

Media Preview of the Dossin Great Lakes Museum and spokesperson availability **Monday, May 13 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** at the Museum, 100 Strand Drive on Belle Isle. Please **RSVP by reply email** to confirm your attendance or call **(313) 833-1262**.

Additional images will be available by request or at the media preview event.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Sales

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**THE DETROIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS THE NEW DOSSIN GREAT
LAKES MUSEUM
WITH A GRAND RE-OPENING ON BELLE ISLE MAY 18-19**

DETROIT — After an extremely successful six-month renovation and Grand Re-Opening last November at its flagship Detroit Historical Museum, the **Detroit Historical Society** turned its attention to the **Dossin Great Lakes Museum** in December.

The Society's Belle Isle attraction, dedicated to the maritime history of southeastern Michigan, the Detroit River and the Great Lakes, has been closed to the public since December 2nd for a major renovation. The \$2 million makeover culminates with a free to the public Grand Re-Opening weekend starting **Saturday, May 18th at noon**.

Grand Re-Opening Weekend hours are the following:

- **Saturday, May 18 – Noon – 6 p.m.**
- **Sunday, May 19 – 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.**

Visitors during the weekend can also register to win a suite at Comerica Park for the Sunday, June 23 game featuring the Tigers vs. the Boston Red Sox, courtesy of **PNC Bank**. The suite includes 14 tickets for the game, a pair of parking passes and a food and beverage package.

A major highlight of the changes at the Dossin Museum is ***Built by the River in the John A. and Marlene L. Boll Foundation Gallery***, the Museum's new permanent core exhibition, which chronicles Detroit's growth and development into one of the nation's leading metropolitan regions and the undeniable link to the river that shares its name. The exhibit highlights the ways in which Detroiters have long used the river and lakes around us to build industries, engage neighbors and pursue recreational passions. Early history will examine Detroit's place at the center of the fur trade, and how its geographic placement made it a strategic spot for the French,

British and American armed forces. Later, its location on the river made Detroit a center of industrial development, manufacturing capital and marine transportation. Younger visitors will enjoy hands-on interactive elements, including a large display simulating a speedboat racing down the Detroit River and a re-creation of an 18th century canoe to climb in and experience what early settlers to the region might have felt upon arrival. Finally, a long-time favorite, the Detroit River Watch webcam, has been reinstalled in a new interactive kiosk and enhanced to now include higher definition images, thanks to the support of **Strategic Staffing Solutions**.

A River's Roar is a new temporary exhibit in the Museum's Great Lakes Gallery that provides an exciting overview of the history of hydroplane racing in Detroit. For over 100 years, the Detroit River and Belle Isle have featured some of the finest racing in the country. The course has hosted the "superbowl" of power boat racing – the Gold Cup – more times than any other venue. The Gold Cup is the oldest trophy in motorsports. It was also a long-running home track for the British Harmsworth Trophy.

Visitors will see some of their favorite boats, and revisit the legendary days of Gar Wood, Guy Lombardo, Wild Bill Cantrell, Fred Alter, Bill Muncey and Chip Hanauer. Everyone can learn about these sleek and fun speed boats with names like "*Tempo*," "*Skipalong*," "*Such Crust*," and "*Miss Vernors*."

Also, the Museum's other well-known attractions have been refreshed, including:

- The Gothic Room from the *City of Detroit III* in **Polk Family Hall**;
- The *Miss Pepsi* championship hydroplane, ensconced in its own pavilion;
- The **Oliver Dewey Marcks** Theater;
- The *William Clay Ford* Pilot House;
- And an array of treasures outside the walls of the Museum that include the bow anchor from the *Edmund Fitzgerald*, two War of 1812-era cannons, a U.S. Coast Guard utility boat, and more.

"This renovation project at the Dossin Great Lakes Museum is the latest manifestation of the Society's five-year Past>Forward Campaign, which funded our very successful makeover at our flagship Detroit Historical Museum in the Cultural Center," said Detroit Historical Society Executive Director **Bob Bury**. "We're looking forward to reintroducing metro Detroiters to our gem on Belle Isle."

The Past>Forward Campaign, launched in 2009, has raised more than 85 percent of its \$20.1 million goal and will conclude at the end of June, 2014.

In 1949, the Detroit Historical Commission opened the Maritime Museum of Detroit on Belle Isle. The last commercial sailing vessel on the Great Lakes, the wood schooner *J.T. Wing*, housed the museum for several years. When the old ship became too fragile for public visitation in 1956, the City of Detroit closed the museum and burned it to the ground. At that time, Walter, Roy, and Russell Dossin pledged part of their fortune -- earned as owners of the exclusive Pepsi-Cola bottling franchise in Michigan and northern Ohio -- and their fame -- as sponsors of several legendary hydroplane racing boats -- to build a new museum. On July 24, 1960, the Dossin Great Lakes Museum opened to the public on the same site where the *J.T. Wing* had been moored.

The Detroit Historical Society is a private, nonprofit organization located in Midtown, the heart of Detroit's cultural center. Founded in 1921, its mission is to educate and inspire our community and visitors by preserving and presenting our region's shared history through dynamic exhibits and experiences. Today, the Society operates the Detroit Historical Museum and the Dossin Great Lakes Museum. In addition, the Society is responsible for the conservation and preservation of more than 250,000 artifacts that represent three centuries of our region's rich history. Through its museum exhibits, school tour programs, community-based programs and history-themed outreach efforts, the Society serves more than 150,000 people annually. For more information on the Detroit Historical Society, visit www.detroithistorical.org.

Starting Saturday, May 25th, the Dossin Great Lakes Museum, located at 100 Strand Drive on Belle Isle, will be open Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Due to the Chevrolet Detroit Belle Isle Grand Prix and the Orion Music Festival, the Museum will be closed to the public on June 1-2 and 8-9. Permanent exhibits include Built by the River in the John A. and Marlene L. Boll Foundation Gallery, the Miss Pepsi vintage 1950s championship hydroplane, the Gothic Room from the City of Detroit III, a bow anchor from the S.S. Edmund Fitzgerald, the pilothouse from the Great Lakes freighter S.S. William Clay Ford, and one of the largest known collections of scale model ships in the world. For more information, call (313) 833-5538 or visit www.detroithistorical.org.

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