

A satellite image of Earth from space, showing the curvature of the planet. The top half shows a view of the Pacific Ocean and the western coast of North America. The bottom half shows a closer view of the Gulf of Mexico and the Yucatan Peninsula. A horizontal band of teal color is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the report's title and year.

Annual Report

2014 | 2015

San Diego Natural History Museum

the**NAT**



Mission

To interpret the natural world through research, education, and exhibits; to promote understanding of the evolution and diversity of southern California and the peninsula of Baja California; and to inspire in all a respect for nature and the environment.

Clark Dry Lake, Anza Borrego Desert State Park



Dear Museum Friends,

Where did 24 years go? When I applied for the executive director position at the San Diego Natural History Museum in 1991, my colleagues in the museum profession warned me that because of the Museum's poor reputation at the time, it would be the end of my career. They were right, but not for that reason! I will retire from the Museum on June 30, 2016, exactly 25 years to the day from when I started.

Many people have asked me why we have been so successful. I believe the most strategic decision we made was to focus on our region of southern California and the peninsula of Baja California. By doing that, the Museum has become relevant to the people who live here as well as those visiting from elsewhere. Our research has led to the naming of many new species of plants and animals, supported important conservation efforts, and resulted in many books and scientific papers of great value for professional and amateur naturalists. Our flagship film *Ocean Oasis* about Baja California and the Sea of Cortés has been seen

by millions of people all over the world and is used extensively in education programs throughout the Baja California peninsula.

We would have been limited in what we could achieve had we not more than doubled our space with a new addition to the Museum in April 2001. This new space has allowed us to explore the geologic and paleontologic prehistory of our region in *Fossil Mysteries* and the biodiversity of our region in *Coast to Cactus in Southern California*, both permanent exhibitions at the Museum. The Legler Benbough exhibition hall enabled us to feature high-profile traveling exhibitions such as the *Dead Sea Scrolls*, *A Day in Pompeii*, *Body Worlds*, *Titanic*, *The Discovery of King Tut*, *Maya: Hidden Worlds Revealed*, and many others. The Kaplan Theater with its 3D projection system has delighted our guests with many spectacular natural history films.

In my final year at the Museum, I am looking forward to the construction of the *Eleanor and Jerome Navarra Library Special*

Collections Gallery. We have spectacular treasures in our collection that few have ever seen, and we will have 3,000 square feet of new exhibition space to display them.

I am proud of it all, but one of the greatest achievements has been the talented team of board members, staff, volunteers, Museum members and donors who have made it all possible. The future of this Museum is bright indeed, and with new leadership you can expect to see exciting new exhibitions, expanded education programs, increased use of technology for outreach, and important new research initiatives.

It's been a great ride! I'll be here until June 30, 2016. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



Michael W. Hager, Ph.D.
President & CEO



A 25 Year Legacy

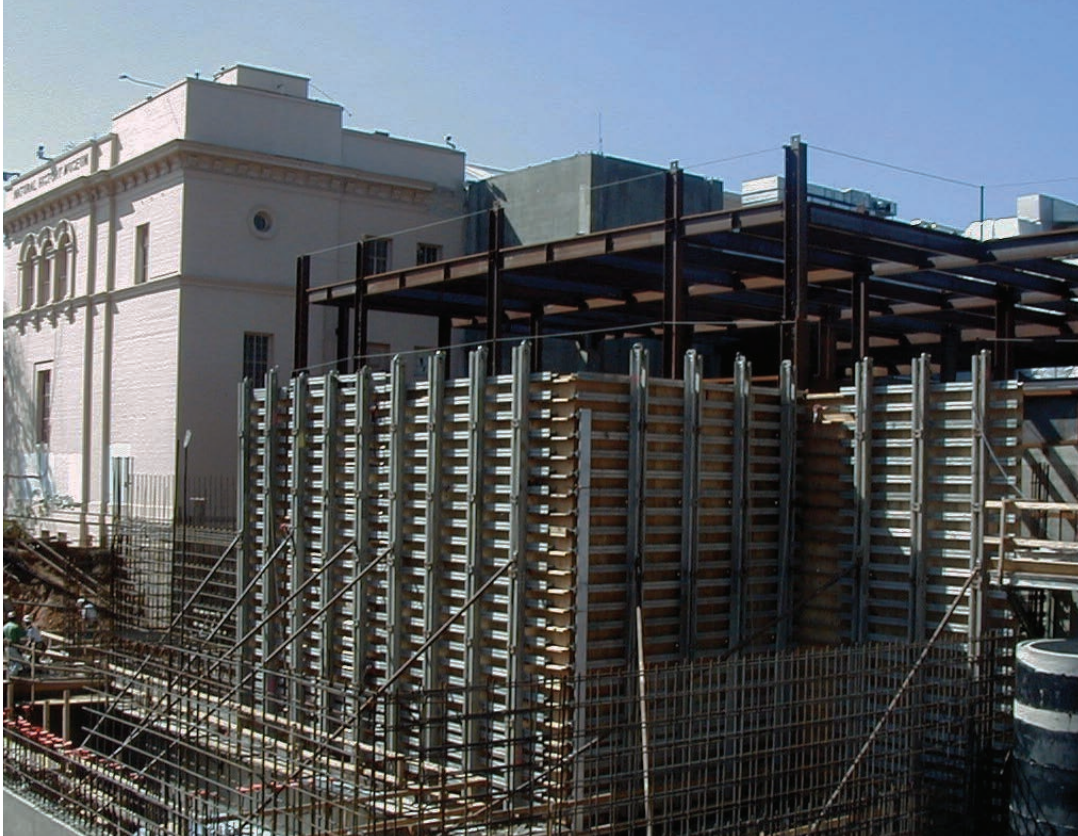
For 25 years, Dr. Michael “Mick” Hager has been at the helm of the San Diego Natural History Museum, an institution that has not only flourished under his leadership, but with his guidance has arguably been brought back from being on life support. It is hard to exaggerate the dire state that the San Diego Natural History Museum was in at the time of Mick’s arrival in San Diego. When he began his tenure in 1991, the *Los Angeles Times* heralded his appointment by stating, in a headline, “Can Mick Hager save the San Diego Natural History Museum from years of malaise?”

The 1980s had been a stressful period for the institution, and the financial state of the Museum was in complete disarray. He was the ninth director in 13 years, and the Museum had been suffering from a lack of direction and forward momentum for some time. Fundraising was non-existent, space for exhibits was inadequate, and attendance was poor, pointing to a desperate need for strong leadership. Clearly, Mick had his work cut out for him.

Remaining true to the proud legacy of the then 117-year-old institution, Mick immediately took on the

challenge to turn the Museum around. As a result, for the past 25 years he has presided over an institution that has gone from an annual budget of \$2.1 million to one of \$13 million, and from a staff of 60 to more than 150 employees and approximately 800 volunteers.

Early on, Mick worked to establish a new strategic plan which outlined steps to be taken over the next 10 years and completed by 2001. His most significant priority was a mission statement that would refocus on the contiguous region of southern California and Baja California. This gave the



A Dinosaur's White Knight

■ Culture: Can Mick Hager save the San Diego Natural History Museum from years of malaise? He thinks so, and so do many others.

By BRIAN ALEXANDER
SPECIAL TIMES

SAN DIEGO—Dr. Michael (Mick) Hager is not fooling himself. He knows he walked into a tough job in July when he became the executive director of the San Diego Natural History Museum. A card from a friend at the National Science Foundation

SAN DIEGO COUNTY

sums up the task ahead. It shows a small knight standing before a very large dragon. "No Guts, No Glory," the caption says.

Three months into the job, Hager is finding out just how much guts his new job will take. The Balboa Park museum's finances have been in a chronic state of disarray. As recently as 1988, an auditor from the National Science Foundation could not complete an investigation into the museum's budget—he could not find the records.

Last January, Allen Shaw, then part-time interim director, said the museum was more than \$124,000 in debt. Hager's latest audit has discovered the museum is "at least" \$300,000 in debt.

Staff morale, poor for more than a decade, hit an all-time low in December when eight employees, four from the science staff, were fired in a cost-cutting move. The museum's library, nationally famous for its extensive collections, had its budget slashed by 80%. A debate raged over whether the museum should import blockbuster exhibits or stress home-grown science.

Hager has spent most of the past three months assessing which direction to go in. Although calling the museum's collections "amazing," he said he was shocked to discover that the museum seemed to have no active plans.

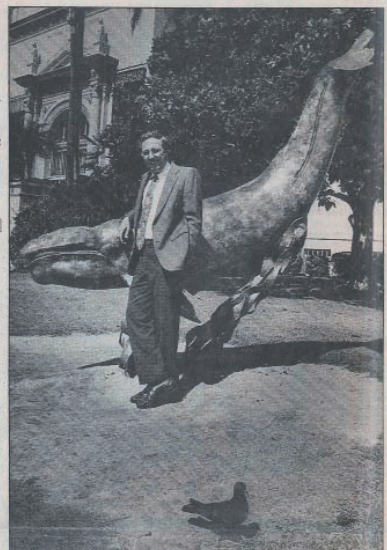
"There was no exhibit schedule, no accurate budget, no long-term state of projects."

"This place was filled with what I call ad-hoceries," he said of the museum, which has a \$2.2-million annual budget.

Went of all, fund raising was moribund. Hager scored an immediate success by winning a \$100,000 grant from the local Sefton Foundation. The grant will be used to support long-term planning, a planning committee of staff, board members and civic leaders has already been formed.

The goal, Hager said, is to develop a mission statement and strategies to help the museum find greater relevance to the community.

Another grant of \$184,000 for the museum's botany collection came in September from the National Science Foundation.



Mick Hager has been director of Natural History Museum in Balboa Park since July.

Hager has also set up a three-year exhibit schedule that stresses what he calls "mini-blockbusters," traveling exhibits—mainly from other sources—designed for audience appeal. The first of these will be "The Age of the Dinosaur" set to open Feb. 1. Hager said this first show will provide a critical test of his plan to save the museum.

Other plans include a possible change in the admission price from the \$5 adult rate, a fee Hager thinks is sometimes "not worth it." Hager said he is considering either lowering the fee or finding more ways to add value to the price.

Before Hager, the museum had become a virtual revolving door for directors. Hager is the museum's ninth director since 1976, the 16th since 1964. Past directors have been frustrated by their inability to push the 117-year-old museum forward. The building, which has never been expanded to its planned size, is deteriorating, exhibit space is small and attendance sagging.

Hager's job is to turn things around.

Please see HAGER, B6



Clockwise from left: Mick at his first museum job 50 years ago, as curator of natural history at the Davenport Public Museum in Iowa; construction of the building expansion underway in 1999; children and civic leaders cut the ribbon on the new building in 2000; a 1991 L.A. Times article; Mick and Curator of Paleontology Tom Deméré present patron Tom Sefton with a fossil walrus named in Sefton's honor; Mick guiding a group of students through the Museum in 1991.

Museum the ability to concentrate on a region that was at once immeasurably diverse and still within reach of the Museum's curatorial expertise. Among other main points to be achieved were the creation of the Biodiversity Research Center of the Californias (the research arm of the Museum), a binational Environmental Science Education Center, a commitment to a major addition to the historic 1930s building, and a focus on long-term plans for exhibitions.

Mick's special talents for fundraising were increasingly demonstrated over time. In

addition, Mick worked to set up an exhibition schedule planned for three years out, and stressed the importance of increasing relevance for the greater San Diego community with the Museum's programs. He involved a wide group of community members and brought a larger group of San Diegans into the Museum "family."

During his tenure, Mick, through his strong leadership, has achieved many remarkable and noteworthy accomplishments. Affectionately known as our "Chief Fossil," he spearheaded a \$34 million capital campaign that entailed extensive

fundraising and planning with a broad range of community stakeholders. These plans resulted in the building of a 90,000-square-foot building addition designed to bring the original historic building up to speed: enlarge and update exhibition space and research labs and realign office space and collections areas; install new education classrooms; and open a multi-use, 300-seat giant screen theater. The building was finished in 2001, and elaborate security and environmental controls for the modern lower level Legler Benbough exhibition space were completed. This enabled the



Clockwise from upper left: Breaking ground in 1998 for the building expansion: Mick, Christine Kehoe, Peter Kovacs, Christy Walton, Dallas Clark, Mary Clark, Norm Roberts, and Gelin Roberts; Mick with a duckbill dinosaur at the Museum of the Rockies in 1989; the January 2015 ribbon cutting for Coast to Cactus in Southern California: Ann Laddon, Sal Giametta representing County Supervisor Ron Roberts, Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins, County Supervisor Dave Roberts with his daughter, Mick, Carol Wilson, Dennis Wilson, and Board President Jeff Block; Mick Hager, Curator of Natural History, Davenport Public Museum, 1967

Museum to host high-profile traveling exhibitions like *Dead Sea Scrolls*, *Pompeii*, and *Body Worlds*, all of which had very stringent requirements for temperature control, light levels, security, and other environmental conditions.

Mick was directly involved in the funding, planning, and installation of more than 30,000 square feet of new permanent exhibitions, including *Fossil Mysteries*, which opened in 2006 and provides a detailed view of our region in prehistoric times—dating back to 75 million years ago. One of the biggest accomplishments happened in January 2015 when

we opened *Coast to Cactus in Southern California*, an exhibition that complements *Fossil Mysteries*, taking the visitor on a journey through all the habitats unique to southern California with its vast biodiversity. Together these two exhibitions provide a comprehensive experience of the past and current environment of this special place we call home.

Mick has also been spearheading the creation of our latest permanent exhibition, which will be located in the Eleanor and Jerome Navarra Library Special Collections Gallery within the Research Library. This exhibition is in planning and

development stages and will open in early summer 2016, just in time to serve as the capstone event before his retirement.

Never at a loss for new ideas and initiatives, Mick has been a true mover and shaker at this institution for the past 25 years, with accomplishments large and small. Always humble and true to his Midwestern roots, he can look around and see his ideas made real in the building, the exhibitions, and the staff that make up the San Diego Natural History Museum we know today. We have been fortunate to have him as our leader over the past quarter of a century.



The Special Projects Campaign Meets and Exceeds its \$16 Million Goal

In December 2012, the Museum board approved an ambitious \$14.9 million goal to fund three strategic projects: *Coast to Cactus in Southern California*; the Research Library renovation and expansion and its associated exhibition, *Extraordinary Ideas from Ordinary People: A History of Citizen Science*; and bridge funding to support operations during the 30-month campaign.

The Campaign launched with more than \$9 million already in hand, including a \$7 million grant from the California Department of Parks and Recreation in support of *Coast to Cactus*, and \$2 million of bridge

funding generously donated by Dale Clark and Nita van der Werff in honor of their parents, Mary and Dallas Clark.

One year later, the Campaign was moving forward ahead of schedule. Realizing that construction projects—especially those in an 82-year-old historic building—often result in higher than anticipated costs and complications, the Museum board approved a new goal of \$16 million for the Special Projects Campaign.

During this time, the fabrication of *Coast to Cactus* began in earnest, with highly detailed, miniaturized

components being sent to the Museum's exhibition partner, Science Museum of Minnesota, for production. Every leaf, flower, animal, and rock was painstakingly rendered to be as lifelike as possible, from the tiniest details to natural blemishes.

Throughout this process, countless donors toured our exhibit development space and then the renovated—though still empty—Dennis and Carol Wilson Hall of Biodiversity, as well as feasting their eyes on the treasures Margaret Dykens, registrar and director of the Research Library, would pull from the rare book room. This gave donors a glimpse of the exquisite antiquarian books and art which will be used to tell the story of *Extraordinary Ideas*. Parallel planning for the Library renovation resulted in an architectural model which allowed donors to visualize how the space

would be transformed and, for the first time, open to visitors.

The Museum's supporters were captivated and responded generously. A total of 396 gifts were received in support of the Special Projects Campaign, totaling \$16.7 million! A staggering 123 behind-the-scenes tours and solicitations were made over 26 months, as well as outreach to the Museum's full constituency and volunteer groups.

Coast to Cactus opened to rave reviews on January 17, 2015, and 120,000 visitors have already explored "this amazing place we call home." Our Museum docents and educators have embraced this new exhibition and have fully integrated it into our environmental science curriculum. Together with *Fossil Mysteries*, we at last fulfill the promise of the new building and our mission to tell the natural

history story of southern California and Baja California.

The Museum's exhibit development and design team is now focusing their considerable talents on the content of *Extraordinary Ideas from Ordinary People*. Simultaneously, construction has been initiated on the renovations in the Research Library which will house the new exhibition.

The projects realized by the success of the Special Projects Campaign represent the capstones to Mick's 25-year tenure at the San Diego Natural History Museum. They reflect his vision and passionate leadership of the Museum. Thank you for your participation and support of these important additions which will enrich our community for years to come.

This page and previous page: Visitors enjoy Coast to Cactus in Southern California, which opened in January 2015.



Special Projects Campaign Donors

With appreciation, we thank the following donors who generously supported the Special Projects Campaign through single year and multi-year pledge commitments.

Leadership Partners

Joan and Irwin Jacobs
Price Philanthropies Foundation
J.W. Sefton Foundation

\$1,000,000 and above

California Department of Parks
and Recreation
Ms. Dale Hollis Clark in memory of
Mary and Dallas Clark
Jerome and Eleanor Navarra
Eleanor and Jerome Navarra
Foundation 🌱
Nita and Henk van der Werff in
memory of Mary and Dallas Clark
Dennis and Carol Wilson

\$100,000-999,999

Thomas C. Ackerman Foundation
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The Legler Benbough Foundation
Stephen and Mary Birch Foundation
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The Dunham Family in Memory
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Bert McIntosh
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The Covey
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The Docents
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Susan and Craig Evanco
Karen and Steven Garsson
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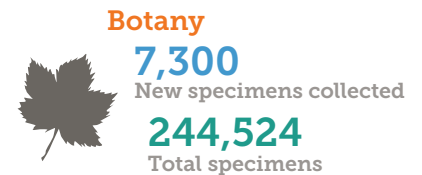
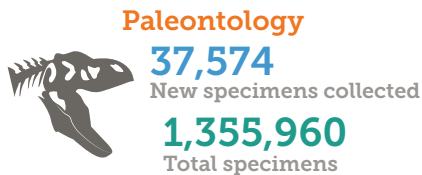
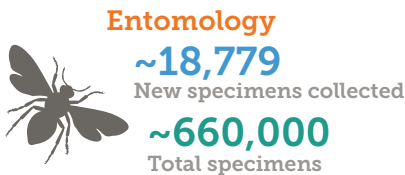
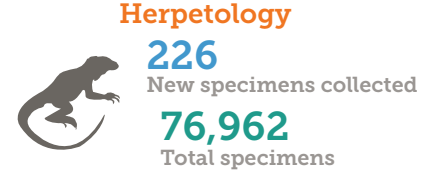
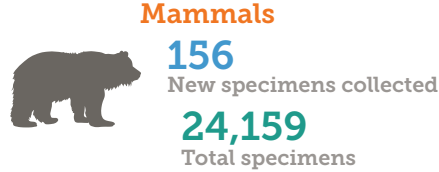
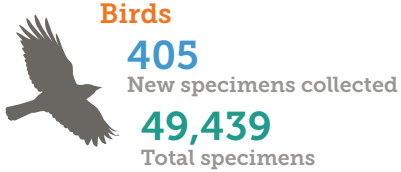
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Mr. and Mrs. Gaylord Stickney
Gwen Stoughton
Mrs. Edna K. Tipton
Rebecca Vesterfelt and Louis Cohen
Dr. Mary M. Yang

🌱 The San Diego Foundation



Collections By the Numbers

Total Number of Specimens **~7.5 million**



A Commitment to Research

A natural history museum president's attitude towards research can dramatically impact not only research output but also financial stability. In a story as old as time, it is not uncommon to look at a museum's history and see a swinging pendulum of past executive directors who either thought research was king or that "we need to run this place like a business." The "all business" model can often lead to a stale museum lacking heart, whereas the unfettered research model is too often financially unsustainable. When Mick Hager was interviewed for the position of executive director in 1991, he was asked to address this very issue when a member of the interview committee asked, "Should we be an exhibits and education museum or should we be a research-focused museum?" His answer was simple, "Yes."

His balanced philosophy set the Museum on an unprecedented journey of physical growth and a renaissance of the regional

museum in which we are so firmly rooted. Nowhere is this clearer than in the Museum's collections. With Mick's support of the San Diego County Plant Atlas, the Botany collections for the County have more than doubled in the last 10 years. As part of his balanced philosophy, Mick encouraged Tom Deméré, now curator of paleontology, to bring his private paleontology salvage company into the Museum as a revenue generating arm of the Paleontology Department. Since then, the Paleontology collections have grown exponentially while generating revenue to underwrite research at the Museum.

Under Mick's leadership, the Museum rallied around a regional-based mission similar to its roots as a young society in the 1800s, leading to a rebirth of scientific surveys, expeditions, and binational research collaboration. From citizen-science driven efforts like the San Diego County Bird Atlas to mule-driven expeditions into the heart of the Sierra

Cacachilas in Baja California Sur, the Museum has underwritten a large array of projects to help us better understand our region. And while projects like our binational expeditions create troves of interesting scientific information, they also generate real conservation and management outcomes like the removal of feral goats from Isla Guadalupe and the designation of the islands of the Gulf of California as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Twenty-five years of balanced leadership has left research at the Museum in a wonderful place. Certainly there have been times when belts were tightened, but while other museums saw collections shut down, Mick encouraged entrepreneurship in the research staff. Because of Mick's leadership, today the Biodiversity Research Center of the Californias generates research, collections, outreach, and revenue: a balanced recipe for relevance and sustainability.



Ranger Kim Duclo offers a tour of Balboa Park to summer campers.

Public Programs by the Numbers

San Diego Programs

Nature to You Loan Library

591 loans reaching **100,955** people

School Programs

784 programs reaching **42,078** people

Family and Public Programs

198 programs serving **26,355** participants

Museum Access Funds

7,627 students from Title 1 schools served

Baja California Programs: Smart Schools, Green Practices

Workshops facilitated **17**

Teachers trained **132**

Students trained **437**

Students impacted **7,920**

Individuals benefited from program **26,885**

Visitation by the Numbers



449,472
people visited the Museum



518,456
people visited sdnat.org

Making an Impact on Visitors

Our visitors' experiences are paramount in what we do, and Mick made several institutional changes over the years that have greatly enhanced that experience. In 1996, the Museum founded the Environmental Science Education Center (ESEC). This comprehensive resource provides programs at the Museum, in schools, and outdoors that inspire understanding, respect, and responsible action for our environment. Through our many programs in the United States and Baja California, we are able to serve more than 160,000 people annually.

More recently, the ESEC, Exhibits, and Volunteer departments were united into a single Public Programs division that could better serve the public. Now, these departments are defining new ways to think about, explore, and develop effective ways to engage visitors, collaboratively resulting in an entirely new and improved visitor experience.

Coast to Cactus in Southern California is an excellent example of this. Our Exhibits team included a representative from the Education Department who was actively involved in content development for the exhibition and

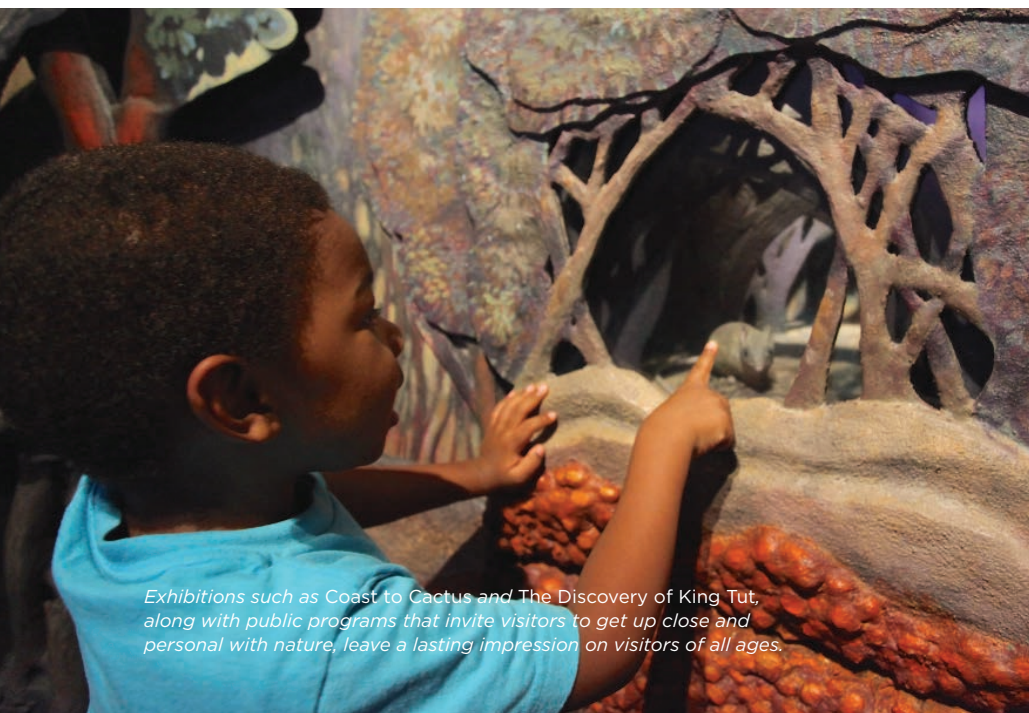
brought the voice of Education to the table. In translating exhibit labels and the script for the *Desert at Night* story theater, a staff member who works in our binational education program assisted the Exhibits team with colloquial language to ensure the Spanish we were presenting was accurate to our region. Volunteers and Docents continue to work with our Education and Exhibits staff to develop activity kits for use in the gallery and programming for school children. Curriculum for grades K-8 is currently being developed with input from the Exhibits team, Education staff, and teacher advisory groups. These departments are becoming dependent upon one another, which in turn, creates a more robust and engaging experience for our members, the public, teachers, and students.

During this past year, efforts have also been put toward making the Museum more inclusive. One initiative involves visitors with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD), which affects about one in 68 children. However, as of March 2015, not one museum in San Diego was addressing the needs of these visitors. We launched ASD Mornings in April and open

the Museum early one day each month for those on the autism spectrum and their friends, families, and caregivers. This innovative program encourages individuals to explore, play, and discover the treasures the NAT has to offer in an environment that is comfortable for them.

Additional accomplishments from the year include the delivery of an exciting lecture program (most notably a sold-out talk by world-renowned archaeologist Dr. Zahi Hawass during *The Discovery of King Tut*), refocusing our school programs to align with the newly adopted Next Generation Science Standards, and being selected as a pilot site for after school programming through the PrimeTime Extended Day Program at the San Diego Unified School District.

All of these changes could not have been realized without the right leadership and support. Mick's openness to new ideas and his willingness to try new initiatives has given the Public Programs staff the ability to think collaboratively and creatively, to experiment, and to assess the needs of our community.



Exhibitions such as Coast to Cactus and The Discovery of King Tut, along with public programs that invite visitors to get up close and personal with nature, leave a lasting impression on visitors of all ages.



Volunteers by the Numbers

Canyoneers

led **72** hikes for **1,358** people,
including **10** hikes for **308** students and chaperones



759
Total volunteers

Docents

reached **4,077** students in **104** classes.



15,353
Research and Collections
volunteer hours

Whalers

reached **30,437** passengers on **302** cruises
through Hornblower Cruises & Events.

58,985
Total volunteer hours

The Board of Directors

donated **1,602** hours of their time.



\$1.5 million
(per Bureau of Labor Statistics)
Dollar value of volunteer hours

13 high school students

worked in the departments of Herpetology, Botany,
Paleontology, Entomology, and Birds and Mammals.

Social Media by the Numbers

f **23,562**
Facebook likes

 **6,926**
Twitter followers

 **595**
Instagram followers

You **Tube** **34,949**
YouTube video views

Getting Social

In addition to managing a blog, located at sdnat.org, the Museum is active on several social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram.

These platforms give us the opportunity to develop a relationship with our fans, friends, and followers. We do this by asking questions, sharing information about our programs and research efforts, and seeing what people think—not only about us but also about other topics. We also like to see what people are doing and enjoying when they come to theNAT. Here are some of our favorite NAT moments as captured on Instagram, which was launched this past fiscal year.

Follow theNAT on Twitter and Instagram (@sdnhm) and join the discussion on Facebook (www.facebook.com/SanDiegoNaturalHistoryMuseum).



45 likes
samjeet I'm friends with Ms. Frizzle. It's not that big of a deal but it's kind of a big deal || #VSCOcam #theNat



23 likes
thehomebrewersd Saturdays at the park with some of San Diego's oldest residents. #sandiego #thenat #balboapark



marina_hotseatsalon, ritanoemi_, damascusapparel
chocoshorty Crazy looking nasal cavity! #skull #nasaicavity #nose #skeleton #sdnat



17 likes
dkbejo Super awesome time at #thenat #rubenflleetsciencecenter with these silly brothers.



46 likes
spenceraudio Love my #loco #familia - Today's excursion - #theNAT #sandiego hanging with #megalodon



alexis.xoxox, ladyk528
ofeliapt Proof that we are spinning! #foucaultpendulum #sdnat

Visitors learn about humpback whales (pictured here) and other marine life from the Museum Whalers, a volunteer group that recently celebrated their 10th anniversary.



Bringing Nature to Life

Volunteers are vital to the San Diego Natural History Museum for the countless hours of time they give in support of Museum projects, both large and small. Mick Hager is a vocal champion of the volunteer corps as a whole and gratefully refers to them as our “unpaid staff.”

This year we are proud to highlight the 10 year anniversary of the founding of the Museum Whalers. From an initial group of 25 interested volunteers, the Whalers have grown to 64 active members. Potential Whalers participate in a robust eight session training program, including presentations by marine mammal scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. With the waters off of San Diego providing an ideal location for observing migrating whales as they make their way to their wintering grounds, the Museum Whalers’

partnership with Hornblower Whale Watching & Events provides enrichment to the whale watching experience. The Whalers help educate the public about the biodiversity in our oceans by staffing two seasons of whale watching cruises each year, viewing gray whales from December through April, and blue whales—the world’s largest mammal—from June through September. In addition, fin whales, humpbacks, minke whales, false killer whales, and pilot whales, not to mention dolphins—Pacific white-sided, common, bottlenose, and even orcas—are regularly sighted on these cruises. Whalers share their knowledge and answer questions, and have a great time cruising in the Bay or out on the open ocean while doing this.

“I have participated as a Museum Whaler for 10 years, a program Mick supported from its inception,” said Sheri Knox. “I am thrilled to

have this volunteer opportunity, and I know we are appreciated by Mick because he tells us so every time we see him. His time at the Museum might be coming to an end, but his influence and vision will last for years to come.”

In addition to the Whalers, other Museum volunteers in outreach roles include the Docents and the Canyoneers. Our science departments of Paleontology, Botany, Entomology, Birds & Mammals, and Herpetology have more than 250 steady volunteers. Other volunteers also serve behind the scenes; for instance, in Accounting/Administration we have a loyal volunteer in Howard Knop. Discussing Mick’s impending retirement, Howard said, “Mick is so approachable and easy to talk to... how many people in his position would take the time to find out what interests a volunteer?”

Financials

We are pleased to report that for the fourth year in a row, the Museum recorded an operating surplus and continued to enhance its financial condition with net assets increasing by nearly \$4 million.

The most significant year-over-year difference in revenue is reflected in contributed revenue, which increased from \$8.9 million to \$14.7 million. In April 2014, the Museum received an extraordinary estate commitment totaling \$15 million. The gift was directed to the retirement of the Museum's \$12.5 million in long-term debt and the remaining balance of the gift was directed to the general endowment. The retirement of the debt spanned across both FY 2014 and FY 2015 with \$8.4 million and \$4.2 million, respectively, included in the contributed revenue columns. In addition, the \$16M Special Projects Campaign was completed and surpassed its goal, adding to the strong finish.

Admissions also had a banner year, with an increase of \$2.2 million over FY 2014. The Museum had two upcharge exhibitions, *The Discovery of King Tut* and *Real Pirates*, which greatly contributed to admissions revenue. In addition, in January we opened the new permanent exhibition *Coast to Cactus in Southern California*.

The Museum's expenses stayed relatively constant as we continued to focus on the most effective ways to deliver our programs and meet our mission. The development of *Coast to Cactus* was completed in FY 2015 and is reflected in the decrease in permanent exhibition expenses from \$4.5 million to \$1.9 million. The marketing and communications expenses increased due to additional advertising for the traveling exhibitions. Most traveling exhibition contracts require the Museum to deploy substantial advertising; these efforts are, in turn,

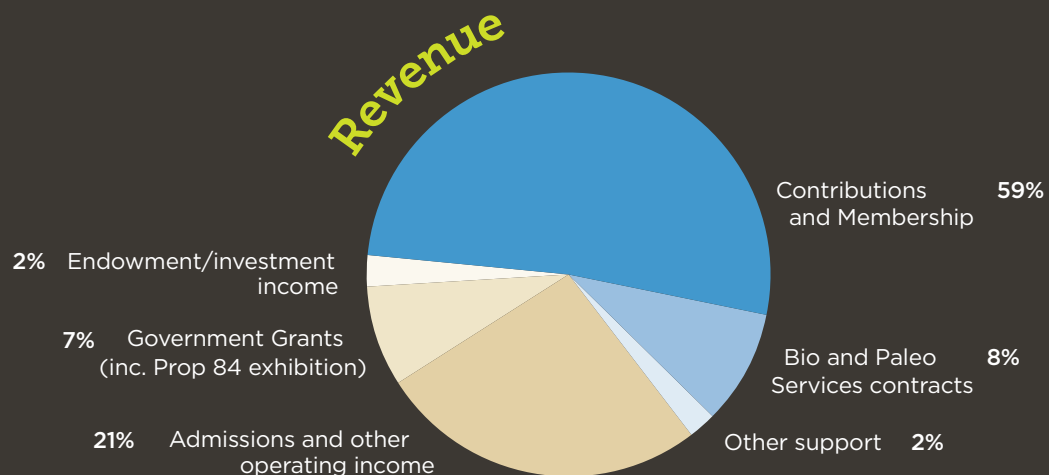
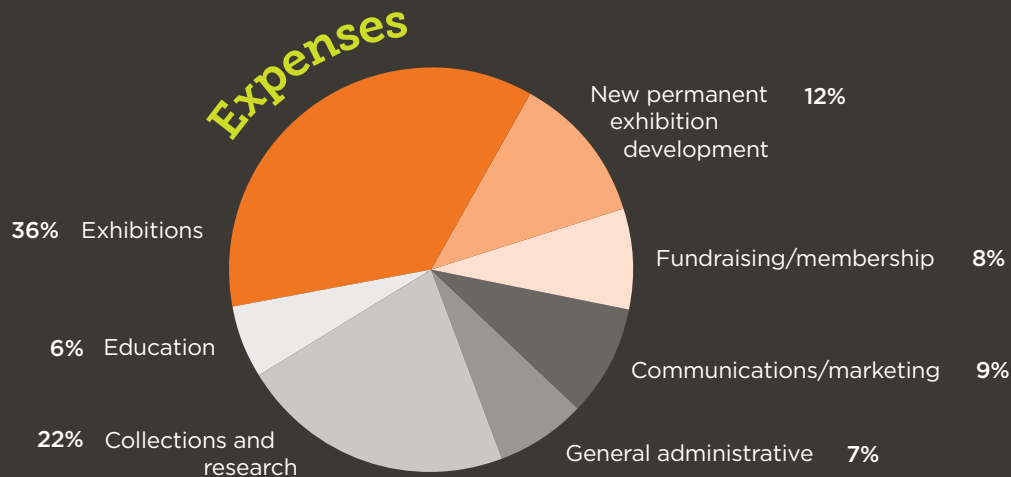
a significant contributing factor to the increase in admissions revenue.

The Museum's financial condition is reflected in the Statement of Financial Position at right. Although cash declined due to the \$8.4 million in debt retirement, the Museum's liabilities also declined from \$10.7 million to \$2.1 million. This resulted in the Museum's net assets increasing from \$43 million to \$47 million.

The Museum's focus on operating sustainably, combined with generous gifts and strong admissions, has resulted in a strong financial condition that allows us to invest in our mission of providing educational programs, exhibitions, and scientific research to our region.



Susan Loveall
Vice President, CFO and COO



Operating Revenue and Expenses July 1, 2014–June 30, 2015

	Fiscal Year 2015		Fiscal Year 2014	
Revenue and Support				
Admissions and other operating income	\$5,326,573	21%	\$3,033,895	15%
Bio and Paleo Services contracts	\$2,105,259	8%	\$2,442,691	12%
Endowment/investment income	\$430,033	2%	\$488,307	2%
Contributions & Membership	\$14,724,953	59%	\$8,892,749	45%
Government Grants (inc. Prop 84 exhibition grant)	\$1,853,009	7%	\$4,535,000	23%
Other support	\$382,744	2%	\$377,608	2%
Total Revenue and Support	\$24,822,571	100%	\$19,770,250	100%
Expenses				
Collections and research	\$3,356,566	22%	\$3,568,323	22%
Education	\$995,400	6%	\$937,172	6%
Exhibitions	\$5,529,270	36%	\$3,741,352	24%
New permanent exhibition development	\$1,853,009	12%	\$4,535,000	29%
Fundraising/membership	\$1,266,843	8%	\$1,143,013	7%
Communications/marketing	\$1,438,238	9%	\$917,026	6%
General administrative	\$1,058,575	7%	\$1,033,047	7%
Total Expenses	\$15,497,901	100%	\$15,874,933	100%
Excess of Operating Revenue and Support Over Expenses	\$9,324,670		\$3,895,317	

Financial Position

	Fiscal Year 2015	Fiscal Year 2014
Assets		
Cash	\$2,885,568	\$7,696,681
Investments and perpetual trusts	\$21,086,986	\$15,867,243
Receivables and prepaid expenses	\$4,519,589	\$4,666,035
Estate contribution receivable	\$-	\$3,894,970
Property, equipment (less accumulated depreciation)	\$20,658,580	\$21,710,872
Total Assets	\$49,150,723	\$53,835,801
Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$1,766,377	\$1,981,774
Other short-term liabilities	\$352,898	\$339,983
Notes payable	\$-	\$8,407,568
Total Liabilities	\$2,119,275	\$10,729,325
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	\$20,629,508	\$12,754,515
Temporarily restricted	\$11,776,759	\$15,858,972
Permanently restricted	\$14,625,182	\$14,492,989
Total Net Assets	\$47,031,449	\$43,106,476
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$49,150,724	\$53,835,801

Further detail on the Museum's financial results can be obtained from our FY 2015 audit available at sdnat.org.

Scientific Publications

Aburto-Oropeza, O., **E. Ezcurra**, J. Moxley, A. Sánchez-Rodríguez, I. Mascareñas-Osorio, C. Sánchez-Ortiz, B. Erisman, and T. Ricketts. 2015. A framework to assess the health of rocky reefs linking geomorphology, community assemblage, and fish biomass. *Ecological Indicators* 52: 353–361.

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Saturday, February 28, 2015

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J. Robert Beyster 1924–2014

Dr. J. Robert Beyster, the founder, former CEO and chairman of Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) was almost equally well known as a San Diego community leader and philanthropist. Dr. Beyster founded SAIC in 1969 and oversaw its growth from a small scientific consulting firm into a multibillion-dollar scientific and technology contractor for the government and private sector, solving problems in communications, logistics, and information technology.

SAIC became one of the largest employee-owned companies in the

United States. Employee ownership was a bedrock conviction of Dr. Beyster's, and a way of rewarding performance and sharing wealth based on people's contributions.

Dr. Beyster served as an Ensign in World War II and was based on a destroyer out of Norfolk, Virginia. After WWII, Beyster worked as a research physicist at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, where he met his wife-to-be, Betty. An accomplished physicist, he held four degrees from the University of Michigan including a doctorate in physics.

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In Memoriam

The following individuals represent members, donors and volunteers who passed away this fiscal year. We are thankful for their commitment to the Museum and wish to honor their memories.

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If we have omitted your name or made an error, please accept our apologies and help us correct our records by calling Jackie Sewell at 619.255.0359 or jsewell@sdnhm.org.

In San Diego decades later, he became involved in the competitive sailing world when the America's Cup was lost to Australia. Malin Burnham recalled that Beyster offered to design a new sailboat and quickly got SAIC's naval architects and scientists to work on it, despite SAIC having no experience building racing hulls. They designed a faster boat, the San Diego team won, and the Cup was returned to the United States.

Betty and Bob were married for nearly 60 years. They raised their family—sons Jim and Mark and daughter Mary Ann—in La Jolla near

what is now UC San Diego's campus. The family's philanthropic interests included UCSD, the University of San Diego Hahn School of Nursing and Health Science, San Diego Regional Fire Foundation, KPBS, the San Diego Public Library, and through The San Diego Foundation, the San Diego Natural History Museum.

At the Museum, Dr. and Mrs. Beyster and their family supported our highest operating priorities and the Museum Access Fund (MAF). With the goal of ensuring that all students have access to excellent environmental science education,

MAF provides scholarships for Museum admission, or for science workshops to be taught in classrooms. The Beyster family's contributions to MAF have allowed the Museum to serve nearly 10,000 students since 2003.

Giving back to the people of the San Diego community he loved was among Dr. Beyster's guiding principles. Speaking for the Beyster family, Mary Ann Beyster said of her father's passing, "Let's celebrate the life of this remarkable man. He touched so many lives and gave to others selflessly."

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Cover photo

NASA image by Norman Kuring, Ocean
Color Team. Caption by Mike Carlowicz,
with assistance from Norman Kuring.

Late November 2011 offered mostly cloud-free skies and a compelling view of the entire length of Baja California and the Pacific coast of Mexico. In the midst of the clarity, strong northeasterly winds stirred up dust storms on the mainland and the peninsula.

The natural-color images required to make this oblique view were acquired on November 27, 2011, by the Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS) on NASA's Aqua satellite. The Ocean Color Team at NASA Goddard processes images like this to help assess the presence of sediment and plankton in the sea. Dust storms interfere with that processing, as the sandy aerosols block much of the incoming sunlight and the outgoing, reflected light.

Dust storms can disturb human activity on land, but once they blow out over the Gulf of California and Pacific Ocean, they help fertilize the waters with nutrients that promote phytoplankton blooms. In winter, the waters around Baja are often full of whales, as the largest creatures in the sea often eat the smallest plankton.

Researchers at the University of Wisconsin put the storm to a practical use. They are working to calibrate measurements on two instruments on the GOES weather satellites, and the dust storm provided a nice event for comparison.

earthobservatory.nasa.gov



The Rare Red-billed Tropicbird (*Phaethon aethereus*)

This year the Museum was pleased to accept a sculpture of a Red-billed Tropicbird in memory of Dr. William E. Glanz, who taught for 34 years at the University of Maine in the School of Biology and Ecology.

Created by Dr. Glanz' brother Daniel, the three foot high bronze bird appears to be gracefully soaring overhead. The Red-billed Tropicbird reaches the latitude of San Diego in the northern limit of its range over the eastern Pacific

Ocean. Its nearest sightings to land were recorded by former Board Chair Joseph Sefton in 1938 and by former Museum Executive Director Clifford Abbott in 1941, five miles west of Point Loma.

The inscription on the sculpture reads "A Lifetime Enlightening All About Our Natural World," which describes Dr. Glanz' passion for natural history as well as a key piece of the mission of the San Diego Natural History Museum.



San Diego Natural History Museum

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