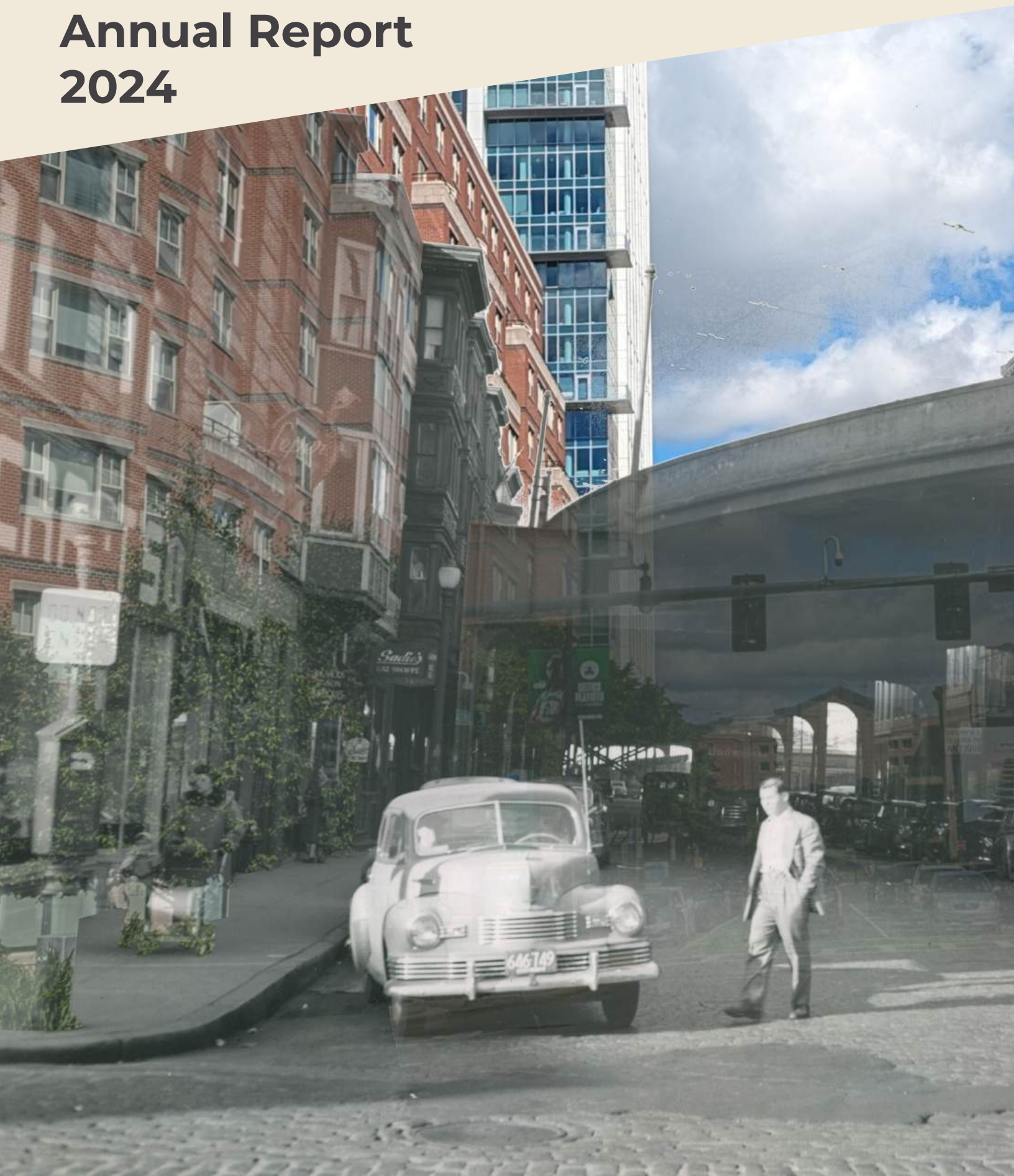


# THE WEST END MUSEUM

Annual Report  
2024



# WEM

THE WEST END MUSEUM

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# Welcome Message

From Lois Ascher, Board President

Greetings,

This past year has been one of growth and progress for The West End Museum. As President of the Board of Directors, I have seen firsthand the impact of our work and the dedication of those who support it. Each milestone has strengthened our mission, expanded our reach, and deepened our connection to the community. As we reflect on 2024, I would like to share some key updates with you.

Perhaps most significant is the rise in The West End Museum's profile, both within our local community and beyond. We are increasingly recognized as a vital cultural institution in Boston through our diverse educational programs and thoughtfully curated exhibits. We have deepened our engagement with former and current West Enders, scholars, students, and visitors from across the city and beyond. We have maintained our commitment to fostering deep community engagement and expanding access to our resources, while continuing to share the important stories of this historic neighborhood.

This year, we took a significant step forward in shaping the Museum's long-term future. Through a partnership with Empower Success Corps, we embarked on a strategic planning initiative that will guide our growth in the coming years. This process allows us to refine our vision, strengthen our operations, and ensure that WEM remains a thriving and sustainable institution for generations to come.

We were also pleased to welcome two new Board Members, N'Dia Reigler and Julia Forbes, whose expertise and passion will be invaluable to the Museum. Named Massachusetts History Teacher of the Year in 2020, N'Dia Reigler brings an educator's perspective to our leadership, reinforcing our commitment to lifelong learning and historical preservation. With extensive experience in community involvement and philanthropy, Julia Forbes is helping us cultivate new opportunities for growth and outreach. Their perspectives and contributions will help shape the Museum's future, and we are delighted to have them as part of our team.

Thank you to our staff, Board members, volunteers, supporters, and partners. Your collective efforts fuel our mission and ensure that the Museum continues to thrive as a space for learning, reflection, and community. Your support has been instrumental in helping us reestablish WEM as a cornerstone of Boston's cultural landscape, and we are profoundly grateful.

As we look forward to the coming year, I am filled with optimism for the opportunities that lie ahead. With your continued support, we will build on our momentum to expand our programs, strengthen our impact, and further our mission to honor, preserve, and share the spirit of the West End. Together, we will inspire future generations to recognize and reflect on this neighborhood's unique contributions to Boston's history.

On behalf of The West End Museum, I want to thank you all for your unwavering commitment to our mission. We are honored to have you with us on this remarkable journey.

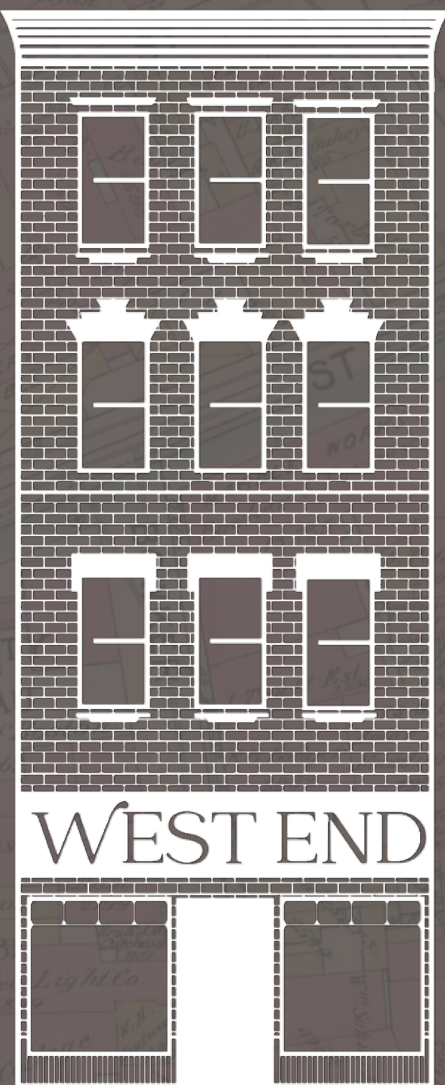
With Deep Appreciation,



Lois Ascher  
President, 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 2024, WEM acquired several significant artifacts that have expanded the archive and enhanced our collections.

This year, WEM acquired two pieces of sculpture by the West End artist Bashka Paeff. The first being a green-painted plaster boy, lying on his stomach.

The second item was a white plaster bust of a boy. The “Dickie” Bust was made in 1944 by the artist. WEM’s Archive also acquired a postcard of a Paeff “Dickie” Bust, circa 1920s. Bashka Paeff was a resident of the West End in the early 20th Century. She lived on Pinckney Street. The sculptures are displayed as part of the Museum’s permanent exhibit, *Rise, Fall, Rebirth: Stories of the West End*.



## Acquisitions of Significance



Thanks to the generous donation of the Singer sisters, WEM acquired an album of family photographs that belonged to their father, circa 1940s. The collection depicts Robert Singer and his brothers, friends, and other servicemen during WWII in Boston and Europe. The Singer family grew up on Charles Street in the West End.

# Achievements of 2024



## Re-Opening

Thanks to the generous contributions of individual donors and institutional sponsors, The West End Museum reopened in May 2024 with a renewed commitment to preserving and sharing the rich history of Boston's West End. Since our reopening, we have seen enormous success, welcoming a growing number of visitors, expanding our programming, and strengthening our community engagement. Our new permanent exhibit, *Rise, Fall, Rebirth; Stories of the West End*, has drawn in both longtime supporters and new audiences eager to learn about the neighborhood's past and Boston's urban history.



## Education, Engagement, and Community

This year, The West End Museum hosted a wide range of events in our new space, strengthening our presence in the community and expanding our reach. From urban renewal, to art and performance, to the rich cultural heritage of the West End, the new WEM is a dynamic space for learning and connection. Our event collaborations with local organizations have further deepened our ties to the neighborhood, reinforcing the museum as a hub for history, storytelling, and civic engagement. With each event, we continue to build a stronger, more engaged community that values and preserves the legacy of the West End.



## Volunteers

The volunteer program at The West End Museum has been an incredible asset to our growth and success since reopening. Our dedicated volunteers serve as greeters and interns, and support staff in a variety of special projects. The team plays a vital role in creating a welcoming and engaging experience for visitors. Their enthusiasm, knowledge, and commitment help bring the Museum's mission to life. Thanks to their efforts, we've been able to expand our opening hours, improve our visitor experience, and strengthen our program offerings. We are so grateful for their contributions and look forward to continuing to build a vibrant volunteer team!

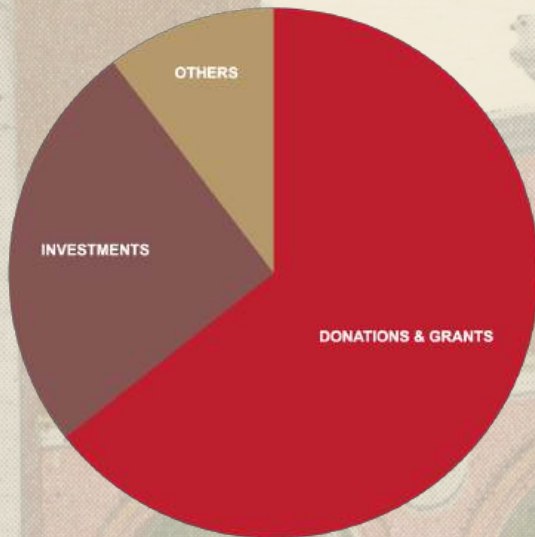
# Financial Summary

## Statement of Activities

### 2024 REVENUE

	Amount	Percentage
DONATIONS & GRANTS -	\$389,800	64%
PROGRAMS & EVENTS -	\$30,000	5%
MEMBERSHIPS -	\$10,100	2%
INVESTMENTS -	\$153,100	25%
OTHER -	\$22,700	4%

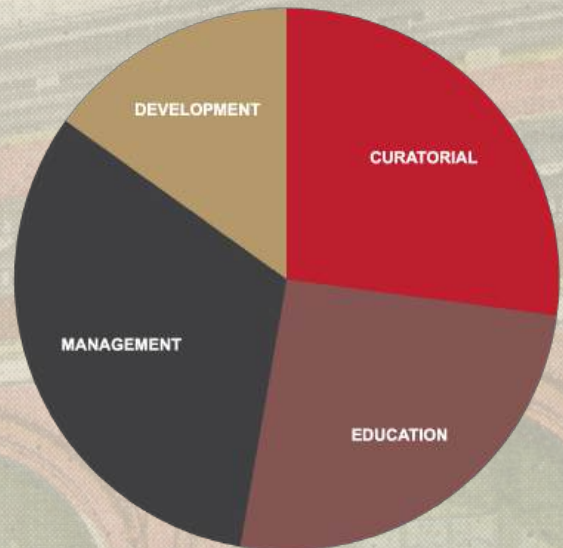
TOTAL: \$605,700



### 2024 EXPENSES

	Amount	Percentage
CURATORIAL -	\$123,200	27%
EDUCATION -	\$116,200	26%
MANAGEMENT -	\$146,200	32%
DEVELOPMENT -	\$68,400	15%

TOTAL: \$454,000



## Statement of Financial Position

### Assets:

Cash \$547,200  
Accounts Receivable \$304,400  
Other Current \$16,400  
Fixed Assets \$982,300  
Pledges Receivable \$1,145,300  
Right of Use (Lease) \$237,400  
Long term Investments \$1,167,500

**TOTAL Assets:**  
**\$4,400,500**

### Liabilities:

Accounts Payable \$8,800  
Credit Cards \$1,500  
Other \$13,700  
Long-term Liabilities \$221,300

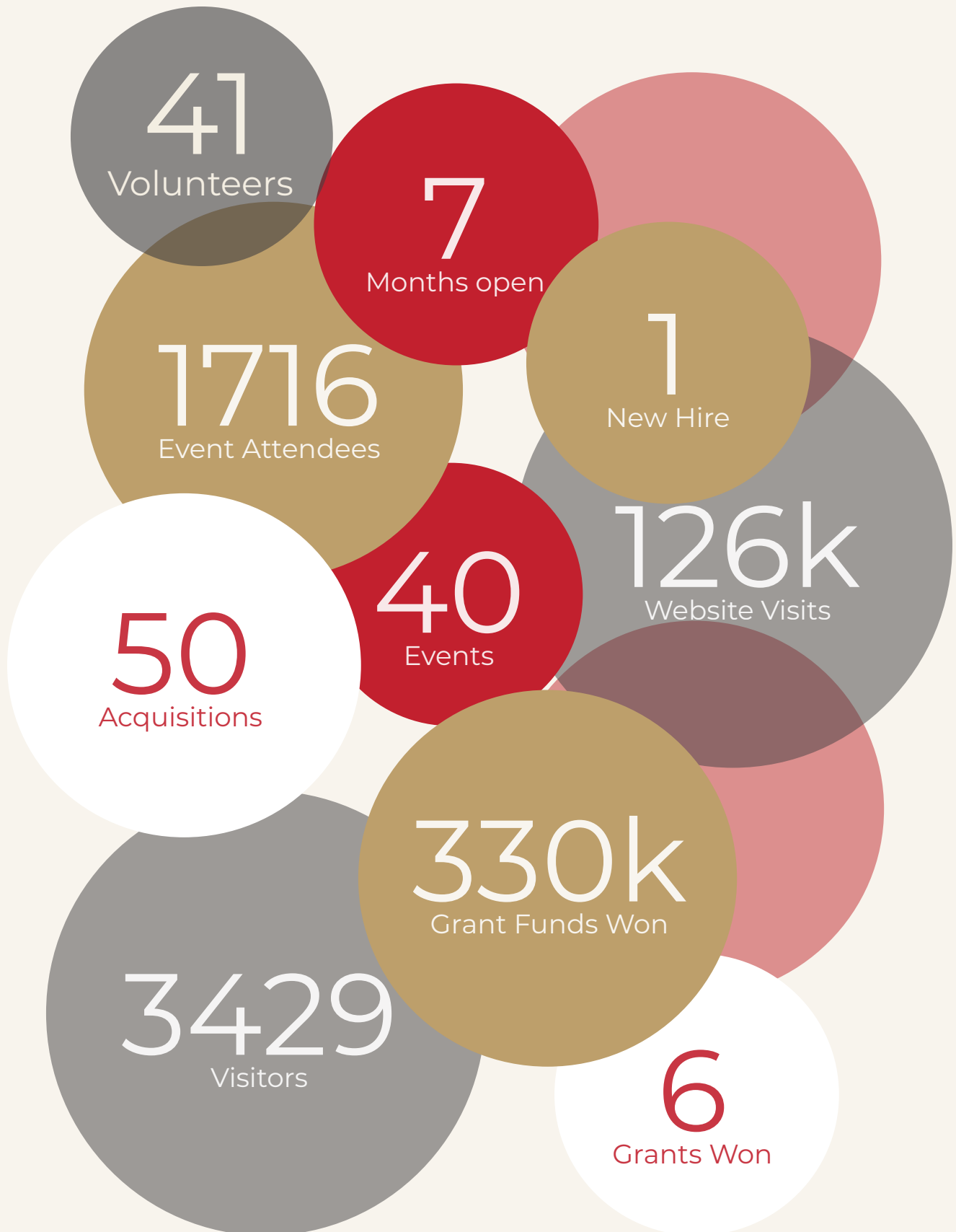
### Equity:

Retained Earnings \$4,003,500  
Net Revenue \$151,700

**TOTAL Liabilities and Equity:**  
**\$4,400,500**

\*Numbers rounded to nearest \$100. For informational purposes only, includes pre-audit financial information.

# Our Year in Numbers





# A Look Forward

## Partnerships

In 2024 WEM expanded our partnerships and forged new connections with businesses and organizations in the West End community and Boston. This year WEM intends to grow our network further, launching special projects with current partners and cultivating new relationships.

2025 will strengthen our partnership with Old Town Trolley Tours. WEM will now offer admission tickets and OTTT X WEM combo packages on the Trusted Tours website.

WEM has also partnered with Shovel Ready Capital to offer Climate Credit Discounts. This program helps raise funds for climate resilience in the City of Boston.

Finally, WEM is now part of Card to Culture. This program allows discounts for those who receive SNAP, EBT, and Health Connector benefits. Card to Culture holders are now eligible for a \$30 family membership from WEM, expanding access to our programs.

## Special Exhibitions

The dedication of The Stephens Family Video Exhibition Gallery this year has enhanced our capacity to host film screenings, lectures, and performances in the existing viewing room.

WEM's first Special Exhibit, *Jimbo*, was successful. Jim was the founder of The West End Museum and West Ender Newsletter. The exhibit shared his life, activism, and contributions to the community as a Displaced West Ender.

## Coming up in 2025

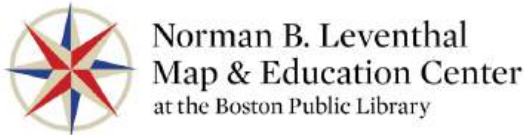
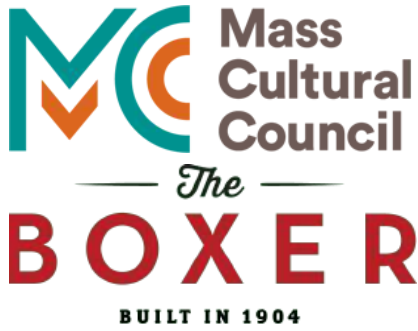
*An Illusion of Freedom: Boston and The Fugitive Slave Laws*  
**Feb 2025 - May 2025**

*Community Tree Art*  
(with WE Tree)  
**June 4th-8th**

Charlesbank  
**Planned**  
**June 2025**

The Immigrant Experience  
**Planned**  
**October 2025**

# Partners



Delaware North.



MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL

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



MASSACHUSETTS visitma.com



Cummins Foundation

chan ascher architecture



Northeastern University



# Board Members, Staff, and Volunteers:

## Staff:

Sebastian Belfanti -  
Executive Director

Bob Potenza -  
Curator and Archivist

Grace Clipson -  
Education Manager

Maisie Winter -  
Operations and  
Advancement 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

Julia Forbes

Bruce Guarino

Chad Kindregan

Bill Kuttner

Andy Matteis

Dan McGrath

N'Dia Reigler

Jane Wilson

## Volunteers

Robert A.  
Meyer A.  
Laurel B.  
Lydia B.  
Queenie C.  
Nancy D.  
Samantha D.  
Lorraine D.  
Daniel D.  
Danny F.  
Janelle SF.  
Julia F.  
Olivia F.  
Ava G.  
Laura G.  
Bruce G.  
Christina H.  
Bill K.  
Caelan N.  
Trisha O.  
Thomas P.

Ramesh R.  
Kavitha R.  
Patrick R.  
Doug R.  
Lindsay S.  
Victoria S.  
Adam S.  
Dan S.  
Will S.  
Robert S.  
Amir T.  
Benjamin T.  
Deepa T.  
Adam T.  
Karla U-L.  
Edward Y.

## Ex-Officio:

Richard Hartnett  
Nick Haney

## Interns

Emma B.  
Parker B.  
Kegan F.  
Jaydie H.

# 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

Melody Allen  
Marjorie M Arons-Barron  
Sebastian Belfanti  
Susann Benoit  
Big Night Live  
Bodega Canal  
Boston Public Market  
Phyllis Carr  
Robert Campanella  
Central Rock Gym  
Chan Ascher Architecture  
John Cucinotta  
Cini's Pizza  
DiMauro Designs  
Dunkin  
Eataly  
Ellen Feingold  
Flour Bakery and Cafe  
H. Richard Garcia  
Karla Cohen  
Joyce Lee and Patti Singer  
Lauren Lepanto  
Duane Lucia  
Luke's Lobster

Mallory Portraits  
Tom Palmer  
Petermans Boards and Bowls  
Red Dog Pet Resort & Spa  
Red's Best  
Revolutionary Spaces  
Robert Kohen  
Rustico Pizzeria  
The Bell In Hand  
The Designers; Leather Clothiers  
The Slattery Family  
Star Market  
Starbucks  
Dorothy van Amber  
West End Johnnie's  
West End Market  
Andrew Zielinski

## \$5000+

Boston Properties  
Ellis Strategies  
Institute of Museum and Library Services  
Mass Cultural Council  
Massachusetts General Hospital  
Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism  
Andrew Matteis  
The Cummings Foundation  
The Forbes Family

## \$1000-\$5000

Mary Louise Burke  
City of Boston  
Matthew Conti  
John A Cucinotta  
Desveaux-Belfanti Family  
The Duehay-Lewis Fund  
Joseph McDonald  
Ryder/Jones Family Fund

## **\$501 - \$999**

Lois Ascher  
Henry Bain  
Sebastian Belfanti  
Virginia Caruso Bove  
Chad Kindregan  
Duane Lucia  
Thomas Palmer

## **\$250 - \$500**

Beacon Hill Civic Association  
Susann Benoit  
Evelyn Berde  
Caitlin Burke  
Gropman Family  
Joseph A Grasso  
Barbara and Jerry Kaplan  
N'Dia Riegler  
Rachel Silver

## **\$1-\$249**

Arlene Andrew  
Elaine Aquilino  
Laurel Baxter  
Beverly Bernson  
David Bernstein  
Robert Campanella  
Karla Cohen  
Mary Cooney  
Linda Cox  
CyberGrants LLC  
Diane Darling  
Robert Fizek  
Cookie Gabrielson and Ben La Spina  
James Healy  
Beverly Hector-Smith  
William Kuttner  
Gene Lee  
Paul Levy  
Nancy Linday  
George and Elaine MacNeil  
Martha and James Maguire  
Daniel McGrath  
Kathleen McPhee  
Elizabeth Murray  
Jane Papa  
Benita Pokat

Preservation of Affordable Housing  
Nella Potenza  
Pinto Family  
Barbara and Robert Ruchames  
Janice Elizabeth Ronco  
Stavre-Schenk Family  
Benjamin Tisdale  
Karla Unger-Laffin  
Loa Winter  
Maisie Winter  
Wilson Family

# Closing Remarks

## From Sebastian Belfanti, Executive Director

Dear Friends,

The West End Museum is a reflection of the strength and resilience of its community. Through challenges and change, the Museum has been sustained by the unwavering support of so many. Through your advocacy, generous contributions, and engagement with our exhibits and programs, the WEM community has demonstrated time and again that the West End's story continues to play an important role in Boston, and well beyond.

As we continue to grow and plan for our future, we are deeply moved by the irreplaceable support so many of you, both down the road and far afield, provide. Despite the numerous challenges that have faced the Museum in the past five years, WEM is back up and running. We are grateful to the hundreds of you who helped us get this far, and who are coming back to the Museum now, helping us move into this new era. Your involvement and support is a testament to the enduring connection between the Museum and all the people we serve. Your enthusiasm, trust, and encouragement fuels our mission—to preserve and share the stories of the West End, amplify voices of the past and present, and create a space where history can help to create a better future. The West End Museum is more than an institution; it is a home for collective memory, dialogue, and discovery. We are grateful to stand alongside you as stewards of this neighborhood's legacy, and we look forward to continuing this journey together.

Our reopening and growth over this past year has been a monumental accomplishment, one that would not have been possible without the dedication of our donors, visitors, volunteers, Board members, and staff. The Museum officially reopened to the public in May 2024, inviting guests back into our newly renovated galleries. WEM welcomed 3,429 visitors in 2024, matching our 2019 (pre-COVID) attendance in just 7 months. On every front the Museum's programs were bigger and better in 2024. New exhibits delve deeper into the West End story, dozens of acquisitions have expanded our collections, and more than 40 events were offered in 2024, a dramatic expansion in WEM's mission-delivery.

We are deeply grateful for the generous contributions that have made all this possible. In 2024, WEM received a \$75,000 grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, which will help sustain our events and expand our visibility over the next two years. Additionally, we are pleased to announce that The Cummings Foundation has awarded WEM a \$150,000 grant in honor of the Stephens Family. This gift will enhance the Museum's visibility and programming, and establishes The Stephens Family Video Exhibition Gallery, which has been named in their honor. These gifts build on ongoing support from individuals, the Commonwealth, and private foundations to move WEM's mission forward.

The addition of Maisie Winter, WEM's new Operations and Advancement Coordinator, has rounded out our outstanding staff. Maisie played a crucial role in the Museum's reopening, supporting operational planning and administration while launching new marketing efforts to expand our reach. She has spearheaded the development of WEM's Volunteer Program, facilitated our Honoree Night and Silent Auction, and built strong relationships with business owners and Boston organizations—helping to grow WEM's visibility. Looking ahead to 2025, Maisie is already planning several exciting fundraisers and community events.

Thank you to everyone who supported the Museum this past year: for your contributions to the archive; for your donations; for your memberships; and for your presence at our events. Thank you to our Board Members, volunteers, partners, and staff, whose efforts turn all that support into action. All that we have accomplished—and all that is yet to come—is only possible because of you.

Many thanks,



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  
Open to the  
Public



**Come Visit!**

# WEM

THE WEST END MUSEUM