“MoMUs” Continue the Berkshire Museum’s Legacy of Innovative Museum Programming with Support from Lee Bank and the Feigenbaum Foundation

Generous support from community partners funds the creation and delivery of Mobile Museum Units to locations county wide

[Pittsfield, MA] – The Lee Bank Foundation has awarded the Berkshire Museum with a grant of $13,500 in support of the museum’s innovative new Mobile Museum Unit (MoMU) program. The generous investment will fund community testing, roll-out to community sites, and quarterly refreshes and location changes. The bank’s support of the MoMU program comes in addition to funding from the Feigenbaum Foundation, which underwrote the construction of the thirty inaugural MoMUs that will roll out to the Berkshire Museum’s galleries and locations throughout the Berkshires by 2022.

Mobile Museum Units, or MoMUs, continue the Berkshire Museum’s legacy of innovative museum experiences. These portable, self-contained units can be displayed inside the museum or delivered to unexpected locations throughout the region to invite community members of all ages to explore new ideas and engage with objects from the museum’s rich collection as part of their daily lives. Each unit tells a single, interdisciplinary story through colorful, informative graphics on the exterior of the case and a selection of art, science, and history objects within.

The first MoMUs were delivered and equipped by the Berkshire Museum earlier this year and new MoMUs are continually being outfitted and rolled out. Several MoMUs are currently on view in the museum’s galleries:
• **Mammals: Nails or Claws**, featuring contrasting mammalian skeletons and facts about animal adaptations.

• **Through a New Lens**, exploring the science and cultural history of lenses with a collection of historical objects containing lenses and an opportunity to experience the effect of different lens shapes.

• **Mabel Choate: Collector**, showcasing a selection of colorful, antique objects collected by Mabel Choate during her travels around the world.

• **Pollinators**, inviting viewers to consider the importance of pollinating insects while viewing a honeycomb and collection of insect specimens.

• **Elephants**, filled with Louis Paul Jonas’ elephant models from *Animals of the World in Miniature* and fun elephant facts.

“MoMUs demonstrate our commitment to serve the region by bringing objects and stories outside our walls to make our collections more relevant and accessible – something we have been doing through school and community enrichment for more than ninety years,” explained Craig Langlois, Interim Co-Executive Director, Chief Experience Officer, and architect of the MoMU program. “The innovative design of these units allows our museum team and programming partners to truly let their creativity and imagination shine while honoring the museum’s legacy as a leader in community engagement.”

This fall, the Berkshire Museum’s education team is collaborating with local educators to develop special MoMUs for their schools and classrooms. Each school-based mobile exhibition will be tailored to fit a class’s curriculum, goals, and unique needs while meeting relevant learning standards the same way the museum adapts its popular educator-led gallery programs for visiting students. MoMUs that explore life under the sea will be the first to roll out at Allendale Elementary School in Pittsfield and in the Early Childhood Education classroom at Pittsfield’s Taconic High School. Soon, units illustrating the story of the region’s Mohican Indigenous people will begin to travel to Pittsfield’s many elementary schools.
Educators interested in partnering with the museum to create their own MoMU are encouraged to contact Liz Anglin, Education Manager, at eanglin@berkshiremuseum.org.

The grant awarded this month by the Lee Bank Foundation will help to fund creation, delivery, and continued updates to Mobile Museum Units at community locations. The first community-based MoMU will be delivered to the Berkshire Athenaeum in Pittsfield on October 25.

**About the Berkshire Museum**

Located at 39 South Street in downtown Pittsfield, Massachusetts, the Berkshire Museum combines art, science, and history to create thought-provoking experiences for the whole family through interactive programs, interdisciplinary exhibitions, and engaging online series. Exhibitions currently on view include *The Land of the Thunder Dragon: Bhutan Through the Lens of Mead Eagle Photography*, *Muh-he-con-ne-ok: The People of the Waters That Are Never Still*, *Objects and Their Stories*, the Aquarium, and more. Plan your visit at berkshiremuseum.org or go to explore.berkshiremuseum.org to enjoy the Berkshire Museum wherever you are.