The Jim Kress Maritime Lighthouse Tower enables the Door County Maritime Museum to better and more effectively share the important maritime culture and heritage of our community with a growing audience, making our unique part of American history come alive for visitors.

More than 450 individual, family, corporate and foundation donors have contributed over $7 Million to the Jim Kress Maritime Lighthouse Tower $9.2 Million capital campaign. This includes $1 Million from the George F. Kress Foundation, $975,000 from DCMM Board Member John Baumgartner and a $250,000 Community Development Investment grant from the State of Wisconsin’s Economic Development Corporation.

We have a construction fundraising goal of ~$650,000, an exhibit funding gap of $1.1 Million, and we are asking for your help to close the difference. The original goal of the Maritime Lighthouse Tower Capital Campaign was $5.5 Million. Due to a number of circumstances, the cost of construction was changed significantly.

Included in the changes to the scope of the Maritime Lighthouse Tower project has been a major upgrade to the HVAC systems installed. The new system chosen will ultimately lead the Door County Maritime Museum to apply for accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums and the Smithsonian Institution, providing access to artifact loans from America’s most respected and comprehensive museum collections.

To discuss a pledge of support for the Maritime Lighthouse Tower, please contact Sam Perlman, Deputy Director and Development Manager sperlman@dcm.org or (920) 743-5958 x103.

The Door County Maritime Museum is expanding our Sturgeon Bay facility with the Jim Kress Maritime Lighthouse Tower.

- Ten floors of interactive educational exhibits that highlight maritime history, people and industries;
- Accessibility to a lighthouse experience that can accommodate everyone regardless of physical abilities;
- A must-see maritime experience that will draw visitors to our area from across the country;
- An intriguing destination that will create a significant economic boost to the region;
- Hands-on educational experiences that will teach young and old, keep maritime history alive and promote interest in maritime-related local career opportunities.
A Glimpse Inside

1st Floor Maritime Theater
Welcome to the Door Peninsula—a place of breathtaking beauty and rich history. Explore the ways water has defined the people, history and development of this region.

2nd Floor Shipwrecks
Shipwrecks are wood and steel chronicles that reveal clues about history, maritime engineering and commerce, and the triumphs and tragedies of life on the water.

3rd Floor Life Underwater
The evolution and role of commercial and recreational fishing, and the various species in the waters of Door County. We are all part of a complex, diverse web of life.

4th Floor Recreational Boating
From small craft to luxury yachts, since the 1920s recreational boating has defined leisure and tourism on the Door Peninsula.

5th Floor Shipbuilding
People from maritime cultures settled Wisconsin shores and shaped the region’s shipbuilding legacy, from the earliest wooden boats to state-of-the-art warships to world-renowned recreational watercraft.

6th Floor Commerce
The Sturgeon Bay Shipbuilding Canal connects the Bay of Green Bay to Lake Michigan, and opened in 1890. Door County today is built on the region’s rich natural resources and its connection to the wider world via the Great Lakes.

7th Floor People of the Water
From Native Americans and early settlers, to today’s tourist economy, people have lived on and off the waters that surround the Door Peninsula for millennia.

8th Floor Navigation
Modern navigation is built on ancient knowledge, advances in tools and technology, and the work of adventurers and cartographers who charted the world.

9th Floor Our Rocky Peninsula
Across time, the Door Peninsula has been defined by water, ice and wind. The result is an ever-changing, beautiful landscape that is home to a diverse array of life.

10th & 11th Floors Our Working Waterfront
Sturgeon Bay’s development reflects the county’s connection to the world via the Great Lakes. The rooftop Baumgartner outdoor observation deck will be seasonally available.

The 1st floor Maritime Theater, 10th floor Our Working Waterfront exhibit and Baumgartner rooftop observation deck, are open to visitors.

The next two floors open to the public are Shipbuilding (2) and Navigation (7), as of February 2022.

The next floors completed will be Life Underwater (3) and Commerce (6), followed by Shipbuilding (5) and People of the Water (8).

The final floors will be Our Rocky Peninsula (9) and Recreational Boating (4), leading up to our Grand Opening on National Maritime Day 2022, Sunday, May 22.
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