FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: CONTACT: Bob Sadler, Director of Marketing and Sales 313.833.7937 or 313.819.5761 (cell) bobsadler@detroithistorical.org

18TH CENTURY CANNON PULLED FROM THE DETROIT RIVER THREE YEARS AGO TO GO ON DISPLAY AT THE DOSSIN GREAT LAKES MUSEUM ON BELLE ISLE

*Media are invited to the 1:30 unveiling of the cannon;
key figures involved in the cannon’s restoration will be available for photos and interviews.*

**DETROIT –** An 18th century British cannon retrieved from the Detroit River in October 2011 before undergoing a three-year restoration process will be unveiled Wednesday afternoon as it goes on display for the public this weekend at the Dossin Great Lakes Museum on Belle Isle.

Key people involved in restoring the cannon will gather at 1 p.m., and the unveiling will take place at 1:30 p.m. at the entrance to the Dossin Museum, located at 100 Strand Drive. **THIS EVENT IS NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.**

Detroit Police Department divers first discovered the cannon in July 2011 and raised it a few months later in October. Then, Detroit Historical Society Senior Curator Joel Stone and the team at the Society’s Collections Resource Center got to work. The cannon first went into wet storage until a conservation protocol was established with the assistance of maritime archaeologist Dan Harrison.

Restoration work commenced at the Cranbrook Institute of Science in 2013, where the cannon was put on public display for a special exhibit. An electrolysis bath drew harmful chemicals from the iron using an electrical current, and young visitors participated in several cleaning sessions. Once back at the Collections Resource Center, electrolysis continued for a year. Over the last two months, the barrel was dried with pure alcohol, and finished with a coating of tannic acid to stabilize the exterior iron.
During the restoration process, the cannon’s past started to become clear. The barrel was embossed with the crest of King George II, who reigned from 1727-1760. Additionally, it was marked with a “P”, an “X” and an “M.” The “P” indicates approval from a civilian approval board, and the “X” is a failure mark by the military ordinance board; while the “M” stands for Mangles, the arms dealer that sold the cannon. On the right trunnion, an “H” was discovered by a group of children working with toothbrushes at Cranbrook. This represents the Hamsell Furnaces of East Sussex, England, where the cannon was manufactured by hand in the mid-1740s.

It is likely that this weapon was used in various conflicts, eventually finding its way to Fort Lernoult in Detroit. When the British abandoned Detroit in 1796, rather than leave outmoded armaments to the Native Americans or Americans, troops were ordered to destroy them. From the fort, soldiers moved the cannon down to the riverbank, near the site of present-day Cobo Hall. Speculation suggests that they slid this gun, along with five others, onto the winter ice. When the ice thawed, the cannons sank, where they remained for over 200 years.

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 for all, all the time. 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 in the Wayne and Joan Webber Foundation Gallery, and one of the largest known collections of scale model ships in the world.

# # #