



museum of
science+industry
chicago

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A LOOK AT THE MUSEUM'S HISTORY

The Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago (MSI) was founded in 1933 and has since celebrated more than 75 years of “inspiring the inventive genius” in our more than 175 million guests. Below are some highlights of our “hands-on” history and a peek at the amazing exhibits, experiences and memories that make MSI so unique.

- 1893** The Palace of Fine Arts, the Museum’s current building, is constructed for the World’s Columbian Exposition, which opened the same year.
- 1911** Julius Rosenwald, a philanthropist and chairman of Sears, Roebuck and Company, visits Munich’s Deutsches Museum with his young son. The boy is captivated by the science museum where exhibits move, and visitors are encouraged to push buttons and work levers. The experience sparks Julius Rosenwald’s determination to bring a similar institution to his hometown of Chicago.
- 1926** Rosenwald pledges \$3 million toward the creation of an industrial museum in Chicago and rallies the city’s business leaders in support of the project. Rosenwald dreams that the new museum will inspire the inventive genius in its guests, encouraging the next generation of engineers, scientists and doctors.
- Rosenwald identifies the old Palace of Fine Arts building in Jackson Park as a home for the planned Museum. The years have reduced the Palace to crumbling plaster, but Rosenwald vows to return the building to its former glory. A \$5 million bond issue is passed for its restoration.
- 1933** On June 19, MSI opens its great doors for the first time. It is the first museum in North America to feature interactive exhibits.
- One of the Museum’s first hands-on displays is the *Coal Mine*. The reproduction of an Illinois coal mine takes guests down “600 feet” in a real hoist to the bottom of a mineshaft.
- 1942** MSI opens its first *Christmas Around the World* celebration as a salute to the Allied nations in World War II.
- 1943** The 3,500-square-foot Sante Fe Model Railroad layout opens to explain the integration of the railroad with the country’s industry and agriculture. The exhibit is so popular, it remains at MSI for the next 60 years, when *The Great Train Story* opens.
- Yesterday’s Main Street*, an exhibit that showcases what would have been like circa 1910, opens.
- 1949** *Colleen Moore’s Fairy Castle* becomes part of the Museum’s permanent collection.
- 1950** MSI’s giant walk-through *Heart* opens to guests. It is constructed from plaster and chicken wire, and guests can stroll through the 16-foot structure to discover how the heart works. It quickly becomes a Museum favorite.

- 1954** The *U-505 Submarine* arrives at the Museum. Guests are able to board the legendary German U-boat whose capture by the United States Navy helped the Allies win World War II. Today, this prized artifact is one of only five U-boats still in existence and the only one in the United States.
- 1956** The first baby chick is hatched at the Museum. Now located in the *Genetics: Decoding Life* exhibit, the *Baby Chick Hatchery* still excites and amazes guests.
- 1961** *Mathematica: A World of Numbers* opens. Charles and Ray Eames, two designers who constantly discovered new ways to fascinate the public, created the exhibit, which was filled with colorful, mesmerizing demonstrations.
- 1971** The Apollo 8 capsule arrives and becomes the centerpiece of a growing space exhibit at MSI.
- 1986** The Henry Crown Space Center opens.
- 1994** MSI lands a United Boeing 727 aircraft at Chicago's Meigs Field. The jet is the largest plane ever to land at the airport. From Meigs Field, the 727 is towed across Lake Michigan and over Lake Shore Drive to the Museum, where it is cantilevered to the east balcony as part of the permanent *Take Flight* exhibit. *Take Flight* explains commercial flight and allows guest to experience a simulated take-off and landing.
- 1998** MSI opens an underground parking garage. The construction allows the Museum to restore its magnificent front lawn, which had previously been a parking lot. The newly conserved *Pioneer Zephyr* also opens and is showcased in its new exhibit area next to the garage.
- 2000** MSI opens the blockbuster *Titanic* exhibition and is the first institution to display artifacts from a recent dive to the legendary ship.
- 2002** *The Great Train Story*, a 3,500-square-foot model train exhibit that explores rail operations in America, opens. The permanent display replaces the beloved model railroad exhibit and features more than 30 trains racing along 1,400 feet of track on a cross-country trip between Chicago and Seattle.
- 2003** The Museum celebrates its 70th birthday and having welcome more than 160 million guests in its history.
- The permanent exhibit and technological wonder *ToyMaker 3000* debuts, featuring an automated assembly line of 12 robots that make 300 toy tops an hour.
- Live From the Heart* debuts and gives Chicago students the chance to imagine themselves as cardiologists in training by participating in an open-heart surgery via video conference with Advocate Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn, Ill. The program provides students and teachers in grades 8-12 a dramatic exploration of the human heart.
- ASIMO (Advanced Step in Innovative MObility), the world's most advanced humanoid robot, was demonstrated for the first time in Chicago at MSI.
- To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Wright brothers' first flight, the Museum, Wright Redux Association (volunteer craftsmen from Chicago's suburbs) and Packer Engineering rebuilt the 1903 Wright Flyer— a 40-foot-wide biplane—and attempted to fly the plane on the Museum's front lawn on Sept. 20. Lack of wind kept the plane from flying that day, but the team successfully flew the plane on October 14 at Clow International Airport in Bolingbrook, Ill. The replica is now part of MSI's permanent collection.
- 2004** Chicago native and Nobel Laureate Dr. James Watson dedicated a DNA double-helix structure to the MSI's *Genetics: Decoding Life* exhibit on January 20. Watson frequently visited the Museum as a youth and would later change the world of science and medicine when he discovered DNA's double-helix structure in 1953.

In April, as part of the largest restoration effort in the Museum's history, the U-505 German submarine is moved almost 1,000 feet and lowered into its new home on the northeast side of the Museum.

Action! An Adventure in Moviemaking, a temporary exhibit developed by MSI, opens in May. *Action!* takes visitors to behind the scenes of Hollywood to explore the process of filmmaking. After its close at MSI, the exhibit continues to tour various institutions around the country.

2005 In June, the new *U-505 Submarine* exhibit opens to the public. The Museum's prized vessel is now part of an indoor, 35,000-square-foot interactive exhibit that tells the story of its dramatic capture.

Gunther von Hagens' BODY WORLDS: The Anatomical Exhibition of Real Human Bodies, an exhibit that had awed more than 16 million people around the world with the complexity of the human body, makes its Midwest debut at MSI in February.

2006 MSI develops and opens *Leonardo da Vinci: Man, Inventor Genius* in April, 2006. This exhibit is the most comprehensive exhibit on Leonardo da Vinci to be presented in the United States.

2007 The Museum opens a renovated Transportation Gallery, which interprets the history of flight in a new, spectacular overhead display. *The Farm*, becomes *Farm Tech*, a modernized exhibit addressing current farming technologies and improvements, and the Henry Crown Space Center is renovated to include new exhibits, interactive units and displays on the history and future of space travel.

2008 MSI's 75th Anniversary is celebrated throughout the year with a special six-day celebration held in June. The landmark year is also heralded with original, world-premiere temporary exhibits including *The Glass Experience*, an exploration of the science and art behind glass and glassmaking; and *Smart Home: Green and Wired*, a three-story, eco-friendly exhibit home built on the Museum's property.

In April, MSI announces its \$205 million capital campaign, the largest since its inception, and its new vision: to inspire and motivate children to achieve their full potential in science, technology, medicine and engineering. To support this vision, the Museum's capital campaign will help create four iconic new exhibits and a wealth of education programs for its new Center for the Advancement of Science Education.

2009 MSI hosts the world premiere of *Harry Potter: The Exhibition* from April through September. *You! The Experience*, a 15,000-square-foot iconic permanent exhibit about human health and wellness, opens in October.

2010 In February, MSI reveals a new logo, the first new logo in more than 10 years.

In March, the 26,000-square-foot *Science Storms* opens to guests. This groundbreaking permanent exhibit reveals the extraordinary science behind some of nature's most powerful and compelling phenomena—tornadoes, lightning, fire, tsunamis, sunlight, avalanches and atoms in motion—and includes a 40-foot tornado, a 20-foot avalanche disk and a giant Tesla coil that produces lightning.

In October, the Museum welcomes its first roommate in the innovative *Month at the Museum* program. After an amazing 1,500 applications from around the world, Chicagoan Kate McGroarty won the chance to live at MSI 24/7 and share her adventures with guests and the world through social media.

2011 In March, MSI hosts the U.S. premiere of *BODY WORLDS & The Cycle of Life*. This iteration of the *BODY WORLDS* exhibits reveals how the body changes through its lifetime.