Celebrating 10 Years of VVFF!

It’s hard to believe that Don Nusbaum’s vision of a car show fund-raiser has burgeoned into such a renowned community event.

On June 6th, MOAH celebrated the 10th anniversary of our signature event, Vintage Vehicles and Family Festival (VVFF), with a festivity-filled evening at the Williams House and Gardens. Over 120 museum members, vehicle exhibitors, and VVFF supporters joined us for an evening of delicious food, exceptional wine, and live music in a one-of-a-kind setting.

We are most grateful to Gordon Biersch of Palo Alto for providing not only the appetizers but the beer as well. Jim Nelson and Fogarty Winery graciously donated some fabulous wines. In addition, The Left Bank Trio/Rive Gauche set the perfect mood with their selection of upbeat European Café tunes of the 1920s-40s.

Last, but certainly not least, we would like to thank Roxy and Michelle Rapp for underwriting this event and making it all possible – we are truly grateful for their support.

We could not have imagined a better celebration to honor the 10th anniversary of Vintage Vehicles and Family Festival. Thank you to all who helped us commemorate this milestone. We look forward to many more years of VVFF. In fact, the 11th annual VVFF is just around the corner on Saturday, May 2nd!
From Our President

Jim Wall

Volunteering ... good for us and good for you

An ongoing challenge for almost all museums is attracting and keeping a good base of volunteers. Simply put, volunteers are the lifeblood of museums. But as much as we need you, a wide variety of studies suggest that you should pursue us as well. What these studies show is that volunteering increases overall health (mental and physical), increases life span, and provides significant benefits for remaining socially active ... and this is especially true after retirement or the loss of a loved one.

And what makes volunteering work for the long term is that you are doing things you enjoy. Volunteering at the Museum of American Heritage is wonderful because of the wide variety of volunteering opportunities that exist. It is easy to find a part of MOAH that matches your own interests and skills. It can be a few hours a month, or a few hours a week, whatever you are comfortable with. Here are some of the diverse areas in which MOAH volunteers are working.

Be a greeter or museum docent. This is the critical job that links the museum to the public at large. Greet people when they first come in ... then help explain the museum's mission, the current exhibit, the historic Williams House, or just chat with our guests. It is important to note that you don't have to memorize a lot of information or be especially knowledgeable about either our artifacts or the current exhibit. How much you learn is entirely up to you. Most long-term volunteers at the museum started off as docents.

Some people really enjoy working with the artifacts. This is done primarily at MOAH's warehouse, where volunteers document and photograph the newly received artifacts. Interested volunteers often clean, repair, or renovate items that catch their interest. Some just help gather the artifacts for new exhibits or put away the ones that come back.

And there are the volunteers who work on garden and house maintenance. An important part of the museum is keeping the garden and house looking good. For some of us, that means raking, weeding, or just general cleanup. For those with green thumbs, there is planting, trimming, and monitoring the existing garden plants and vegetables. On the maintenance side, the 100-year-old Williams House needs regular inspections and repairs to ensure it can make it through its second century of life.

See From Our President, Page 7.
MOAH Collection in the Community (and Beyond)

MOAH’s inventory database contains 4,705 accessioned artifacts to date, and the number continues to grow. In fact, we receive weekly phone calls from community members wanting to donate treasures to the MOAH Collection; luckily we are able to give most items a home. Until recently, most artifacts, unless on exhibit at the museum, remained at the warehouse where they were rarely seen. However, we are thrilled to announce that MOAH’s unique collection has been more and more visible outside the warehouse, thanks to the efforts of our warehouse crew (Charlie Gillis, Roger Broussal and Jim Wall) and thanks to recent interest from local (and not-so-local) organizations.

In March, Palo Altans bid farewell to the Palo Alto High School gym with an event celebrating 85 years of fond memories. The event attracted over 600 members of the community who wanted to pay their respects to the iconic Palo Alto building. MOAH was more than willing to loan 20 of our artifacts for a “Then & Now” display. Artifacts ranging from a record player, to a typewriter and even a sewing machine reminded many attendees of their former days at Paly, while younger visitors were introduced to a taste of the past (before iPods and computers).

Gunn High School celebrated its 50th anniversary with a festivity-filled weekend in September. The Gunn celebration organizers also approached MOAH in search of interesting artifacts to display throughout the campus during their celebration weekend. Slide rules, cameras, typewriters, and more from the MOAH collection were scattered across the Gunn campus for people to admire as they celebrated 50 years of Gunn High School.

In July, we received a phone inquiry from Las Vegas-based tech company Typo Keyboards, which designs keyboards that attach to the iPhone. In September, we packed up 49 typewriters (barely a dent in our collection of 204) to be transported to Las Vegas and used as part of the Typo Keyboards booth display at a trade show. Even more exciting, Typo Keyboards will use MOAH’s typewriters for display at the January 2015 Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas. Historically, CES has attracted over 100,000 industry professionals from around the world – what great exposure for the MOAH collection!

See From Our Executive Director, Page 7.

Spotlight On Staff:
Welcome Aboard, Sandra!

MOAH is excited to introduce our new Operations Assistant, Sandra Roorda. Sandra began working at MOAH in June and has eased right into the position.

Sandra was born and raised in the Bay Area and attended Gunn High School here in Palo Alto. After graduating high school, Sandra completed her undergraduate degree in both Art History and Studio Arts at Scuola Lorenzo de’ Medici in Florence. She then continued to further pursue her education and graduated with honors from Maastricht University in the Netherlands with an MA in Arts and Heritage: Policy Management and Education.

Since returning to the United States in September 2013, Sandra has consulted on various projects with a number of Bay Area museums, including SFMOMA and the Cantor Arts Center. In addition to her responsibilities at MOAH, Sandra volunteers at the newly opened Anderson Collection at Stanford and works as a free-lance writer and researcher in the field of cultural heritage.

She has already been instrumental in the success of some of MOAH’s major events in 2014, including the VVFF 10th Anniversary Celebration, several lectures, the victory garden open house, and the volunteer appreciation luncheon. In addition, Sandra was a key player in the planning, installation and completion of our current exhibit, Museum of American Heritage A to Z. We are delighted that Sandra has joined our small but impressive staff as she is a talented individual with a variety of valuable skills to contribute to MOAH.

See From Our Executive Director, Page 7.
MOAH UPDATE

Current Main Gallery Exhibit

Museum of American Heritage A to Z

Now through March 15, 2015

MOAH boasts a collection of roughly 5,000 historic electrical and mechanical inventions, yet some artifacts are rarely exhibited. MOAH’s current exhibit, Museum of American Heritage A to Z, introduces visitors to the breadth and depth of the MOAH collection with a variety of unrelated artifacts.

This exhibit features artifacts beginning with the letter A (abacus) and continues all the way through the alphabet to items beginning with the letter Z (zapper). Among the unique artifacts in this display are antique medical devices, including an embalming pump, a collection of typewriters, extraordinary culinary devices and much more. Visitors are welcome to identify each letter of the alphabet as they tour this fascinating display of unusual historic inventions.

Upcoming Main Gallery Exhibit

Celebrating 25 Years of MOAH Exhibits

Opening April 17, 2015

Can you believe that 2015 marks the 25th anniversary of the Museum of American Heritage? From opening our doors at the original Alma Street location to our current home at the Williams House, our upcoming show will highlight memorable exhibits from the past 25 years. This exhibit will offer visitors a glimpse of a variety of artifacts while also following the history and evolution of MOAH itself. We hope you will have the opportunity to join us on this journey as we celebrate each year of MOAH’s impressive past.

MOAH Is Still Green!

The city of Palo Alto is a partner in the Green Business Program, which is “a voluntary regional program for certifying and recognizing small and medium sized businesses that operate using environmentally sound practices.” To qualify, a business must undergo a rigorous evaluation on water and energy conservation, pollution prevention, and solid waste reduction/recycling.

In 2010, the Museum of American Heritage became one of a small number of businesses in Palo Alto to be certified as a Green Business. We are proud to announce that MOAH was recently recertified and thus continues to officially be “green.”
MOAH sincerely thanks the following individuals and organizations for their support over the past 6 months:

Exhibit Contributors
Art Adams * Roger Broussal * Beth Bunnenberg * Dorian Clair * Dick Clark * Charlie Gillis * Hassett Hardware * Bob Katzive * Wayland Lee * The MOAH Collection * Beryl Self * Sandra Roorda * Jim Wall * Bill Wehrend

General Support
The Agnes the Wondergoat Family Fund * Beth Bunnenberg * Alice & Herbert Fischgrund * Isabel Kennedy * Dottie & Wayland Lee * Bev & Jim Nelson * Gwen & Don Reichert * Curt Weil

Thank you to the following supporters of the 10th annual Vintage Vehicles and Family Festival*:

VVFF General Supporters

VVFF In-Kind Support

VVFF Sponsors

VVFF Underwriters

* Donations received as of October 6, 2014

A special thank you to Roxy & Michelle Rapp for underwriting the 10th anniversary celebration of VVFF on June 6th, 2014!

MOAH Sponsors

The Moore Family Foundation * Hassett Hardware * Frank Livermore Trust
Technical Education

Wendy Breu

MOAH’s alignment with STEM

We have all heard about the importance of providing STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education to prepare our children; the projected job growth in these areas far exceeds the non-STEM fields in the future. In fact, California just adopted new K-12 science standards, NGSS (Next Generation Science Standard) in September 2013. One of the areas NGSS for California emphasizes is the “integration of skills and practices across the content areas as the foundation of STEM education.”

I cannot help but bang the drum here for MOAH’s technology workshops and science fun programs, including outreaches at school sites. Each of them is well aligned with STEM education, but with two added ingredients: informality and fun.

I recently read a very interesting article, *The Science of Learning* (69-73, August 2014, Scientific American). The subheading of a side column, “Stop Lecturing Me” by Carl Wieman, caught my eye. It read, “At the college level, the evidence is clear: science students learn less when they are expected to listen passively.”

Well, I dare say that the same could apply to students of all ages; they may learn better in an informal class setting – one like MOAH’s. Our students do more than just listen. If you ever visit the Livermore Learning Center while one of our education programs is in session, you will observe that our wonderful teachers interleave class instruction with lively Q&As and demonstrations, followed by hands-on practice. This practice is in the form of either completing a take-home project (say, building a mini-version of a Van der Graaf generator in the Electrostatics and Electromagnetism workshop) or exploring freely all the interactive displays during a Science Fun event.

By the way, adults are welcome to attend these classes/events, too. We do have a minimum age requirement; however, there is never an upper limit to the age of a participant. ;-) 

Family Science Fun Program, a re-branding exercise

In my last report, I mentioned that, because multi-generation families often attend our Science Fun events, we might need to rename our program “Family Science Fun.” To get an idea of what I mean, please follow this link, https://www.flickr.com/search/?tags=mrscience to view pictures taken over this past summer when Bob Boschert, our Mr. Science, visited 17 San Jose Library branches. It may be premature to disclose but, with two new Palo Alto Library branches slated to open later this year, we may see Mr. Science in action closer to home.
MOAH Celebrates Volunteers

This year we were fortunate to celebrate our annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon on October 29th – one of the most beautiful days of the year, with temperatures in the high 70s ... not too hot and not too cold. Forty volunteers gathered at MOAH to enjoy a lovely luncheon al fresco. The MOAH gardens proved once again to be the right atmosphere for a party; what a perfect place to honor our volunteers!

We are grateful for the opportunity to honor our volunteers with this annual event celebrating their many hours, months, and years of commitment to our organization. Without their skills and dedication, our museum simply could not exist. We offer special thanks to Judy Pell for her efforts in organizing such a fabulous event.

We look forward to celebrating our volunteers again next year!

From President, continued from Page 2

An obvious of any museum is working on the exhibits themselves. The volunteer Exhibits Committee is responsible for planning all aspects each exhibit. How will it be staged? What should the exhibit text convey to the viewer? Artifact selection, placement, color schemes, and lighting are all critical to making each exhibit special.

For some, the interest is in the education department. Science, electrical, and computer classes are taught to middle school students on weekends. And don’t forget the lecture series for adults. Volunteers help teach, assist or help organize the wide variety of classes and lectures we offer.

We understand that not everyone has the time or perhaps the inclination to volunteer at our museum. But please keep us in mind, not just for yourself, but for friends and acquaintances who have time on their hands and wish to stay active and involved in the community. And if not the Museum of American Heritage, consider volunteering somewhere else. Do it for yourself.

From Our Executive Director, continued from Page 3

In September, we were thrilled to get a request from the Palo Alto History Museum. They held an afternoon event for friends of the Palo Alto History Museum and borrowed a selection of MOAH artifacts as decoration. It was quite charming to see pedal cars, a student’s desk, a gramophone, and vintage television adorning the garden for visitors to appreciate. Speakers at the event were delighted to talk into a working vintage microphone from the MOAH collection. We were pleased to collaborate with our soon-to-be neighbors.

Lastly, the SFO Museum has once again borrowed from the MOAH collection for an upcoming Egyptian revival exhibition scheduled to open in January. If you happen to be flying somewhere, be sure to look for MOAH’s “Sphinx” Singer sewing machine in the international terminal.

As you can see, MOAH’s collection and the museum have recently been exposed to far more than the local community! We have an exceptional assortment of mechanical and electrical inventions, and it is important that our collection continues to occupy a role in the community (and beyond), sparking a sense of nostalgia in some or presenting an unknown piece of the past to others. We will ensure that the MOAH collection continues to have a presence outside of the warehouse and museum so that a wider range of people can enjoy our unusual and interesting treasures.
At The Lectern

Jay Thorwaldson’s love of the Bay Area environment began when he was a child. He remembers taking the bus as a teenager to explore the Alviso marsh region, and he used to paddle, row, and sail into the South Bay sloughs. And he remembers well how “California’s lost and found Baylands” were, for a long time, fair game for development. On April 23, in his talk, Saving the Bay Past & Future: The Power of Individual Action, Jay shared with a MOAH audience the story of the struggle to preserve and protect the unique ecological nature of the local environment.

In the 1960s, Jay participated in an archeological dig of a midden in Union City that uncovered native American remains dated to about 12,000 years ago. After occupying the area for thousands of years, the native population was conquered and decimated by the Spanish, who were eventually supplanted by Mexicans, who in turn were replaced by European American settlers.

From the mid-1800s to the mid-1900s, the relentless diking and filling of the bay reduced its size by an average of four square miles per year. Faced with the probability that the bay would be reduced to essentially a river by 2020, three feisty women (Kay Kerr, Sylvia McLaughlin, and Esther Gulick) launched a campaign that led to creation of the Save San Francisco Bay Association, now known as “Save the Bay.” In 1965, legislation established the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) to provide stewardship of the Bay Area coast.

Jay has been personally involved in various projects to protect the Baylands, including the battle to save Bair Island and efforts to preserve historic Cooley Landing in East Palo Alto. While concerned about the future effects of climate change on the region, he was happy to note that just one day before his lecture, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced grants of approximately $5 million to “restore water quality and wetlands throughout the San Francisco Bay watershed.”

Jim Adams’ impressive on-line resume includes the details of his background in the U.S. Air Force, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, and Stanford University, where he is now Professor Emeritus. It also highlights his deep interest in “the ancient, honorable, and valuable activity of working with the hands,” which was the topic of his May 21 MOAH lecture, Making, Fixing, and Tinkering.

The reason Jim thinks “everyone should have a hobby that involves using the hands” is that using one’s hands provides quick feedback, pride and a sense of accomplishment, confidence, aesthetic pleasure, joy, a balanced outlook on life, a way to make money, quick and cheap maintenance, and custom products. He laments the fact that working with one’s hands has acquired a bad reputation for various reasons: “it’s boring”; traditional gender roles; “upper class people shouldn’t get dirty”; hobbies take time away from job and family; “people should get rid of the things they love (especially large ones) so their heirs won’t be burdened with them when they die.”

Jim grew up amid citrus farms, an environment where working with one’s hands was commonplace; he also played piano, took shop in high school, and was the only boy in his high school to take a typing class. He was fortunate to have several mentors who worked with their hands, including his grandfather and uncle, a Stanford professor who restored old tractors, and his mother, who made both clothes and furniture and eventually became a watercolorist. Jim confesses that he is now “hooked on old machinery.”

Citing a current swing back to hands-on work, Jim encouraged attendees to join the trend, noting that “using your hands makes you a superior being.”

continued on next page
At The Lectern, continued from Page 8

While in high school, Kenneth Lum got interested in both astrology and the history of the telescope. He went on to get both a Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley, and an M.D. from Stanford University, making him a veritable “doctor squared.” He is a member of the Antique Telescope Society, which Ken describes as “a bunch of geeks.” The society holds its annual conventions at sites around the world that are significant in the development of the telescope. Ken integrated photographs he took during some of these trips into his July 23 lecture, Invention and Development of the Telescope: A Travelogue.

Ken opened his talk with the question, “What would life be like if we had no telescopes?” Just imagine the impact on humanity of having little or no knowledge of the universe we live in. Of course, this question is hypothetical, as, in 2008, we celebrated the 400th anniversary of the invention of the telescope.

Although other individuals (notably Jacob Metius and Zacharias Iansen) may have some claim to the invention of the telescope, Ken acknowledged Hans Lipperhey of the Netherlands as the clear inventor of the telescope in 1608. A year later, Galileo Galilei became the first person to use the telescope for astronomical observation and, in 1611, Johannes Kepler made significant improvements to its design. Later, Christiaan Huygens solved the problem of chromatic aberration that affected existing (refractive) telescopes, and Sir Isaac Newton overcame the same issue by inventing the reflective telescope.

By 1672, the basic telescope designs were in place, and no other designs appeared until 1930. Through pictures and stories, Ken continued the “travelogue” through the two divergent paths (refractive vs. reflective) of telescope design.

With a degree in biochemistry, Gary Lee pursued a career in research science. As his web site states, his “fascination with molecular design and the complexity of biological systems” led to an equally strong interest in the question of how a guitar’s design determines its sound. In 2007, his hobby of building classical guitars became his full-time career, which he now practices in Wayne, New Jersey.

Born in Russia, raised in Israel, and holding a Master’s Degree in music from Yale University, Yuri Liberzon is a classical guitarist who performs at prestigious venues around the world and teaches classical guitar to students in the Bay Area. Based on his achievements in the field of music, Yuri boasts the rare distinction of having been granted “Alien of Extraordinary Ability United States Permanent Residency.”

On August 13, Yuri Liberzon accompanied Gary Lee in an interactive presentation of What happens before the music begins? from the perspectives of both the builder and the player of a guitar. After a brief performance by Yuri to demonstrate the capabilities of a fine guitar, Gary asked Yuri to describe his relationship with the guitar (“It has changed over the years. Both of us can be moody, and the relationship is different from day to day. I view my guitar as something that allows me to express myself.”) and what he requires of a guitar (“It must be comfortable, not be a challenge, possess beauty of sound, be powerful, have the ability to project.”).

Turning to the perspective of the builder, Gary explained that lutherie (the making of a stringed instrument) is less about “building a beautiful box” and more about creating its sound and capabilities. He gets his insight from watching a player play and listening to the player speak about the experience. He thinks of himself as a toolmaker, striving to create a tool that has clarity, volume, tonal color, and the ability to sustain. He values most the players who are the most demanding and feels the best guitars are those that have the fewest weaknesses and are the most responsive. He places materials at the bottom and execution is at the top. Gary discussed and demonstrated various types of materials and the methods he uses to shape and control the guitar’s capabilities. The evening concluded with another short performance by Yuri.
The “Dirty Dozen” Hosts Victory Garden Open House & Harvest Dinner

The small and extremely dedicated group of Garden Club of Palo Alto members working on the MOAH victory garden are also known as the “Dirty Dozen.” On July 22nd they showcased their garden project with an open house. Members of the Garden Club and the MOAH Board of Directors were invited to observe the completed summer victory garden. In addition to touring the victory garden, attendees were encouraged to help themselves to produce grown right here at MOAH. Among the historically appropriate harvest were varieties of squash, eggplant, peppers, pickling cucumbers, beans and more. An information table with historic publications, posters, and a research binder informed and educated visitors about victory garden history and the effort involved in creating the MOAH victory garden. This event was a wonderful way for MOAH to further connect with the community and to encourage more Garden Club members to get involved with MOAH.

Additionally, to celebrate their many accomplishments, the “Dirty Dozen” hosted a “Seeds to Supper” harvest dinner on September 16th at MOAH. The Williams Garden proved to be the perfect setting for the party, which included a delectable three-course meal under the twinkling fairy lights on the wisteria arbor. Each dish was prepared with ingredients from the victory garden, including basil pesto chicken, zucchini ribbon salad, green beans, Hubbard squash salad, and much more. This was certainly the perfect way for the “Dirty Dozen” to celebrate the success of the victory garden.

Are you interested in learning about gardening and working in the MOAH victory garden? MOAH and the Garden Club invite you to help us with the upcoming summer victory garden. No prior gardening knowledge is required, and this is a great way to learn about summer vegetable gardens while getting your hands dirty! If you would like to help, please contact Laurie Hassett at 650-321-1004 or mail@moah.org.
In Memoriam

MOAH recently lost three of its long-term volunteers, and we extend our deepest sympathies to their families.

Dr. Fernando Vescia  November 1, 1926 - September 2, 2014

Born to Italian parents in Egypt, Fernando Vescia came to the United States in 1948 to study medicine. In addition to practicing gastroenterology for over 30 years, Dr. Vescia taught medical history at Stanford University.

When MOAH moved into the Williams House, Dr. Vescia was one of several doctors and nurses who set up the doctor’s room at the house. Following that experience, he became a member of the museum’s Community Advisory Board. During his tenure, he made many excellent suggestions (always in his soft-spoken and gentlemanly way) and was always a good will ambassador for MOAH.

Renee Young  January 10, 1929 - September 23, 2014

Renee Young was born in Tacoma, Washington, and moved, with her husband Loren, to the Bay Area in the late 50s. After raising her two children, she worked for a not-for-profit business association.

Shortly after MOAH moved to the Williams House, Renee became a docent at the museum. In addition to her Friday docent shift, Renee also helped with museum tours. She always enjoyed meeting visitors and sharing information about MOAH with them as well as attending museum events and parties with her husband.

Bev Kinney

Bev happened upon MOAH about five years ago when she struck up a conversation with garden volunteers Buck Cox and Julie Norman. Bev expressed that she had recently moved to Palo Alto from across the Bay where she previously volunteered. In addition to having a love for volunteering, Bev mentioned that she enjoyed tending roses. Julie and Buck thought Bev was a great match for the MOAH gardens and she soon began volunteering at MOAH. Bev lived in the Weatherly condominium complex, right next door to MOAH, but was often found working in the MOAH gardens throughout the week. You may have noticed the pumpkins that Bev planted annually – a tradition we hope to continue.

How to Join and Get MOAH for your Money!

Museum members receive this newsletter; attend lectures free of charge; receive a discount on workshops and special events; and are invited to special members-only receptions for each exhibit.

- Livermore Circle .......... $ 5000
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- Sponsoring ................. $ 500
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MOAH EXHIBITS, CLASSES, EVENTS

Exhibits: Friday - Sunday, 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM (Group tours available at minimal fee)

*Museum of American Heritage A to Z*
In the Main Gallery
Now through March 15, 2015

*LEGO® Holiday Exhibit*
In the Frank Livermore Learning Center
Now through January 18, 2015

*Celebrating 25 Years of MOAH Exhibits*
In the Main Gallery
Opens April 17, 2015

Events:

*11th Annual Vintage Vehicles & Family Festival*
In partnership with Palo Alto May Fete
Saturday, May 2, 2015

*Repair Café Palo Alto*
Hosted by MOAH
Sundays in 2015: 2/22, 5/31, 8/30, 10/25

Classes:

*Solid State Electronics* with Larry Pizzella
Saturdays: 1/24, 1/31, 2/7, 2/14; 1:00-3:30PM

*Design for Superheroes* with Larry Pizzella
Sundays: 2/1, 2/8; 1:00-3:00PM

*Digital Logic* with Jim Wall
Saturdays: 2/28, 3/7, 3/14; 1:00-3:00PM

*3-D Modeling* with Jeff Risberg
Sundays: 3/1, 3/8; 1:00-3:30PM

*Build a Crystal Radio* with Larry Pizzella
Saturdays: 4/18, 4/25, 5/9, 5/16; 1:00-3:30PM

MOAH’s 25th Anniversary

2015 will mark the 25th anniversary of the Museum of American Heritage. We are in the process of planning a variety of special events to commemorate this significant milestone. We hope you will join us in celebrating MOAH’s silver anniversary,