

# The Campaign for the Monhegan Museum of Art & History



*"This is the most wonderful country ever modeled by the hand of the master architect. The island is only a mile wide and two miles long, but it looks as large as the Rocky Mountains."*

- George Bellows, writing about Monhegan to his wife, Emma

## For Love of an Island

For half a century, islanders, summer residents, and visitors alike have entrusted their most valued Monhegan treasures – the artifacts of history, family, art, and culture – to the Monhegan Museum of Art & History. Each of the more than 30,000 objects in our collection has been donated...a reflection of trust in the Museum to care for the island's extraordinary legacy. Each is a gift to be preserved and displayed for future generations.

With a story that has been unfolding for 4,000 years, Monhegan Island has served as an outpost for fishing, a beacon for sailors, an inspiration for artists, a magnet for tourists, and a special place to work and belong. Our museum helps us share this remarkable story with the world.

The Museum is integral to the life, culture, and economy of our small, remote island. It is also a labor of love, sustained by a small staff and Museum Association members and volunteers, and enjoyed by thousands of delighted patrons every year. Day hikers and history buffs, art scholars and lighthouse lovers, islanders and mainlanders, all have reason to support this museum. For love of an island, we are all stewards of this special place.



*"This museum holds the history and significance of the island. It's a museum of the community: of the people who live here, who come here, and who care about Monhegan. It belongs to them, and it belongs to you."*

- Ed Deci, Director of the Monhegan Museum of Art & History

## Progress and Impact: No Museum is an Island

The Monhegan Museum is on the island, of the island, and for the island. But this island museum is also a bridge. Our collection links us inextricably to the history of North America and more than 150 years of great American art. The Museum connects us to the fishing and seafaring heritage of Maine, and draws mainland visitors into island life. The works of artists who are known and appreciated all over the world are in our collection, making us part of their story, just as they are part of ours.

The Monhegan Museum also is an important part of the economic well-being of this small island community.

- **Annual Visitation:**

The Museum is a major draw for the summer tourist season, attracting visitors interested in art, history and lighthouses to Monhegan. More than 5,000 individuals visit the exhibits at the Museum every year. These patrons contribute to the many businesses on the island, including hotels, restaurants, and stores.



- **Island Employment:** The Museum is one of the island's few year-round employers. Four of our five part-time staff are from the year-round community. A fourth-generation summer resident is the fifth member of our team. Monhegan's location as a remote outer island also means that it cannot depend on workers from the mainland to provide many critical services. As a result, many members of the island community depend upon the financial benefits accrued from the services they provide to the Museum.

- **Sustaining the Local Economy:** The Museum, a major consumer of island electrical power, recognizes its important role as part of Monhegan's

energygrid—a small community of barely 100 homes and approximately 50 year-round residents. By partnering with the Monhegan Plantation Power District in innovative technology that reduces our dependence on fossil fuels, we support the sustainability of the island's power district. The Museum also is a major contributor to the economy of the year-round ferry service that is the lifeblood of the island.

- **Value to Researchers:** Our archives attract the interest of researchers who visit Lighthouse Hill or contact Museum staff via telephone and email with their inquiries. Many local and national museums, historical societies, and individual researchers have benefited from this access.
- **Educational Programs:** Museum professionals, associates, and invited speakers routinely offer lectures about art and history during the

summer on the island. We also collaborate with the Maine Artists' Residency Corporation (MARC) to support their annual lecture.

- **Sharing of Museum Resources:** The Monhegan Museum works with art and history institutions, filmmakers, authors, universities, and others in need of artwork, images or information on Monhegan artists. We partner with other institutions to co-curate exhibitions, both on and off the island, that display the Museum's astonishing art and Monhegan Island's beauty, serenity, and power.
- **The Maine Art Museum Trail:** The Museum is a member of the Maine Art Museum Trail, an association of eight art museums that offers more than 73,000 works of art, from ancient to contemporary, in collections featuring works by the many artists associated with Maine.



## Sustaining Our Future

Each year the Association has further restored our historic buildings and expanded the collections. Our buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places. The Museum's reputation has continued to grow, as demonstrated by our award of a major National Endowment for the Humanities grant.

But the challenges are great. Our remote location 12 miles off the Maine coast and small population of Island residents poses many limits and challenges. The Museum is fortunate to have highly talented and skilled paid staff members from the year-round community as well as from the summer community who work beside the more than 150 Museum volunteers to ensure the Museum's successful operation.

**Our vision is to be an enduring tribute to the power of place to foster community and artistic creativity. Our strategic goals for growth include:**

- Continue toward our goal of \$3 million for our permanent endowment;
- Grow operating income (generated from annual fund donations, memberships, admission fees, and retail sales) to at least \$250,000 annually by 2019 to cover ongoing expenses;
- Grow the Museum's Long-Term Investment account to \$2 million to generate sufficient interest and earnings to support two additional staff – a paid Museum Director and an associate to assist with development and financial activities;
- Elevate awareness of the Museum's significant collections and its place in the history of American art, by organizing more traveling exhibitions and collaborating with larger art institutions around the country;
- Engage more of the island community as well as visitors, scholars, and art lovers on the mainland and globally, through educational programs, promotion, and outreach;
- Increase recognition of the art of James Fitzgerald whose estate we manage, ensure his legacy, and continue to engage with other art institutions to advance his work;
- Promote the Rockwell Kent/James Fitzgerald Historic Artists' Home and Studio;
- Prepare the institution for leadership succession and strengthen its overall organization; and
- Implement important new approaches to preserving our cultural heritage while also caring for the environment, including the groundbreaking, sustainable energy improvements, partially funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, to reduce the Museum's dependence on electricity and propane.

To secure our premier position among the great community museums of America and to sustain our presence and build for the future, we need your support. Please consider contributing to The Campaign for the Monhegan Museum of Art & History.



For more information, please contact:

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of Art & History**

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