



# News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**DOSSIN GREAT LAKES MUSEUM'S 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CONTINUES WITH  
SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND THE OPENING OF TWO NEW EXHIBITS ON  
SATURDAY, APRIL 24**

*New exhibits include **Life on a Long Ship: Great Lakes Sailors**  
and **Dossin Great Lakes Museum: Celebrating 50 Years!***

**DETROIT** – Two maritime exhibits opening **Saturday, April 24** will celebrate a unique lifestyle and a special anniversary at the **Dossin Great Lakes Museum** on Belle Isle.

Have you ever thought of running away to sea? The new exhibit *Life on a Long Ship: Great Lakes Sailors* might help satisfy that yearning. This exhibit takes visitors on a visual journey of a typical lake boat, looking into the lives of individuals who make their living on the Great Lakes. You will view a bridge deck and find out what a ship's captain does, and how that job has changed over the years. Similarly, learn about wheelmen, mates, porters, engineers, lookouts, oilers and deck hands. This exhibit will expose what life can be like on a ship – perhaps less romantic than expected, and a lot of hard work.

The other new exhibit, *Dossin Great Lakes Museum: Celebrating 50 Years!*, traces more than a half century of telling the region's maritime history. Opened to the public in 1960, the Dossin Great Lakes Museum was the first facility built specifically to chronicle these stories. Since then it has focused on that mission and has successfully moved into the twenty-first century as one of the premier maritime museums on the Great Lakes.

In 1949, the Maritime Museum of Detroit was opened on Belle Isle aboard the landed wood schooner *J. T. Wing*, the last commercial sailing ship on the Great Lakes. Seven years later, this Museum was closed due to the deteriorated condition of the *J.T. Wing*. The Dossin family, a well-known name in the wholesale food and soft drink businesses, provided the funds for a new maritime museum. The new facility, now named the Dossin Great Lakes Museum, opened on the *Wing's* former Belle Isle site on July 24, 1960, the 259<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Detroit's founding.

This exhibit will focus on the *J.T. Wing* days and feature individuals that made the Dossin Museum possible. Projects such as the recovery of the anchor from the *S.S. Edmund Fitzgerald* and the installation of the pilot house from the *S.S. William Clay Ford*, as well as current projects that are underway, will also be recognized in this anniversary exhibit.

In celebration of the Museum's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the opening of the new exhibits, the Detroit Historical Society and the **Dossin Maritime Group** will host **John Polacsek**, former curator of the Museum for 25 years, as he presents slides and stories showcasing the institution's history. He will offer two 30-minute presentations at 1 and 2 p.m. -- plan to stay for both presentations so that you don't miss anything! There is no charge for the presentations, but donations will be accepted. Contact **Rebecca McDonald** for more information on this program at (313) 833.1801 or via email at [rebeccam@detroithistorical.org](mailto:rebeccam@detroithistorical.org).

*Life on a Long Ship: Great Lakes Sailors* replaces the *Committed to the Deep: Exploring Underwater Treasures* exhibit in the **Great Lakes Gallery**. *Dossin Great Lakes Museum: Celebrating 50 Years* replaces *L is for Lighthouse* in **DeRoy Hall**. Both exhibits will be open until **April 2011**.

**MASCO** is the presenting sponsor of the Dossin Great Lakes Museum's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary activities.

The Dossin Great Lakes Museum, located at 100 Strand Drive on Belle Isle, is open Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free at the Museum for the duration of 2010 thanks to the generous support of **MASCO**, however, donations are welcome. Permanent exhibits include the *Miss Pepsi* vintage championship hydroplane, a bow anchor from the *S.S. Edmund Fitzgerald*, the pilothouse from the Great Lakes freighter *S.S. William Clay Ford*, and the 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](http://www.detroithistorical.org).

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