

THE WEST END MUSEUM

ANNUAL REPORT

2023



WEM

THE WEST END MUSEUM

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Welcome Message

From Lois Ascher, Board President

Greetings,

Thank you for your dedication to, and involvement with, The West End Museum. As President of the Board of Directors for WEM, I am filled with a sense of pride and accomplishment. As we reflect on the past year, it is with great pleasure that I share some important updates and achievements with you.

I am thrilled to report that the profile of The West End Museum continues to rise within our community and beyond. Through our educational programs, exhibitions, and community engagement efforts, we are increasingly recognized as a vital institution dedicated to preserving and sharing the rich history and culture of Boston and the West End neighborhood.

This year, a committee was formed to update Museum governance and operations using guidelines from the American Association of State and Local History's Standard and Excellence Program for History Organizations. The STEPS Committee is responsible for establishing the policies and practices necessary to ensure The West End Museum's sustainable growth in the coming years. This process of aligning the Museum's policies with best practices is the first step in securing a national certification from the American Alliance of Museums, a long-standing goal of Museum leadership.

The Board remains confident in our appointment of Sebastian Belfanti as Executive Director. We are pleased to have reached a multi-year agreement to support him in his pursuit of further education and ensure ongoing stability for our institution during this period of growth and change.

None of our achievements would be possible without the action and hard work of our staff, board members, volunteers, supporters, and partners. Thanks especially to Tom Palmer for stepping up as Treasurer of the Board and for his continued service with WEM and its financial stability.

As we look forward to the coming year, I am filled with optimism and excitement for the opportunities that lie ahead. Together, we will continue to honor, preserve, and share the spirit of the West End neighborhood and inspire future generations to celebrate its unique contributions to Boston's history.

Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to The West End Museum. We are truly grateful for your support on this remarkable journey.

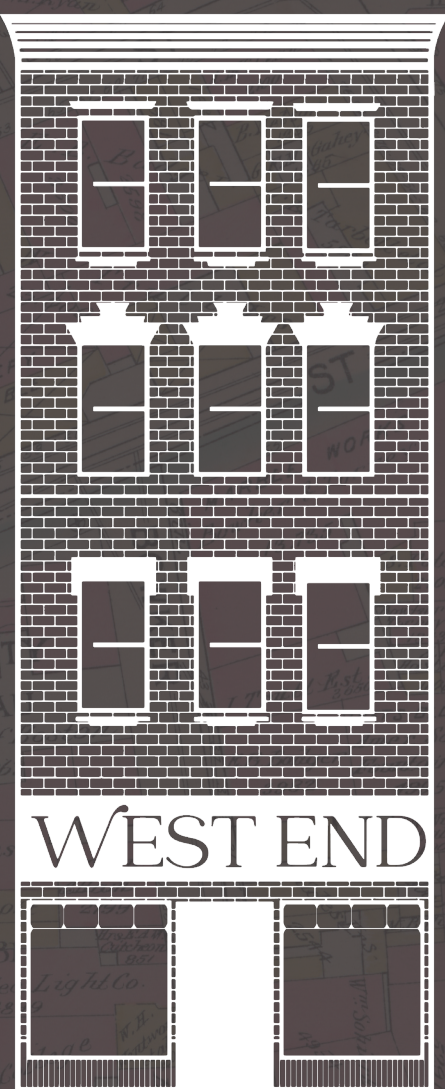
Warm regards,



Lois Ascher
President of the Board of Directors
The West End Museum

Our Mission

The West End Museum is dedicated to telling the story of Boston's West End neighborhood. The Museum provides a space for past and present residents and the community; educates the public in history and urbanization; and preserves its material history and culture. The Museum seeks to challenge citizens to take an active role in shaping their communities.



Organization Overview

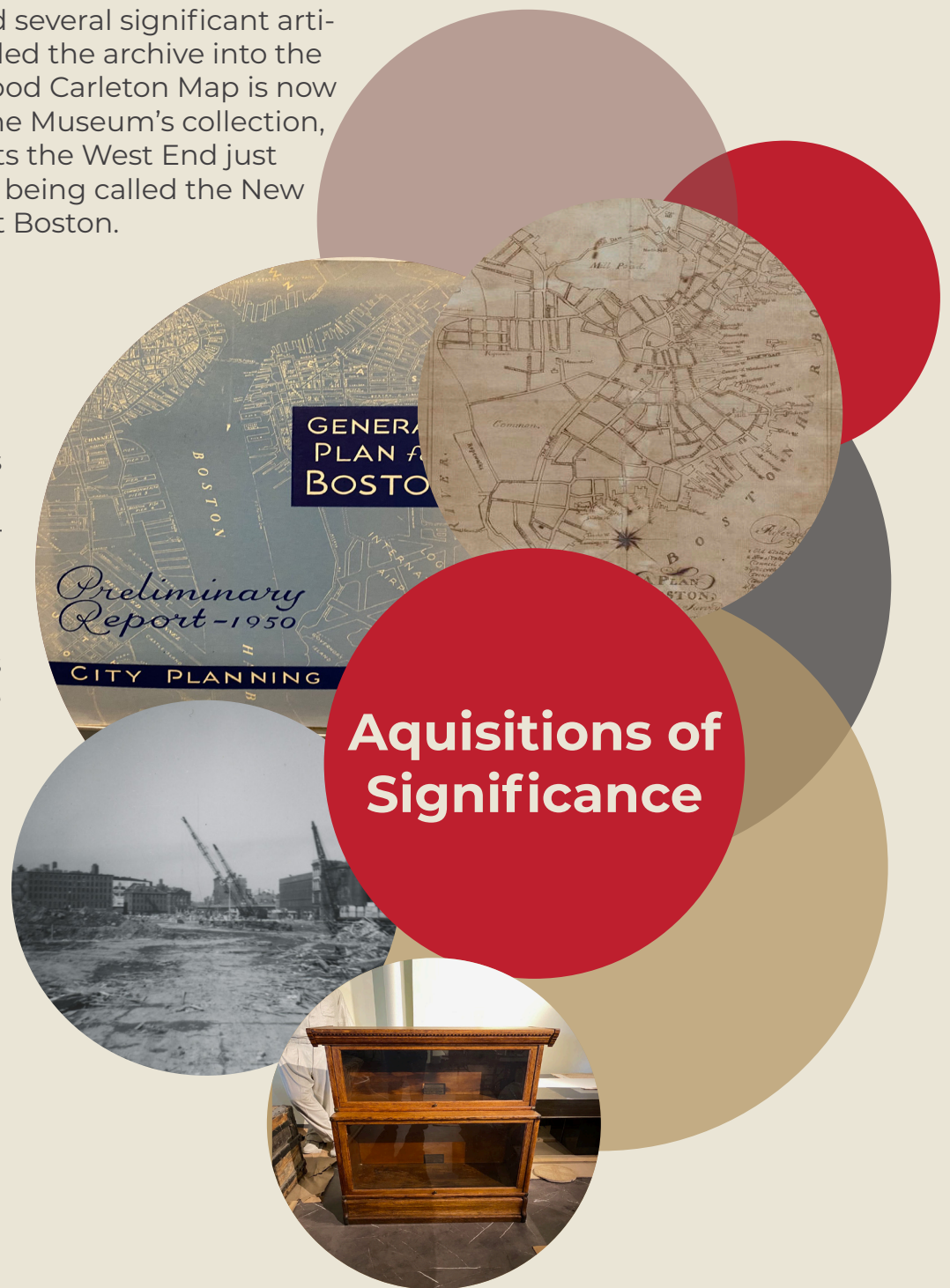
The West End Museum works to document and preserve the history of the West End from its earliest Colonial period, through its destruction by eminent domain in 1958, and highlights the stories of its former residents in their experiences of life in the West End – the work, home and leisure time of people living in the neighborhood. By gathering evidence of former residents' direct experience, in the form of oral histories, personal photographs, objects, and reminiscences, the Museum preserves the detailed fabric of life in the West End.

In 2023, WEM acquired several significant artifacts that have expanded the archive into the 18th century. The Osgood Carleton Map is now the oldest artifact in the Museum's collection, dating to 1796 it depicts the West End just as it transitioned from being called the New Fields to become West Boston.

A generous donation by the BPDA includes an original copy of the 1950 General Plan. Prior to this document, plans for redevelopment in Boston were loosely defined. The General Plan directly selected the West End as the location for demolition. This document is part of the first publicly published plan to redevelop the West End.

The archives of WEM are enhanced by the generous donation of the Edgell Collection. This collection was donated by the family of Claudia and Steven Edgell Sr. who took it upon themselves to document the demolition of the historic West End Neighborhood from 1958-1960. This is the largest known collection of photographic documentation of the West End's demolition.

The Lomasney Book Case made its way to the West End this year through Elizabeth Hebert, whose family were longtime residents of the West End on the (now lost) Billerica St. The case is supposed to have belonged to Martin Lomasney, a political leader in the West End in the 1800s, and the boss of Ward 8. The case was taken from Lomasney's office at the Hendricks Club, a Democratic Organization in the West End by his successor, John I Fitzgerald.



Achievements of 2023



ReUnion Campaign

The West End Museum would like to express our deep gratitude for individuals who have contributed to our ReUnion Campaign in 2023. The generosity of our constituents has been a driving force behind our renovation and has allowed us to bring our plan for WEM's future to life. These gifts support the museum in educating the public in the history and urbanization of Boston's West End. Our new exhibit will be on display upon reopening in the Spring of 2024. We can't wait to bring the public back into our space and hope to see you there.



Education, Engagement, and Community

Throughout our closure this year, we have been able to offer continued programming for the public and our WEM community. Guided walking tours of the neighborhood continued. Our newest member of staff, Grace Clipson led groups on Murder and Mysteries tours and covered the West End's haunted history in October. While we weren't able to host, events were held in collaboration with the Boston Atheneum and Boston Properties' Hub Community Room. Events included Trivia Nights and talks like *Boston in Transit* and *400 years of Urban Development* to name a few.



Contributors

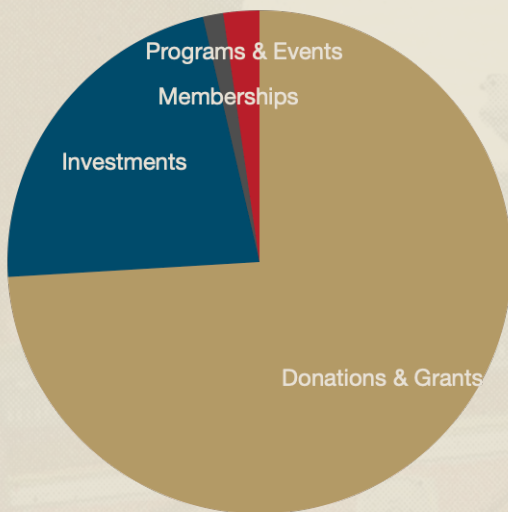
The West End Museum benefits greatly from collaborative partnerships, which have played a crucial role in initiating our renovation project and rejuvenating our space. The generous contribution of time and materials from CRW Construction supports the implementation of design plans from Chan Ascher Architecture, which are poised to revolutionize our museum. The creativity showcased by Chan Ascher Architecture and the team at Trivium Interactive has injected fresh energy into our physical space. Their innovative approach and cutting-edge technology promise to redefine our upcoming exhibits, bringing a wave of innovation to The West End Museum.

Financial Summary

2023 REVENUE

	Amount	Percentage
DONATIONS & GRANTS -	\$438,092	74%
PROGRAMS & EVENTS -	\$13,677	2%
MEMBERSHIPS -	\$7,697	1%
INVESTMENTS -	\$132,154	22%

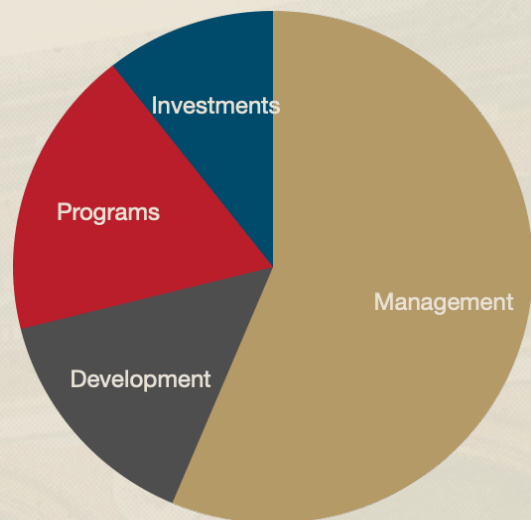
TOTAL: \$591,619



2023 EXPENSES

	Amount	Percentage
MANAGEMENT -	\$193,276	%56
PROGRAMS -	\$62,840	%18
DEVELOPMENT -	\$50,681	%15
INVESTMENTS -	\$36,299	%11

TOTAL: \$343,096



Current Assets:

Cash \$762,331
 Accounts Receivable \$157,500
 Prepaid Assets \$2,917
 Investments \$1,168,335
Total Current \$2,091,084

Construction in Progress \$509,654
 Pledges Receivable \$1,420,450
 Right of Use (Lease) \$171,906
TOTAL: \$4,193,093

Liabilities:

Current Liabilities \$31,625
 Longterm Liabilities \$181,512
 Liabilities \$213,137
 Net Assets \$3,979,956

TOTAL Liabilities and Net Assets:
\$4,193,093

Our Year in Numbers

3

Special Events

1

New Hire

16

Walking Tours

49

WEM WEEKLY
Emails Sent

7

Talks

38

Aquisitions

\$213k

In Grant Funds Won

\$14k+

Individual
Gifts to
Rebuild

4

Grants Won

A Look Forward

Renovation and Reopening

Renovation

Over the past 10 months, our space has undergone an extensive remodel; expanding our galleries and creating an event space and video exhibition room. The West End Museum is looking to reimagine itself in a way that will be more accessible to a wider audience, representative of the wide range of ethnic and racial backgrounds present in the historic West End, and more adaptable so that the space can be a locus for a range of stories.

New Exhibits and Reopening

As we look to the future of The West End Museum, we are excited to unveil our new permanent exhibition. *Rise, Fall, Rebirth: Stories of the West End* will open with the Museum at the conclusion of the first phase of the project. The permanent exhibit turns the pages of history into living narratives and will provide an informative and engaging experience that captivates and educates visitors from near and far.

Phase One of our remodel brings a renovated space and our new permanent exhibit. The initial phase of the exhibit will utilize state-of-the-art technologies, encouraging visitors' participation with interactive maps of the neighborhood to equip guests with a broad understanding of the West End story and its ever-changing landscape.

Phase Two will bring more interactive experiences and special exhibits in the coming months and years. Later in Phase Two, immersive video experiences will engage the public in the story of the West End from 1950 to 1975 and the impact of the loss of the neighborhood on its residents. The exhibit will also document the history of the Black community that defined the West End from 1780 to 1880, from service in the Revolutionary War and through the birth of Abolitionism to the ultimate end of slavery in the United States.

The space's new layout and interactive elements will shape the Museum into a vibrant hub where the history and community of the West End are understood and celebrated. We hope to see the public enjoying the new space in the Spring.

In Loving Memory
Jim Campano
January 4, 1941 - May 20, 2023



Jim 'Jimbo' Campano dedicated his life to the West End. He burned a wrecking crane. He organized reunions. He published the West Ender newsletter and co-produced the West Ender Video Newsletter. He insisted that the displaced be allowed to return, founding the West End Historic Association and Old West End Housing Corporation. He founded The West End Museum.

Jim remained an activist until the day he died. In our memories, he lives on as a symbol of unwavering dedication and love for the place he called home.

Board Members and Staff:

Staff:

Sebastian Belfanti -
Executive Director

Bob Potenza -
Curator and Archivist

Grace Clipson -
Education Coordinator

Officers of the Board:

Lois Ascher -
Board President

Michael Gropman -
Vice President

Tom Palmer -
Treasurer

Duane Lucia-
Clerk

Members of the Board:

Leland Alexander

Katie Burke

Bob Campanella

Samantha DiMauro

Bruce Guarino

Chad Kindregan

Bill Kuttner

Andy Matteis

Joe McDonald

Dan McGrath

Jane Wilson

Partners



Norman B. Leventhal
Map & Education Center
at the Boston Public Library



BOSTON
ATHENÆUM



Revolutionary
Spaces

Open History. Enter Democracy.



Northeastern
University



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PAUL S. RUSSELL, MD MUSEUM OF
MEDICAL HISTORY AND INNOVATION



Boston
Properties



THE VILNA SHUL

BOSTON
UNIVERSITY

Donations

Our sincerest gratitude to the dedicated individuals who make up The West End Museum's vibrant community. Thank you to our donors, partners and volunteers, and to the wider community, for your unwavering support.

In Kind Donations

Anonymous (1)
Stephen Edgell

Boston Planning and Development Agency
Chan Ascher Architecture
DiMauro Designs

\$5000+

Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development
Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism
Massachusetts General Hospital
Mass Cultural Council
Pennyweight Hotel
Ellis Strategies
Andrew Matteis

\$501 - \$3000

Barbara Kaplan
Henry Bain
Michael Wyson
William Margolin
Evelyn Berde
Julia Forbes
Skip Stearns
Joseph Russo
John Cucinotta
Matthew Conti
Virginia Caruso Bove
Joseph McDonald
Thomas Palmer
Janelle Smart Fisher
David N Aurelio
Lois Ascher
Timothy Eastman
Joseph Cancelleri
Gene Kroner
Boston Properties
Andrew Matteis

\$201 - \$500

David Wizansky
Duane Lucia
Nancy Dennis
Sebastian Belfanti
Campano Family
Joseph DiVestea
Roslyn Diamond
Michael Gropman
Boston University
Michelle Desveaux
Tom Burgess
Hub50House
Beacon Hill Civic Association

\$50 - \$200

Rachel Silver
Stephen Kaiser
Mimi Graney
Michelle Duane
Victor Brogna
Georgianne Aquino
Joseph Alessandro
Toby Pearlstein
Anne Fitzgerald
Rhea Becker
Robert Seifert
Karl Pastore
Sergio Alonso
Barbara Haley
Judith Brown
Julie Bellet
Louise Thomas
Carol Matyka
Laura Guadagno
Gretchen Locke
Alison Barnet
John Zinkowski
Lynne Young
Denise M. Tompkins

Henry Stolar
Laura Rossi
William Millett
Paul Levy
Joan Jacobs
Alexis Hambrick
MaryAnne Gucciardi
Alan Berkman
Ruth Berg
Frank Alfonso
Maria Sidor
Richard Koch
Daniel Spiess
Linda Ellenbogen
Katherine Dander
David Kubiak
William Kuttner
Jane Papa
Robert Malster
Barbara Callahan

Mary Louise Burke
Michael Maler
Susann Benoit
Daniel Dain
Leland Mercer Alexander
Kathleen Fitzgibbon
Alexander von Hoffman
Janice Pinto
Patricia Dick
Carl Carlsen

Under \$49

Anonymous (1)
Daniel Rutman
Emily Duggan
Robert Campanella
John Crimlisk
Katharine Howard
Lydia Costello
Diane Gipson
A Nelson
Elliot Isen
Arthur Fleming
Susan Lang
George MacNeil
Geraldine Moscaritolo
Francis Morello
Robin Coyne
Mary Anne Conboy

Zoe Colt
Dena Barisano
Jim Tabner
Laura Smeaton
Elizabeth Buckler
CJ Shields
Scott Winokur
Federica Torri
Dorothy Saunders
Elizabeth Murphy
Matthew Murcko
Jennifer Goren
Lisa Plosker
James Salini
Jane Wilson
Paul Keplin
June Carol Erlick

Volunteers

Meyer Aviles
Queenie Chen
Nancy Dennis
Jenelle Smart Fisher
Julia Forbes
Trisha OConnell
Dan Spiess
Adam Tomasi

Closing Remarks

From Sebastian Belfanti, Executive Director

Dear Reader,

Thank you for your involvement with The West End Museum. 2023 was an amazing year for WEM, and it couldn't have been without the support of our donors and guests, and the work of our volunteers, Board members, and staff. Together, we are making WEM into an institution that I hope you can be as proud of as I am.

The Museum was closed for all of 2023, which makes its successes even more notable. They begin with the formal establishment of the WEM Fund – the Museum's endowment – through the investment of a \$1,000,000 gift from Massachusetts General Hospital in 2022. With the assistance of the Museum's new capital advisors, Pallas Capital, the WEM Fund has already grown substantially, producing a 6% return in 2023. The Museum does not intend to spend these earnings, instead dedicating them to the growth of a safety net that will allow the organization's survival in the inevitable lean years, so it continues to thrive despite any challenges ahead.

The year also brought us Grace Clipson, our outstanding new Education Coordinator – who will be joining us as Education Manager in 2024. Grace has gone above and beyond to deliver outstanding programming and raise awareness of Museum events. Over 500 guests enjoyed Museum events in 2023 despite its closure, and I can't wait to see what she's able to accomplish in 2024 with an open Museum and some time at WEM under her belt!

Of course, another highlight of 2023 was the immense progress made towards reopening. The Museum was able to raise funds to complete the first stage of construction, and has executed its plans efficiently (the only major delay coming from city inspections). Bob Potenza, our Curatorial Manager, has done amazing work with Trivium Interactive and DiMauro Designs to plan out the Museum's new exhibit – Rise, Fall, Re-birth: Stories of the West End. Simultaneously, I have had the pleasure of working closely with Chan Ascher Architecture to plan the Museum's new form, and with CRW Construction to implement those plans. The new Museum would not be possible without the pro bono work of Chan Ascher, nor without CRW's gifts of time and material (which go beyond what we have paid). Mass General also gifted the Museum about two-thirds of the screens that will be used in the new exhibits. A multitude of financial contributions, large and small, from companies and individuals, have made this project possible. We are so grateful to all of our supporters, without them, there would be no reopening, nor a WEM at all.

Thank you all for your support, for your contributions to the archive, your donations, your memberships, and your visits to Museum events. Thanks to the Board Members who have volunteered their time to guide the Museum forward. Thank you to the loyal volunteers, partners, and Staff. Thank you all, everything we've done, everything we will do, we can do only because of you.

Very best wishes,



Sebastain Belfanti
Executive Director
The West End Museum

The West End Museum Story



2004
Established



2006
The Last
Tenement Exhibit



2011
Incorporated



2022
Flood
Closure



2023
Renovation

2024
Reopening in
the Spring!



See You Soon!

WEM

THE WEST END MUSEUM