

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**EXPLORE BELLE ISLE'S CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL HERITAGE THIS
SUMMER AT THE DETROIT HISTORICAL MUSEUM**

DETROIT – The **Friends of Belle Isle** will open their new exhibit, *Belle Isle: Soul of the City*, on **Saturday, July 18** at the **Detroit Historical Museum**. This three-month exhibit celebrates the historical and environmental significance of Belle Isle and explores possibilities for the island's future.

Since its purchase as a park in 1879, Belle Isle has lighted the way for better urban living. This exhibit captures the island's 150 year history through photographs of the park's natural ecological features and historic preservation efforts, and displays of island memorabilia. This exhibit takes a close look at the island's maintenance, and illustrates the careful steps needed to fulfill its potential as a model for urban living.

Generations of Detroiters have enjoyed Belle Isle for its mix of recreation, culture, scenic natural setting, and unique heritage as a Frederick Law Olmsted showcase park. Picnics and reunions annually celebrate its rich cultural heritage, and its daily worth is demonstrated in special civic events, recreational programs and everyday leisure. In the past decade, there has been much discussion about a master plan for the conservation of the park's historical and natural assets, the upkeep of its fragile ecosystem, and the availability of its community activities. Visitors to the exhibit will learn many ways to participate and support Belle Isle activities and stewardship.

An exhibit opening party is scheduled for **Friday, July 17** from **6 p.m. – 8 p.m.** at the Museum. Tickets cost \$40 per person, and proceeds will benefit the Friends of Belle Isle. Information and products focusing on the island will be available, including *Island in the City: How Belle Isle Changed Detroit Forever*, a 112-page history of the park. Wine and refreshments will also be provided.

Belle Isle: Soul of the City, is open through **Sunday, October 11** in the Museum's **Community Gallery**, supported by **Comerica Bank**. For more information about the exhibit, contact Friends of Belle Isle at (313) 331-7760, or visit their website at www.fobi.org.

The Detroit Historical Museum, located at 5401 Woodward Ave. (NW corner of Kirby) in Detroit's Cultural Center area, is open to the public Wednesday through Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. On Mondays and Tuesdays, the Museum is not open to the public but available for group tours by calling **(313) 833-7979**. Admission for the Museum for the month of July is free, thanks to a gift from **PVS Chemicals**. Regular adult admission is \$6. Seniors (60+), college students with valid college ID, and youth ages 5-18 pay \$4. Parking in the Museum's lot is \$4 at all times. Permanent exhibits include the famous *Streets of Old Detroit*; *Frontiers to Factories*; *The Motor City*; and *The Glancy Trains*. New exhibits include *From Haven to Home: Jewish Life in America*; *Detroit's Classic TV Personalities*; *Hero or Villain? Metro Detroit's Legacy of Leadership*; and *Automotive Showplace*. For more information, call the Museum at **(313) 833-1805** or check out our website at www.detroithistorical.org.

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