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News Release



NORTH CAROLINA
MUSEUM OF HISTORY
A Smithsonian Affiliate

Playing Around: *Toy Boom!* exhibit to open at North Carolina Museum of History
From LEGO to Lite-Brite, explore toys from the Boomer era



September 17, 2019 (RALEIGH, N.C.) — Toys are the latest story North Carolina Museum of History! On Oct. 4, the museum will unveil its newest exhibit, [***Toy Boom! Toys from the 1950s & '60s***](#). Featuring vintage playthings in abundance from an Easy Bake Oven to Rock 'Em, Sock 'Em Robots, this exhibit examines how toys most beloved by Baby Boomers reflected the energy, ambition, and abundance of a prosperous era, all while channeling the uncertainties of the period.

“The baby-boomer years were a time of *more* in America... including *more* toys,” said Katie Edwards, the curator of popular culture at the North Carolina Museum of History. “We created this exhibit to help North Carolinians reflect on their paths from childhood to adulthood, including the toys that paved the way.”

Toy Boom! is curated into unique environments, including TV westerns, as well as space age, zany, and creative toys, with many of the sections including dolls, action figures and more. The exhibit will feature multiple photo ops for visitors to share on social media.

Visitors can see toys come to life with fun, hands-on interactive activities. Attendees can look forward to reliving their childhood with a larger-than-life Twister board, a giant *Lite-Brite* wall, an Etch A Sketch station, working Hot Wheels racing tracks (complete with inversion loops), a “Name that Tune” with TV Westerns game, and a digital Christmas catalog stations where visitors can digitally flip through the pages to look at vintage toys.

Why focus on the Boomer era? Post-World War II, a soaring birthrate made America become a more child-focused culture. Parents believed toys would help children find their correct place in society. Television was a huge factor, and for the first time, toys were marketing to kids directly.

So, whether you pine for Mr. Potato Head or are gaga for Gumby, come have some fun at the N.C. Museum of History. *Toy Boom!* will be open from October 4, 2019, through January 3, 2021.



CLICK HERE FOR ALL IMAGES

Credit: North Carolina Museum of History

For information about the NC Museum of History, a Smithsonian Affiliate museum, call 919-814-7000 or access ncmuseumofhistory.org or follow the museum on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), or [YouTube](#).

About the NC Museum of History

The North Carolina Museum of History, a Smithsonian Affiliate, fosters a passion for North Carolina history. This museum collects and preserves artifacts of state history and educates the public on the history of the state and the nation through exhibits and educational programs. **Admission is free.** Last year, more than 465,000 people visited the museum to see

some of the 150,000 artifacts in the museum collection. The Museum of History, within the Division of State History Museums, is part of the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

About the Smithsonian Affiliations Network

Since 2006, the North Carolina Museum of History has been a Smithsonian Affiliate, part of a select group of museums, cultural, educational, and arts organizations that share Smithsonian resources with the nation. The Smithsonian Affiliations network is a national outreach program that develops long-term collaborative partnerships with museums, educational, and cultural organizations to enrich communities with Smithsonian resources. More information is available at affiliations.si.edu.

About the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

The North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NCDNCR) is the state agency with a vision to be the leader in using the state's natural and cultural resources to build the social, cultural, educational, and economic future of North Carolina. NCDNCR's mission is to improve the quality of life in our state by creating opportunities to experience excellence in the arts, history, libraries, and natural assets in North Carolina by stimulating learning, inspiring creativity, preserving the state's history, conserving the state's natural heritage, encouraging recreation and cultural tourism, and promoting economic development.

NCDNCR includes 27 historic sites, seven history museums, two art museums, two science museums, three aquariums, and Jennette's Pier, as well as 39 state parks and recreation areas, the North Carolina Zoo, the nation's first state-supported symphonic orchestra, the State Library of North Carolina, the State Archives of North Carolina, the North Carolina Arts Council, the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, and the North Carolina Office of State Archaeology, along with the state Division of Land and Water Stewardship. For more information, call 919-814-6800 or visit DNCR.nc.gov.

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