

# The Power of Exhibitions and Fairs

to educate, promote economic development and enhance civic pride.

## SMALL CITIES AND TOWNS HAVE MUCH TO CELEBRATE.

Every city and town has something to celebrate: an historic event, the birthday of a famous resident or a reoccurring natural phenomena. If there is not an indigenous celebratory event or person, grab from the regional, state or national scene. Find something to celebrate in a public way. State fairs serve this purpose, especially in places with strong agricultural interests. Annual sporting events like the Daytona 500, a football bowl game or a national holiday like Memorial Day fill the bill; although local, authentic events are more interesting.

## SMALL CITIES CAN MAKE CELEBRATIONS A BIG DEAL.

The point is to find an event that draws the interest and participation of the town's families. Special groups may be the leaders and organizers, such as a Greek Festival that draws people from the entire town; the food and dancing are usually great. Parks, town squares and community centers provide the venues.

If there is no proper venue for a citywide celebration, creating such a space can become a community project that provides value for a special event and for general use throughout the year. Local celebrations create the possibility to build civic pride and community spirit.

## COMMUNITY IDENTITY.

Once events are established and become regular features associated with the town, the events take on a life of their own; they attract people from outside the city. Car shows, book fairs, music festivals, art shows, historic tours, founder's day celebrations and events of all kinds litter the calendars of cities and towns across America.

Find a reason to celebrate, build an authentic base and plan for success. Charleston, Miami and Pebble Beach had to start somewhere; they are attractive destinations to start with, but they had to establish an authentic purpose and build a reputation. International events draw millions of people. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Chicago and Philadelphia were important cities that used world fairs to enhance their reputation as centers of innovation and economic vitality.

*The Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance is the flagship of Pebble Beach Automotive Week. Begun in 1950.*  
<https://pebblebeachconcours.net/>



For 17 days and nights each spring, **Spoletto Festival USA** fills Charleston, South Carolina's historic theaters, churches, and outdoor spaces with performances by renowned artists as well as emerging performers in opera; theater; dance; and chamber, symphonic, choral, and jazz music.

Now approaching its 45th season, Spoletto Festival USA is internationally recognized as America's premier performing arts festival.

## THE CARDBOAT BOAT REGATTA.

*"Creating corrugated chaos on the Ohio!"*

*The world's top cardboard boat race teams converge to compete for bragging rights in the weirdest, wildest & wackiest competition this side of the Pecos!*

### THE CARDBOARD BOAT MUSEUM

**The Regatta in New Richmond OH**, founded in 1814, brings out the community being one of many activities that reenforce achievement of the Village's motto:

*"Preserving our past, planning our future".*

"The Village's mission is to consider the life quality of our residents in every decision we make. Furthermore, we strive to provide our community with efficient utility and street departments and quality emergency services. New Richmond is dedicated to preserving our rich history and enhancing our river village's charm". The Village of New Richmond 's population in 2010 was 2582.



**SMALL CITIES AND TOWNS HAVE MUCH TO CELEBRATE.**

**SMALL CITIES AND TOWNS.**

Large cities have used fairs and exhibitions to enhance their reputations and economies for decades. Small communities with more limited goals and resources can use this same technique to build their economy and their cultural assets. Authenticity is important. Base building is important. Community belief in the mission is important. Ultimately, infrastructure will be important: how do people arrive, where can they spend the night, what about food and beverage, do regulations support the event while protecting the town? **Celebrate the town; provide new learning opportunities, promote economic development and build civic pride.**

**EDUCATION.**

Exhibits, displays and lectures that come with exhibitions and fairs are often illuminating and inspiring to children and adults. Many life stories of successful people are founded on their early exposure to some interesting person or subject that happened at a local technical exhibit, book fair or graduation ceremony.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.**

Businesses need to be associated with successful towns. Investors look for strong local economies. Employees and owners need interesting environments for their work. Active communities that draw intellectual, economic and cultural events, people and demonstrations to their town invite businesses to remain in town or relocate to it from elsewhere.

**CIVIC PRIDE AND COMMUNITY SPIRIT.**

Community leaders set the stage, create the momentum and authenticate the events that become traditions. Local events, once established become part of community life. Volunteers appear every year. Visitors from out of town make an annual trek to enjoy traditional festivals or exhibitions. Businesses participate to show commitment to the town. New residents find participation as a way to become part of the community.



**An annual street party draws families.**



**The annual Daytona Turkey Run fills the Speedway infield.**



**San Antonio's Fiesta.**



**An annual downtown festival with local music.**

### BUILD COMMUNITY CHARACTER WITH CELEBRATIONS.

Every small city and town can find something interesting and worthy of celebration in its past or present life. Develop and use celebrations to build civic pride, community spirit and trust in the city's institutions.

**Have a Vision.** Think of the city or town as a special place with reason to celebrate.

#### Develop a Celebration Strategy.

- Find people who care
- Embrace a community-wide vision of celebration
- Find an event, person or place that authentically is associated with the town
- Develop the "story"; every town has a founder and an origin story, a notable event or person is a plus

#### Prepare and Complete Action Plans.

- Form a committee
- Find a sponsor, or two or three
- Finalize the "story"
- Schedule an event
- Proceed with the details to plan the community party
- Document the event using social media and every means available
  - Ensure the celebration is replicable every year
  - Employ the celebration in economic development, bond issue promotions, referendums to support schools, parks and other local activities and funding programs

Use every celebration and civic event to build civic pride, hometown spirit and institutional trust.

### THE HISTORY OF FAIRS AND EXHIBITIONS.

Fairs, exhibitions, trade shows have been going on ever since mankind discovered the benefits of trade and commerce. In pre-Columbian America there are two interesting examples:

- **The Hopewell Tradition** (also incorrectly called the "Hopewell culture") refers to the common aspects of the [Native American](#) culture that flourished along rivers in the northeastern and midwestern [United States](#) from 200 BCE to 500 CE. Perhaps more impressive than the mounds and earthworks of the many sites encompassing the Hopewell Tradition is the reflection of a culture that included various Native American tribes with a collection of artifacts suggesting they had regular contact with cultures thousands of kilometers away.



Artifacts, materials and trade goods came from Canada north of the Great Lakes, the eastern ridge of the Rocky Mountains and the Caribbean basin. Two sites to visit are:

- **The Hopewell Interaction Sphere** was centered around mysterious burial mounds in what is today southern Ohio [**Chillicothe OH**]. The Hopewell tradition, an affiliation of many Native American tribes, flourished from around 200 BCE to 500 CE.
- **The Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site is across the Mississippi River from St. Louis, Missouri.** Preserved remains of an ancient Native American city near Collinsville, Illinois, covering more than 2,000 acres, Cahokia is the most sophisticated prehistoric native civilization north of Mexico.

**LINK:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Hopewell\\_sites](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Hopewell_sites)

**LINK:** <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/article/intriguing-interactions/>

**LINK:** <https://www.legendsofamerica.com/il-cahokia/>

- **The Miami Circle** located on the trendy commercial section of Brickell Avenue in downtown Miami demonstrate the prowess of these early people in identifying a long-term viable commercial location. The Miami Circle, built between 500 BC and A.D. 900, is now preserved. It is a place once visited by peoples from far distances. The precise purpose of the place is still being debated, but trade must be one of its activities. Materials from outside the region, such as basalt, have been found on the site. Connections to the Ocmulgee mound people near Macon GA have been opined, perhaps a participant in the Hopewell Interaction Sphere.



Miami Circle, 2011, wikipedia

**LINK:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami\\_Circle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_Circle)

**Modern Exhibitions** began with the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations organized by England's Prince Albert in 1851. A century of grand displays followed [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_world\\_expositions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_world_expositions)] and persists in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with planned exhibits:

- **Expo 2020 in Dubai [scheduled for 2021-22, pre-COVID-19],**
- **Expo 2023 in Buenos Aires and**
- **Expo 2025 in Osaka.**

### THREE BLOCKBUSTER EVENTS.

Prior to the **1893 World's Columbian Exposition** in Chicago [aka The White City] that introduced the nation to electricity and so much more, there were three predecessor exhibitions that set the tone and the expectations for lasting positive impacts.

- **Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations, 1851, London.**
- **The Great Central Fair of 1864, Philadelphia.**
- **Centennial International Exhibition of 1876, Philadelphia.**

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia...

## Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations.



*The Great Front Door of the Hall; Paxton's; Crystal Palace enclosed full grown trees in Hyde Park.*

**THE GREAT EXHIBITION OF THE WORKS OF INDUSTRY OF ALL NATIONS** or **The Great Exhibition** (sometimes referred to as the **Crystal Palace Exhibition** in reference to the temporary structure in which it was held), an [international exhibition](#), took place in [Hyde Park](#), London, from 1 May to 15 October 1851. It was the first in a series of [World's Fairs](#), exhibitions of [culture](#) and [industry](#) that became popular in the 19th century. Famous people of the time attended, including [Charles Darwin](#), [Karl Marx](#), [Samuel Colt](#) and the writers [Charlotte Brontë](#), [Charles Dickens](#), [Lewis Carroll](#), [George Eliot](#), [Alfred Tennyson](#) and [William Makepeace Thackeray](#).

### BACKGROUND.

The Great Exhibition of Products of French Industry organised in Paris, France, from 1798 to 1849 were precursors to the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London. The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations was organised by [Prince Albert](#), [Henry Cole](#), Francis Henry, [George Wallis](#), [Charles Dilke](#) and other members of the [Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce](#) as a celebration of modern [industrial](#) technology and design. It was arguably a response to the highly effective [French Industrial Exposition of 1844](#): indeed, its prime motive was for Britain to make "clear to the world its role as industrial leader".<sup>[1]</sup> Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's consort, was an enthusiastic promoter of the self-financing exhibition; Although the Great Exhibition was a platform on which countries from around the world could display their achievements, Britain sought to prove its own superiority.

A special building, nicknamed [The Crystal Palace](#), or "The Great [Shalimar](#)",<sup>[4]</sup> was built to house the show. It was designed by [Joseph Paxton](#) with support from [structural engineer Charles Fox](#). Six million people—equivalent to a third of the entire population of Britain at the time—visited the Great Exhibition. The average daily attendance was 42,831 with a peak attendance of 109,915 on 7 October.<sup>[6]</sup> The event made a surplus of £186,000 (£18,370,000 in 2015),<sup>[7]</sup> which was used to found the [Victoria and Albert Museum](#), the [Science Museum](#) and the [Natural History Museum](#). The remaining surplus was used to set up an educational trust to provide grants and scholarships for industrial research; it continues to do so today.<sup>[8]</sup>

**READ MORE AT:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great\\_Exhibition](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Exhibition)

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## The Great Central Fair of 1864.



### HISTORY

The Great Central Fair took place from June 7 until June 28 of 1864<sup>[1]</sup> in the [Logan Circle](#) park in Philadelphia.<sup>[2]</sup> It was inspired by past [sanitary fairs](#) that happened throughout the United States to raise funds for the [United States Sanitary Commission](#).<sup>[3]</sup> It was a fundraiser for the [United States Sanitary Commission](#).

The main exhibit building was 200,000 square feet in size. It was designed by [Samuel Honeyman Kneass](#) and [William Stickland](#).<sup>[3]</sup> There was also Union Street, which was 540 feet long and ran in the middle of the fair.<sup>[1]</sup> Union Street was compared to a [cathedral](#) by Charles J. Stille. Inside the main building were "departments" with different themes. Themes included the neighboring states of [New Jersey](#) and [Delaware](#), themes about [corn](#) and [sewing](#), a restaurant and [parlor](#), as well as weaponry, fine art, [curiosities](#), transportation and children's subjects.<sup>[3]</sup>

On June 16, [Abraham Lincoln](#) and his family visited the fair. He donated 48 copies of the [Emancipation Proclamation](#) at \$10 a book. They were all autographed by Lincoln. The festival raised over \$1 million.<sup>[1]</sup>

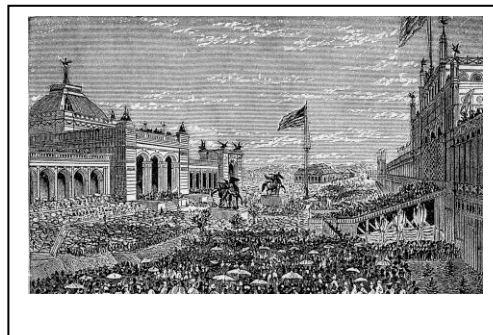
**READ MORE AT:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great\\_Central\\_Fair](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Central_Fair)

**The United States Sanitary Commission (USSC)** was a private relief agency created by federal legislation on June 18, 1861, to support sick and wounded soldiers of the United States Army (Federal / Northern / Union Army) during the American Civil War.[a] It operated across the North, raised an estimated \$25 million in Civil War era revenue (assuming 1865 dollars, \$417.55 million in 2020) and in-kind contributions[1] to support the cause, and enlisted thousands of volunteers. The president was Henry Whitney Bellows, and Frederick Law Olmsted acted as executive secretary. **LINK:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_Sanitary\\_Commission](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Sanitary_Commission)

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## Centennial International Exhibition of 1876

**THE CENTENNIAL INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF 1876**, the first official [World's Fair](#) to be held in the United States, was held in [Philadelphia, Pennsylvania](#), from May 10 to November 10, 1876, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the signing of the [Declaration of Independence](#) in Philadelphia. Officially named the **International Exhibition of Arts, Manufactures, and Products of the Soil and Mine**, it was held in [Fairmount Park](#) along the [Schuylkill River](#) on fairgrounds designed by [Herman J. Schwarzmann](#). Nearly 10 million visitors attended the exposition, and 37 countries participated in it.



The idea of the Centennial Exposition is credited to **JOHN L. CAMPBELL**, a professor of mathematics, [natural philosophy](#), and astronomy at [Wabash College, Crawfordsville, Indiana](#).<sup>[1]</sup> In December 1866, Campbell suggested to [Philadelphia](#) Mayor [Morton McMichael](#) that the [United States Centennial](#) be celebrated with an exposition in Philadelphia.

**HERMAN J. SCHWARZMANN**, an engineer for the Fairmount Park Commission, was appointed the main designer of the exposition. In 1869 Schwarzmann had begun working for the Fairmount Park Commission, which administered the site of the 1876 Centennial Exposition. It is one of the great urban parks of America, its importance in landscape history surpassed only by Central Park. Schwarzmann was the chief architect for the Centennial Exposition, designing Memorial Hall, Horticultural Hall, other small buildings, and the landscaping around them. His work for the Centennial Exposition was informed by the [Vienna International Exposition in 1873](#), which Schwarzmann visited. The Vienna International Exposition in 1873 was marred by disastrous logistic planning and was taken as a cautionary example.

**STRUCTURES.** More than 200 buildings were constructed within the Exposition's grounds, which were surrounded by a fence nearly three miles long.<sup>[17]</sup> There were five main buildings in the exposition. They were the Main Exhibition Building, Memorial Hall, Machinery Hall, Agricultural Hall, and Horticultural Hall. Apart from these buildings, there were separate buildings for state, federal, foreign, corporate, and public comfort buildings. This strategy of numerous buildings in one exposition set it apart from the previous fairs.

**READ MORE AT:** [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Centennial\\_Exposition](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Centennial_Exposition)