

Marin History Museum

MARIN HISTORY MUSEUM

2026 Community Impact Report

OUR MISSION

"The Marin History Museum preserves, shares, and brings Marin County's history to life through collections, education, and community engagement, connecting people with the stories and places that have shaped Marin."

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Building a Stronger Museum for Marin County

"Together, we are building a stronger Museum that will preserve Marin's past, inspire its future, and serve our community for generations to come."

In 2026, the Marin History Museum strengthened its financial foundation while expanding educational programming, bilingual offerings, exhibits, public programs, and community collaborations throughout Marin County.

This progress is possible because of a remarkable network of public partners, donors, members, volunteers, staff, educators, and community organizations. In 2025, the County of Marin committed $300,000 over three years, providing $100,000 annually to support the facilities and operations required to preserve Marin County's largest historical collection. Also in 2025, the City of San Rafael began providing the Museum's public home at the historic Boyd Gate House rent-free, an annual contribution valued at $14,400. We are deeply grateful for the vital support of both the County of Marin and the City of San Rafael.

That public support provides an essential foundation. The generosity of donors and members allows MHM to build on it, bringing history into classrooms, libraries, community gatherings, and public spaces throughout the county.

Financial responsibility and community impact go hand in hand. By operating more efficiently, we are able to invest more where it matters most: preserving Marin County's history and making it accessible to everyone.

None of this would be possible without our talented part-time staff, dedicated volunteers, Board of Directors, and Emeritus/Auxiliary Board. Collectively, they extend the Museum's capacity, strengthen community partnerships, and help us share Marin's history in new and meaningful ways.

Thank you for being part of this story. Together, we are building a stronger Museum that will preserve Marin's past, inspire its future, and serve our community for generations to come.



Heather McPhail Sridharan
President, Board of Directors

OUR PEOPLE

Staff and Leadership

The Museum is supported by more than 40 volunteer leaders representing education, local government, philanthropy, business, libraries, preservation, and community organizations throughout Marin County. Their expertise extends the Museum's capacity far beyond what a small staff alone could accomplish.

Staff

Carol Acquaviva, Archiving Consultant (paid part time)
Celia Golden, Director of Programming (paid part time)
Jennifer McGeorge-Rising, Boyd Gate House and Office Manager (paid part time)
Lori Deibel, Research Librarian (volunteer)
Marcie Miller, Education Coordinator (volunteer)

Board of Directors

Heather McPhail Sridharan, President
Jordan Knopf, Vice President
Sue Hagan, Treasurer
P.J. Nave, Secretary
Harry Barbier, Member
Ann Batman, Member
Matt Brown, Member
Rick Lewis, Member
Ryan Madden, Member
Roger Smith, Member

Emeritus / Auxiliary Board

Carol Acquaviva, Local Historian, Archivist, and Librarian
Lana Adlawan, Director, Marin County Free Library
Mary Jane Burke, Marin County Superintendent of Schools Emerita
Shauna Correia, Attorney, Weintraub Tobin Law Firm
Cris Criollo, Local Historian
Jonathan Eldridge, Superintendent / President, College of Marin
Dennis Fisco, CFO, Seagate Properties
Felecia Gaston, Founder, Marin City Historical and Preservation Society & Performing Stars of Marin
Debi Geller, Community Relations Coordinator, Rodef Sholom
Susan Gilardi, Business Partner & Philanthropist, Gilardi & Company
Ann Marie Heffernan, Heffernan Insurance Brokers
Andrea Henderson, VP Philanthropic Planning, Marin Community Foundation
James Holden, Local Author and Retired Attorney
Heidi Krahling, Founder / Owner, Insalata's, San Anselmo
Heidi Kühn, Founder, Roots for Peace
Dewey Livingston, Local Historian and Author
Crystal Martinez, Aide, Marin County Supervisor Mary Sackett; College of Marin Trustee
Tom O'Neill, Former Vice President, MHM; Businessman
Jaime Ortiz, Vice President, Market Manager, Bank of Marin
Cheryl Paddack, CEO, North Marin Community Services
Christine Paquette, Executive Director, St. Vincent de Paul Society of Marin
Jaime Pera, Real Estate Agent, Corcoran
Gary Phillips, Former Mayor, San Rafael; Former Board President, MHM
Nicola Pitchford, President, Dominican University
Melissa Prandi, Founder and CEO, Melissa Prandi Children Foundation
Gary Ragghianti, Retired Marin Municipal Attorney; Former Board President, MHM
Aaron Richardson, Dominican University Librarian and History / Politics Professor
Andrea Schultz, President and CEO, Greenbrae Management Inc.; Chair, MarinHealth Operating Board
Dick Spotswood, Politics and Government Columnist, Marin Independent Journal
Karen Strolia, CEO, Center for Volunteer & Nonprofit Leadership (CVNL)
Richard Torney, Local Historian
Julia Violich, Board Member, Marin County Bicycle Coalition; VP/CFO, Violich Farms
Joanne Webster, President/CEO, North Bay Leadership Council
Susie Woodall, Commissioner, Marin County Athletic League (MCAL)
Cecilia Zamora, Executive Director, Latino Council

STRENGTHENING OUR FINANCIAL FOUNDATION

Building a Sustainable Museum

Last year, the Board held a retreat to establish our priorities. The overriding goal was to develop a realistic plan to make the organization financially viable. To achieve this, we identified three priorities:

MHM Priorities for 2026	Status
Develop a robust Membership and Donor Program. Success measure: raise at least $100K through this program.	IN PROGRESS
Increase and expand community engagement and visibility of MHM to make our collection and programming more accessible throughout all of Marin. Success measures: expand programming to a more diverse audience with strategic community partnerships and increase participation in our MHM programs.	✓ACHIEVED
Align staff, volunteer, and board makeup and clearly defined roles to actively support and drive MHM priorities forward. Success measure: Priorities 1-2 accomplished.	IN PROGRESS

Today, the Museum is operating with a stronger financial foundation, clearer organizational priorities, and growing community support.

Public Investment That Protects Marin's History

The Marin History Museum preserves the largest historical collection in Marin County.

20,000+
HISTORIC ARTIFACTS

200,000+
HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS

90+
YEARS PRESERVING MARIN HISTORY

County of Marin

In 2025, the County committed $300,000 over three years, providing $100,000 annually to support the facilities and operations required to preserve Marin County's largest historical collection.

City of San Rafael

Also in 2025, the City began providing the Boyd Gate House rent-free, an annual contribution valued at $14,400, allowing additional resources to support exhibits, educational programming, and public initiatives.

STRENGTHENING OUR FINANCIAL FOUNDATION

Building Financial Sustainability

Since July 2025, the Board has carefully reviewed Museum operations to ensure our resources are aligned with our mission. In one year, we have reduced operating costs while increasing donor support and expanding programming and community engagement.

$103,000
OPERATING BUDGET REDUCTION
$366,000 → $263,000

$7,000
MONTHLY SAVINGS
$27,000 → $20,000

50% → 30%
PAYROLL SHARE OF BUDGET

+100%
ANNUAL FUND GIVING
$29,000 → $58,000

Measure	2025	2026	Progress
Operating Budget	$366,000	$263,000	$103,000 reduction
Monthly Operating Costs	$27,000	$20,000	$7,000/month savings
Payroll Share of Budget	50%	30%	50% to 30%
Annual Fund Giving	$29,000	$58,000	100% increase

Rent and Operations

Two of our most significant expenses are the rent and operations needed to manage two sites: the Boyd Gate House in San Rafael, home to our public exhibits and research library, and the Craemer Family Collection Facility in Novato, which houses our 20,000 artifacts and 200,000 photographs. The Novato facility is rented from a private landlord at approximately $77,000 per year; utilities, security, and insurance across both sites add more than $16,000 annually; and maintenance and repairs add another $3,600.

Altogether, rent and operations at both sites cost $96,600 a year, representing 37% of our total budget.



The Boyd Gate House, San Rafael

STRENGTHENING OUR FINANCIAL FOUNDATION

Responsible Financial Stewardship

Financial sustainability required thoughtful decisions throughout the organization. Highlights include:

Action	Result
Organizational restructuring	Leaner, more collaborative operations
Centralized purchasing	Reduced operating costs
Lower-cost technology	Approximately $10,000 in annual savings
Updated governance policies	Stronger accountability
Current State reporting	Improved readiness for grants and charitable support

Community Philanthropy

In 2025, a local family generously established a $250,000 capital expense fund at Marin Community Foundation for capital projects. Annual Fund giving reached $58,000 at the end of 2025, approximately double the prior year, from roughly 100 donors.

Collection Stewardship

Following professional guidance, MHM paused most new collection donations while focusing staff and volunteer capacity on organizing and caring for the collection already entrusted to the Museum. The Museum continues planning for a future part-time Collections Manager when funding allows.

$250,000
CAPITAL EXPENSE FUND ESTABLISHED AT MARIN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

$58,000
ANNUAL FUND GIVING, ROUGHLY DOUBLE THE PRIOR YEAR

~100
ANNUAL FUND DONORS

Every dollar saved is another dollar invested in preserving and sharing Marin County's history.

EXPANDING COMMUNITY IMPACT

Bringing Marin Together

A New Tradition for Marin County. This spring, the Marin History Museum launched the inaugural Marin Community History Day, bringing together historical societies, museums, libraries, cultural organizations, and community groups from across the county for a free celebration of Marin's shared heritage.

More than 200 attendees explored bilingual exhibit tours, heritage crafts, student performances, interactive displays, and opportunities to connect with organizations preserving Marin County's rich and diverse history.



Marin Community History Day, May 2, 2026

For the first time, organizations from across Marin County came together in one place to celebrate our shared history, reinforcing the Museum's growing role as a countywide convener and resource.

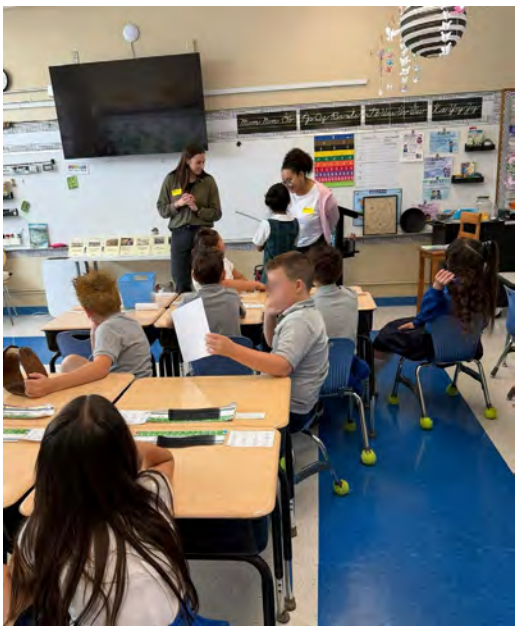
Participating Organizations

Anne T. Kent California Room
Belvedere-Tiburon Landmarks Society
Coast Miwok Tribal Council of Marin / Huukuiko Inc
Corte Madera History Center
El Marinero Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution
Family History and Genealogy Society of Marin County
Friends of China Camp
History of the Canal Community
Jack Mason Museum
Kentfield-Greenbrae Historical Society
Larkspur Heritage Preservation Board
Marin History Museum
Mill Valley Historical Society
Mill Valley Public Library
Miwok Archeological Preserve of Marin (MAPOM)
Museum of the American Indian
North Bay Italian Cultural Foundation
Novato Historical Guild
Ross Historical Society / Jose Moya del Pino Library
San Anselmo History Museum
San Geronimo Valley Historical Society
San Quentin Museum and Archives
San Rafael Heritage
San Rafael Public Library
Sausalito Historical Society
Sonoma-Marin Cattlewomen
Torogoz con Voz
West Marin Archives

Educational Programs: Inspiring the Next Generation

The Museum offers a free Educational Trunk Program and a Hands-On Education Room at the Boyd Gate House for schools. All schools in Marin have been contacted to offer third grade (Then and Now) and fourth grade (Rancho Roots) programs. The programs are offered both at the Museum and as traveling trunk presentations at schools. The curriculum and presentations for the Rancho Roots exhibit are available in English and Spanish.

Rather than reading about history in a textbook, students explore original artifacts, historic photographs, maps, and local stories that connect directly to the communities where they live.



Museum docents visiting a Marin elementary school classroom

Program	Description
Then and Now	Third grade program exploring how life in Marin has changed over time through artifacts and hands-on activities.
Rancho Roots	Fourth grade program connected to California history standards and the Museum's bilingual Rancho Roots: The Californio Legacy of Marin exhibit.
Educational Trunk Program	Traveling presentations that bring Museum collections directly into local classrooms.
Hands-On Education Room	Interactive learning experiences hosted at the historic Boyd Gate House for schools and community groups.

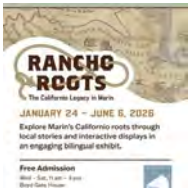
Today's students are tomorrow's stewards of Marin County's history.

OUR EXPANDED PROGRAM

Bringing History to Life

Over the past year, the Marin History Museum has expanded opportunities for residents and visitors to explore Marin's history through exhibits, guided tours, public lectures, and community presentations. Together, these programs have transformed the Museum from a place that simply preserves history into one that actively shares it throughout the county.

Exhibits That Connect Past & Present. The Boyd Gate House brings Marin County's vibrant history to life through exhibits exploring its people, places, and stories. Many exhibits are also available virtually, making Marin's history accessible anywhere.



Rancho Roots: The Californio Legacy of Marin

The Museum's first bilingual exhibit, connecting the history of Marin's ranchos to the communities, landscapes, and place names that continue to shape the county today. The exhibit more than doubled museum attendance and extended its reach into schools through a traveling trunk.



Baseball in Marin County

Virtual exhibit featuring images from our collection spanning more than 100 years of local baseball.



Petals & Ice: The Adventures of Louise A. Boyd

Permanent exhibit celebrating San Rafael explorer Louise A. Boyd, whose pioneering Arctic expeditions continue to inspire visitors today.



Great Heights: The Photography of Ed Brady and Aero Photographers — Virtual Exhibit

Eighteen large-scale black and white aerial photos of Marin County from the 1950s and 1960s.



Marin the Muse — Virtual Exhibit

Selected paintings from the collection where Marin County was the artist's inspiration.

A Museum that Reaches Beyond Its Walls





History of the Dipsea at College of Marin and the History of Fourth of July Parades exhibit at the Marin County Fair

In 2026, the Museum expanded access to local history through monthly Boyd Gate House public tours, Coffee with the Curator programs, bi-weekly Marin History Watch articles in the Marin Independent Journal, a monthly newsletter, a print Annual Bulletin, active social media channels, private group visits, and presentations throughout Marin County and beyond.

8,000 FACEBOOK	**3,500+** INSTAGRAM	**250** MEMBERS
2,000+ VOLUNTEER HOURS	**80+** RESEARCH REQUESTS	

Community Presentations and Outreach

Museum staff and volunteers shared exhibits and local history with these audiences throughout Marin County and beyond:

- Mill Valley Historical Society
- Dominican University's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
- Ross Valley Rotary Club
- Marin County Fair
- Marin County Youth Commission
- China Camp Asian and Pacific Islander Day
- San Rafael Heritage Annual Meeting
- Ross Valley Seniors
- Multicultural Center of Marin
- Marin Coalition
- San Rafael Chamber of Commerce
- College of Marin
- Sonoma Finding History Day
- Sonoma Women's History Day

Private Group Visits

- OLLI
- California State Parks staff and volunteers
- Canal Arts
- Marin League of Women Voters
- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Marin County Free Library and Anne T. Kent California Room staff
- National Charity League Marin
- The Redwoods in Mill Valley

Marin History Watch in the Marin *Independent Journal*

Written by MHM volunteers Maryann Jones Thompson, Robert Elias, and Steve Fait. 2026 articles included:

- New San Rafael walking tour brings history to life
- Remembering Marin's lost movie theaters
- The City and County of Tamalpais
- The Legacy of William Barr
- A look at Marin's historic Carnegie libraries
- A Walk Through California's Last Rancho
- College of Marin Celebrates 100 Years
- Louise Boyd's Arctic Research
- Bowling Alone, Or Not At All
- Tracking A Lasting Mark On San Rafael

Pop-Up Exhibits

Historical Marin parade photographs at the Marin County Fair; local history exhibits planned at San Rafael City Hall.

Marin Archival Collaborative (MAC)

MHM participates quarterly, fostering relationships among organizations that preserve and share local history.

Conversations, Partnerships, and New Programs



A Year-Round Conversation About Marin History

The Museum's Monthly Speaker Series has become one of our signature public programs, offering engaging presentations by respected historians, authors, educators, and subject matter experts. 2026 Speaker Series: Celebrating College of Marin's 100 Years shown at left. Other 2026 topics included:

Month	Program / Speaker
January	Rancho Olompali and the Californio Legacy, Ryan Forbes
February	Rancho Roots, Herb Rowland
February	Three Fingered Jack, John Boessenecker
March	Californio Rancho Women, Marie Beebe and Robert M. Senkewicz
April	The 1906 Earthquake, Richard Torney
May	Sausalito Houseboat Wars, John Byrne Barry
June	College of Marin's 100th, Dr. Jonathan Eldridge
July	Marin Cults and Communes, Carol Acquaviva
August	Bay Area Environmental History, David D. Schmidt
September	Christo and Jeanne-Claude's Running Fence
October	Stories from the San Rafael Police Department, Harry Barbier

San Rafael Chamber of Commerce Mixer

On April 23, MHM hosted its first San Rafael Chamber of Commerce Mixer at the San Rafael Elks Club, generously sponsored by Bank of Marin. One of the Chamber's most highly attended Mixers of the year, the event brought together local business and community leaders, introduced new audiences to the Museum, and strengthened MHM's connections throughout the community.

College of Marin + Marin County Women's Commission

On May 27, MHM partnered with College of Marin and the Marin County Women's Commission on a free public program, "Marin's Iconic Dipsea Race, and Its Pioneering Women," with historian Barry Spitz. More than 150 people attended at the College of Marin Center for Student Success.

Downtown San Rafael Walking Tour

In partnership with the City of San Rafael, MHM launched a free self-guided downtown San Rafael walking tour in September with bilingual QR codes that bring local history to life. Research Librarian Lori Deibel presented the new tour at the San Rafael Library on September 10.

Family Keepsake Day

On October 4, MHM hosted the inaugural Family Keepsake Day, a free community event focused on preserving family history. Preservation specialists Doug DeFors and Carol Acquaviva shared practical guidance for caring for photographs, documents, textiles, and heirlooms, while Michaan's appraisers offered professional appraisal opportunities.

Exclusive Member Experiences

In fall 2026, we launched a new pilot program that provides MHM members complimentary or early access to behind-the-scenes tours, lectures, and history excursions.

Date	Experience
August 15	Bay Model Visitor Center Tour
September 10	San Quentin Lecture, Museum Tour & Village Visit
October 17	Tennessee Beach History Walk & Talk with Brian Crawford

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2027

At Steep Ravine: Dorothea Lange's West Marin Retreat



Opening in January 2027, the new exhibit will offer an intimate look at one of America's most celebrated photographers and the Marin landscape that offered her inspiration, renewal, and time with family.

From 1957 to 1964, Lange and her family spent time in a rustic cabin at Steep Ravine, where she photographed family, friends, and the dramatic coastal environment. The exhibit will include Lange photographs, historic images and maps, cameras, and archival materials. It will also explore the history of Steep Ravine from Coast Miwok history through its development as a vacation destination and its place within Mount Tamalpais State Park.

The exhibit will explore photography, family, memory, recreation, and the natural world, with public and private tours and Coffee with a Curator opportunities.

Preserving Our Past. Inspiring Our Future.

The Marin History Museum is proud to serve as Marin County's historical resource, preserving our shared heritage while making it more accessible, more engaging, and more relevant to every generation. With the continued partnership of the County of Marin, the City of San Rafael, our members, donors, volunteers, staff, and community partners, we are building a stronger Museum that will preserve and share Marin's history for generations to come.

Thank you for being part of that story.

Marin History Museum

MARIN HISTORY MUSEUM

marinhistory.org