Year of Civics Education Program a Big Success

Fairfield Museum is a lead partner in the statewide Civics Education for Connecticut Students Project. In its first year, the program welcomed 1,244 K-5 students from Fairfield and Bridgeport Public Schools who learned about regional history, voting, debating ideas, and how to become more active participants in the community. The 3-year Civics in Education program will eventually inspire more than 100,000 students statewide to become the democratic leaders of tomorrow. Additional support for the program has been generously provided by TD Bank.



## Celebrating Christmas in July

Families love attending the Fairfield Museum's annual Holiday Express Train Show in December, so this year we launched a special Christmas in July Train Show that drew more than 600 kids and families who enjoyed crafts, storytime with the Fairfield Public Library, and, of course, model trains!

# Inaugural Lunar New Year Celebration

In February, the Fairfield Museum welcomed more than 400 people for our first annual Lunar New Year Celebration. The festivities included a lion dance featuring The Scholar's Martial Hall, delicious dumpling samples from the Grumpy Dumpling Company, storytime with the Fairfield Public Library, live animals from Earthplace, and a special classical Chinese dance performance by Li-Garden Dance Company. In addition to inviting new audiences to the Museum, the celebration embodied the Museum's value of creating inclusive experiences for Fairfield's diverse communities.



## Adult Programs

The Fairfield Museum provides a growing list of programs for adults. More than 100 attendees joined us for our Spring 2024 Speaker Series, "People & Place", that explored how Connecticut's natural landscape has shaped our history. History Bites, the Museum's popular lunchtime lecture series, welcomed more than 250 people who delved



into topics like oystering in Long Island Sound, the 1964-65 World's Fair, the Gilded Age in Connecticut, and more. Our walking tours exploring Fairfield's architectural history, the Burning of Fairfield, and other topics continue to sell out. Be sure to sign up for our e-newsletter at [www.fairfieldhistory.org](http://www.fairfieldhistory.org) to hear about upcoming programs.

## Tavern Night!

To commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Marquis de Lafayette's triumphant visit to Fairfield in August of 1824, the Museum hosted a delightful evening of fun, food, and drink at the historic Sun Tavern. Guests—many in costume—were treated to a visit by "Lafayette" and tavern songs by Cliff Haslam and Joseph Morneault (pictured).





## Opening of the New Pequot Trail in Southport Park

In partnership with the Sasquanaug Association and the National Park Service, the Fairfield Museum has opened an exciting new interpretive trail in Southport Park that explores the history and culture of the area's Native American communities and the devastating impact of the 1637 Pequot War. New research materials on that conflict are also now available on the Museum's website.

## Fairfield Museum Wins Prestigious National Award



Fairfield Museum has been honored as a 2024 Leadership in History Award of Excellence winner by the American Association for

State and Local History. The award recognizes superior and innovative achievements in the interpretation of state and local history that makes the past more meaningful to all people. Our newly renovated *Creating Community: 400 Years of Fairfield Stories* exhibition has received national recognition for its ability to vividly connect the past to the present and to provide a more complete picture of southwestern Connecticut's diverse history and our shared future.



## Honoring Leonard Bernstein's Legacy

In January, the Museum partnered with Sacred Heart University Community Theatre to present a rare, intimate afternoon celebrating the life and work of one of Fairfield's most famous residents, composer

Leonard Bernstein. A sold-out theatre was mesmerized by acclaimed pianist Orin Grossman and Tony-Award-winning actors Joanna Gleason and Santino Fontana performing many of Bernstein's classic works, along with an intimate look into the famous composer's life with Jamie Bernstein, Leonard Bernstein's daughter

and author of *Famous Father Girl*. Special thanks to producer Alan Neigher.



## A Full House for Gilded Age Tours

In April, more than 150 people enjoyed an exclusive Gilded Age House Tour featuring the privately-owned Sturges "White" House (1855) and the Sturges Cottage (1840) located on Mill Plain Green. The event was offered in conjunction with Fairfield Museum's special exhibition *Money Talks: The Gilded Age in Fairfield*.

# What's on the Horizon

## Special Tours in October

This October, the Fairfield Museum will be hosting spooky Lantern Tours, a special series of walking tours exploring East Cemetery and Bridgeport's Mountain Grove Cemetery. Also, don't miss the Museum's exciting new Halloween tours that features a live performance diving into the history of Fairfield's witchcraft trials. See [www.fairfieldhistory.org](http://www.fairfieldhistory.org) for more information.



## The 250th Anniversary of the Declaration

**AMERICA 250**  
CONNECTICUT

In 2026 the nation will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. In preparation, the Fairfield Museum is working with our cultural partners to plan a full roster of exciting exhibits and programs that tell inclusive stories, celebrate the Fairfield's unique history and power of place, and encourage civic engagement. Stay tuned!

### LIST OF UPCOMING PROGRAMS

- 2024 Fall Speaker Series | Connecticut Witch Trials: From Accusations to Exoneration Efforts: **OCTOBER 20, 1-2:30 PM**
- Accused! Fairfield Witchcraft Trial Tours: **OCTOBER 24-26**
- Lantern Tours: **OCTOBER 26-30**
- Halloween on the Green: **OCTOBER 27, 12-4 PM**
- Research Your House Drop-In Session: **NOVEMBER 2, 10 AM-4 PM**
- 2024 Fall Speaker Series | Mrs. Fisher: Danbury's Marian Anderson: **NOVEMBER 3, 1-2:30 PM**
- Holiday Wreath Workshop: **NOVEMBER 16, 11 AM-12:30 PM**
- Holiday Pop-Up Market: **FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22 (4 TO 7 PM) & SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23 (10 AM TO 4 PM)**
- Holiday Express Train Show: **DECEMBER 7-31**
- Lunar New Year Celebration: **FEBRUARY 8, 10 AM-1 PM**

## Upcoming Exhibits

### BUILDING AN AMERICAN VOICE

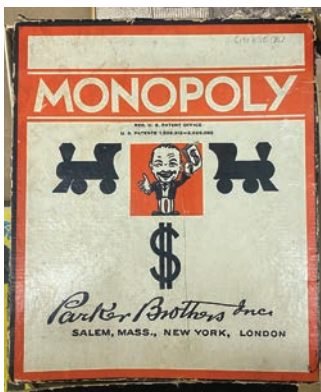
Our newest exhibition *Building an American Voice* presents an illustrated timeline of important moments in Connecticut's, and the nation's, historic struggle to have everyone's voice heard in the political arena. The exhibition is part of the Museum's commemoration of the Declaration of Independence and includes rare objects and original documents that highlight how the history of freedom of assembly, speech, petition, and voting has helped achieve key victories in civil rights, voting, and other freedoms.



### WELCOME TO THE TOYSHOP!

On view November 16, 2024 – April 13, 2025

Do you remember your favorite childhood toy? Just in time for the holidays, the Fairfield Museum's upcoming exhibition *Welcome to the Toyshop* will be an immersive journey through the history of toys and Fairfield's iconic toy shops.





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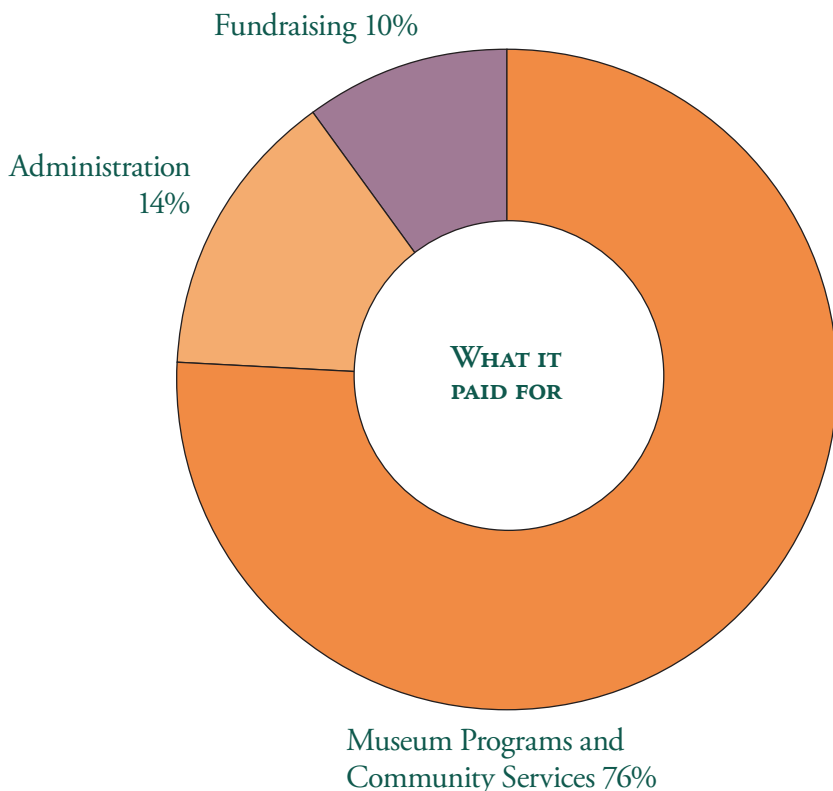
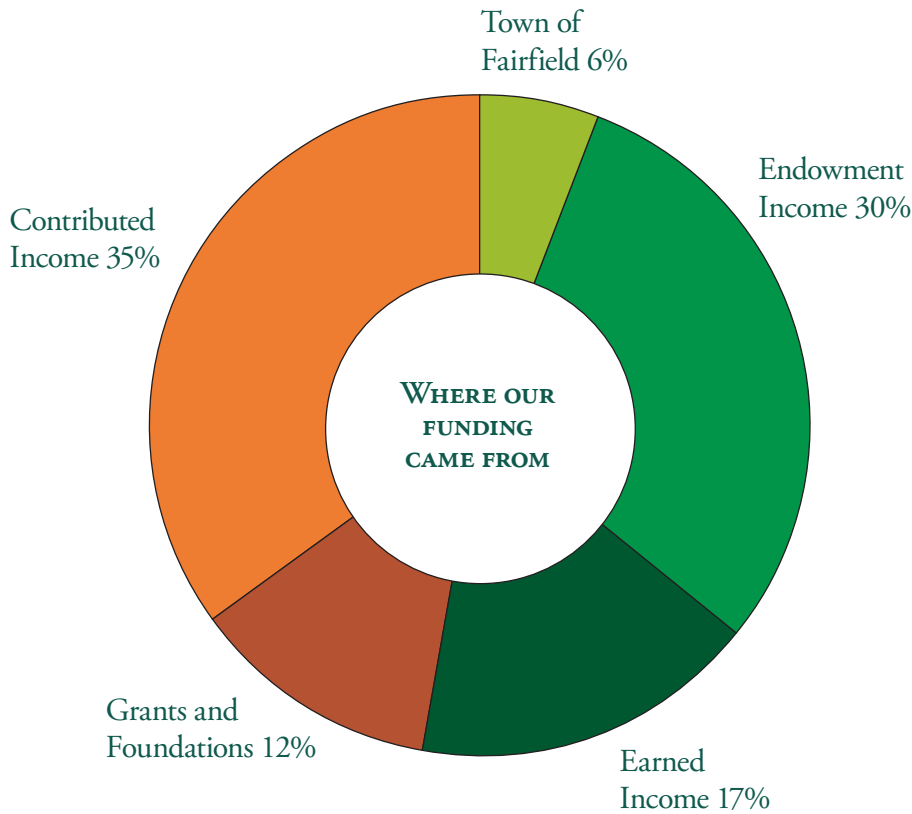
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*Includes contributions from 7/1/2023 through 6/30/2024*

# Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Financial Overview

To view our financials, visit [www.fairfieldhistory.org/support/](http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/support/)



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