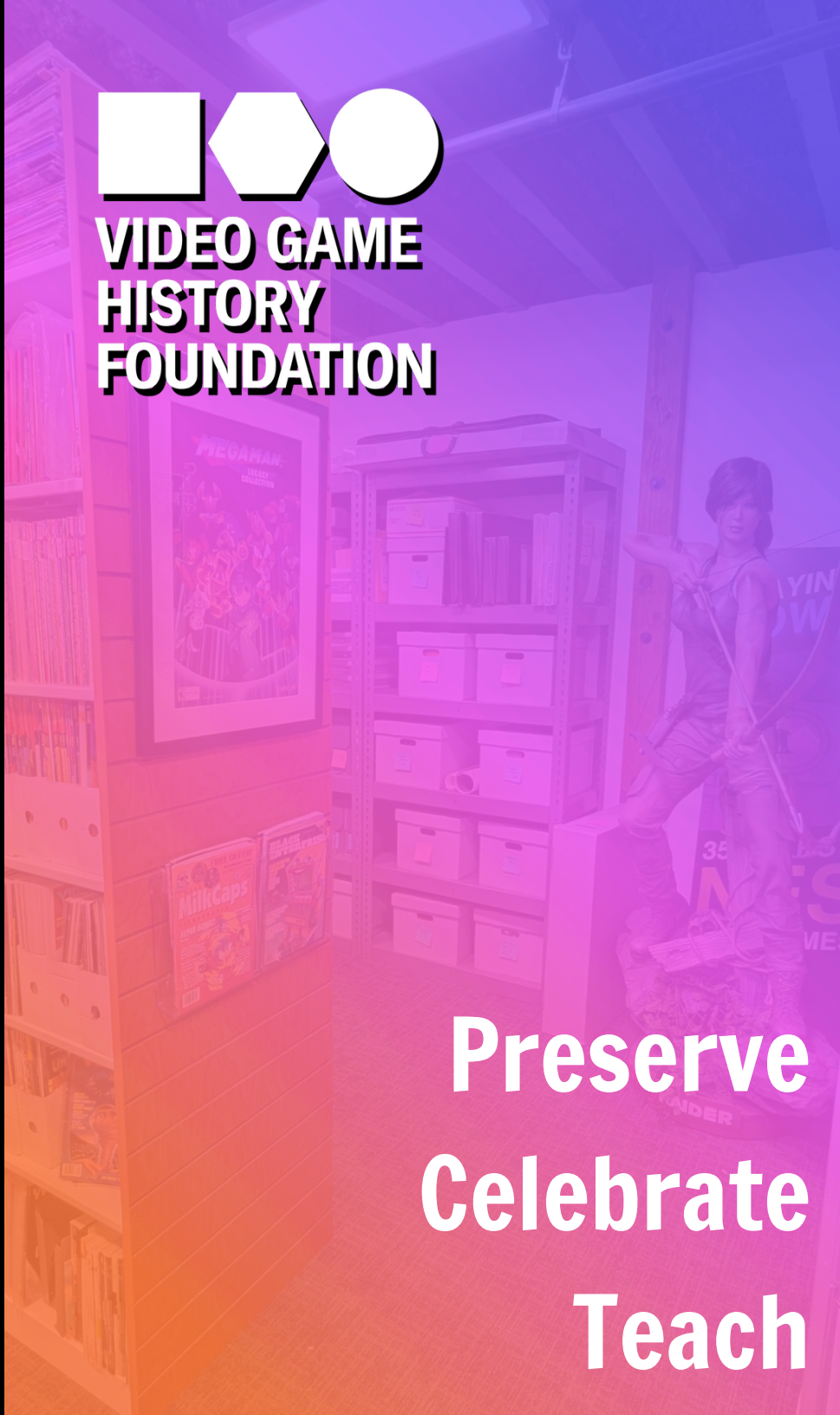


VIDEO GAME HISTORY FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT

VOL 01

Preserve
Celebrate
Teach

WELCOME TO THE LIBRARY



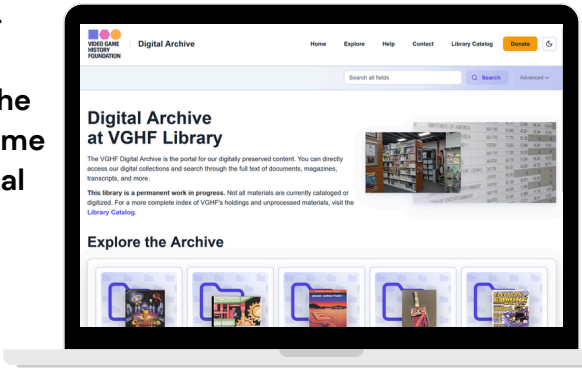
The Video Game History Foundation is a nonprofit dedicated to preserving video game history and making it accessible to everyone who wants to study it: researchers, journalists, developers, and curious fans alike.

That work has always meant rescuing materials that would otherwise disappear: developer archives, magazines, promotional materials, and other ephemera that rarely survive on their own. For years, preserving those materials meant physical storage, with access limited to whoever could visit in person or request directly. Last year that changed.

8,000+ items cataloged in the library (that's over 61,000 individual files!)

After years in development, in 2025 the Video Game History Foundation launched our digital library! We wanted to make it easy for anyone to learn about the history of games, so we made a research tool that's as easy as searching the web. And the results speak for themselves: over 700 people visit the library every day!

We developed a state-of-the-art text recognition toolset that makes even the wildest, weirdest video game magazines and promotional materials fully text-searchable. And we've created our own digital archive portal with the powerful search and navigation features that video game historians have asked us for.



archive.gamehistory.org

THE IMPACT

This year we partnered with the University of Washington on a survey of library users, and we uncovered some exciting data that is aligned with our original mission and vision for this resource.

We learned that we have a diverse user base: enthusiasts/collectors, historians (both professional and independent), developers (indie and professional), educators, and cultural heritage professionals all represented.

EXCLUSIVE

The VGHF library has officially archived over 5,000 magazines in the collection! We are incredibly proud of this milestone!

User satisfaction with search/discoverability averaged solidly in the "moderately well" to "extremely well" range across every user group, with several groups averaging around 4 out of 5 stars

Have you explored the digital archive? It's free for everyone, anywhere in the world, at http://archive.gamehistory.org!

Check out a few of the fascinating collections available in the digital library

IN THE STACKS

SONIC 2

Unlike the original game, Sonic 2 was actually developed by an international team in the U.S.! And thanks to contributions from three of its American artists - namely Tom Payne, Craig Stitt and Brenda Cook - our archive now has unique insight into how the game was made, including art and level layouts for stages that didn't make the final cut.



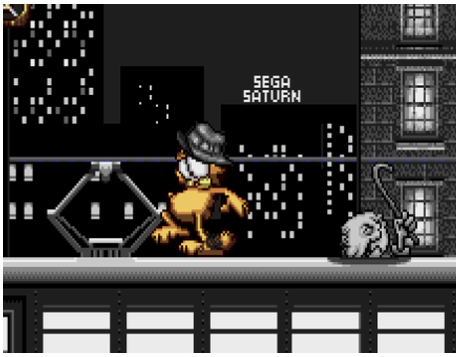
Sonic 2's unfinished winter level, seen for the first time!

CYAN

The Cyan collection is one of the most exciting collections in the Video Game History Foundation Library. In collaboration with Philip Shane and Cyan, we recovered over 100 hours of video from Cyan's history, from the original Myst game from 1993 all the way to Myst V: End of Ages from 2005. There's hours of never-seen interviews with the developers, raw green screen footage of the actors, and even a live idea session where you can watch the actual moments Rand and Robin Miller came up with some of the game's concepts!



Myst "Video News Release" press kit



Garfield: The Lost Levels, no longer lost!

SEGA CHANNEL

We have recovered over 100 new Sega Channel ROMs, including system data, exclusive games, and even prototypes that were never published. We've also digitized internal paperwork and correspondence that reveals how Sega Channel operated, how it was marketed, and what would've come next for the service. You can view the correspondence, notes, and presentations from executive Michael Shorrock's personal collection, which give an inside look at this groundbreaking games-on-demand service.

ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT EXPO

For over 25 years, E3 was *the* professionals-only event for the video game industry to show off its upcoming new games. Thanks to donations from a number of executives, journalists, and attendees, VGHF's E3 collection features thousands of objects, ranging from ephemera, planning documents, promotional material, and hours of footage from the early years of the event.



E3 2009 event photo gallery

BEYOND THE PAGE

WATCH AND LISTEN

In 2025 we launched Season 2 of our podcast, the Video Game History Hour. Every other week, we conduct interviews that dig deep into the world of video game history and preservation.

We use the vast resources collected in the library to conduct research and tell stories that bring video game history to life. We don't just run the archive, we use it too!

PODCAST
FEATURED EPISODES

EP. 161

Blizzard Digital Vault

EP. 152

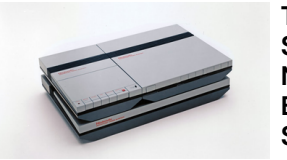
Japanese Mobile Game Preservation

EP. 139

Phoenix: The Rise of Leonard Herman

YOUTUBE
FEATURED VIDEOS

01



The Untold Story of the Nintendo Entertainment System

02



Don't Just Watch TV: The Secrets of Sega Channel

03



Lost Indiana Jones Adventure Discovered

LIBRARY IN ACTION

DIGITAL ECLIPSE RELIES ON THE VGHF LIBRARY TO HELP US SOURCE HIGH-QUALITY ASSETS, FROM CLASSIC ADVERTISEMENTS TO VINTAGE INTERVIEWS, AS WE PRODUCE OUR INTERACTIVE DOCUMENTARY PROJECTS, LIKE MORTAL KOMBAT: LEGACY KOLLECTION.

- DAN AMRICH, CONTENT EDITOR AT DIGITAL ECLIPSE

Our collections are used to ensure that new projects featuring old games have accurate source materials.



MORTAL KOMBAT LEGACY KOLLECTION

Authors and content creators use the library for research, fact checking, and inspiration when writing or making videos teaching and celebrating video game history.

VGHF'S DIGITAL ARCHIVE IS MY FIRST STOP FOR VERIFIED INFORMATION AND ARTIFACTS WHEN I'M RESEARCHING A VIDEO. I ARRIVE LOOKING FOR ONE TOPIC AND END UP DOWN A RABBIT HOLE LEARNING ABOUT OBSCURE GAMES I HAD NEVER HEARD OF.

-JENNA STOEBER, VIDEO ESSAYIST



KILL THE PAST: 25 YEARS OF GRASSHOPPER MANUFACTURE

BEING ABLE TO SEARCH FOR SPECIFIC QUOTES OR KEYWORDS WITHIN ITS VAST COLLECTION OF MAGAZINES MEANT I WAS ABLE TO FIND MULTIPLE LONG-FORGOTTEN INTERVIEWS AND CHOICE QUOTES FOR MY SHADOWS OF THE DAMNED ESSAY FOR LOST IN CULT'S NEW BOOK KILL THE PAST.

-MICHAEL LERI, AUTHOR

RECOVERED. PRESERVED. PUBLISHED.

We rescue important video game history at risk of being lost forever. Here are two major projects we recovered and preserved in 2025.

01 XCAVATOR

A LOST NES GAME, FOUND AND FINALLY FINISHED.

In 2024, we recovered the source code for the unfinished and unannounced NES game Xcavator, cancelled in 1991, from the family of game programmer Chris Oberth.

We secured the rights from incredible Technologies and partnered with Mega Cat Studios to complete the game with period-accurate tools and authentic NES craftsmanship.

XCAVATOR 2025 AVAILABLE NOW

Exclusively from iam8bit.

ALL PROFITS GO TO VGHF

Every purchase supports our mission to save and share video game history.



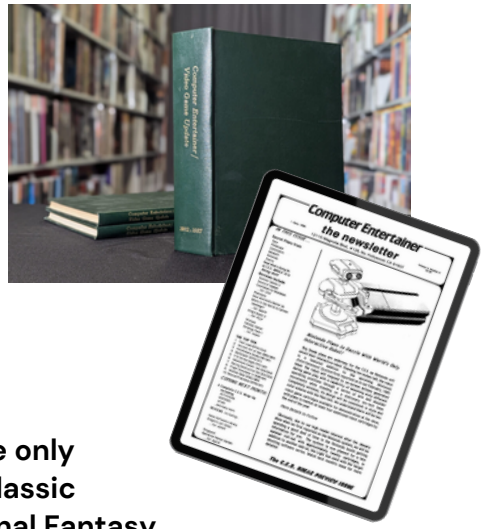
34 years after it was abandoned, Xcavator is now a finished, playable NES game, and it's finally in the hands of players.

02

COMPUTER ENTERTAINER

ONE OF AMERICA'S FIRST VIDEO GAME MAGAZINES, PRESERVED FOR ALL.

The Video Game History Foundation acquired the rights to Computer Entertainer, one of the first American video game magazines.



The magazine, which ran from 1982–1990, is the only known publication in the United States that regularly covered home console video games in the mid-1980s.

Computer Entertainer is one of the only sources for American reviews of classic games like The Legend of Zelda, Final Fantasy, and Super Mario Bros.

The newsletter, co-edited by sisters Marylou Badeaux and Celeste Dolan, also has the unique distinction of being the earliest console video game magazine run by women.



Editors Marylou Badeaux (far left) and Celeste Dolan (far right), presenting awards at the 1984 C.E.S. show

DIGITIZED, COMPLETE. OPEN TO ALL.

The entire run, released under a Creative Commons license.

FREE TO USE FOR ANYONE.

For journalists, researchers, or history buffs.

LOOKING AHEAD

This December we will hold our annual Winter Fundraiser. Keep an eye out for exciting new content featuring video game history you've never seen before!

February 27th, 2027 is the VGHF's 10 Year Anniversary! We will celebrate with a livestream event hosted by some very special friends of the foundation. Mark your calendar now, you won't want to miss it!

HELP US GROW THE ARCHIVE!

We have many incredible historial materials just waiting to be preserved and shared. With additional resources and support we can make them available for study in the future. Here are just two examples of collections we have not yet processed!



A massive collection of material used in the production of Game Informer magazine



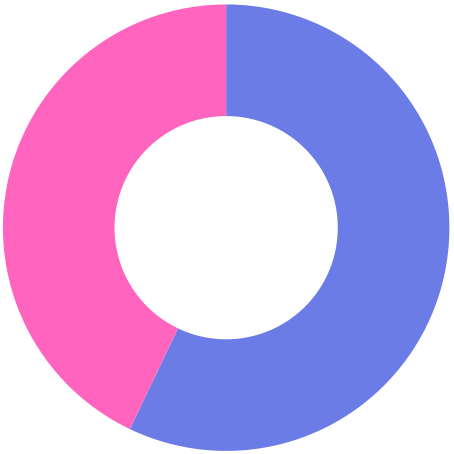
The archives of executive Rita Zimmerer, including internal records from her time at Sunsoft

FINANCIALS

The Video Game History Foundation is committed to transparency, stewardship, and long-term sustainability. This overview provides a snapshot of our financial position for the 2025 fiscal year.

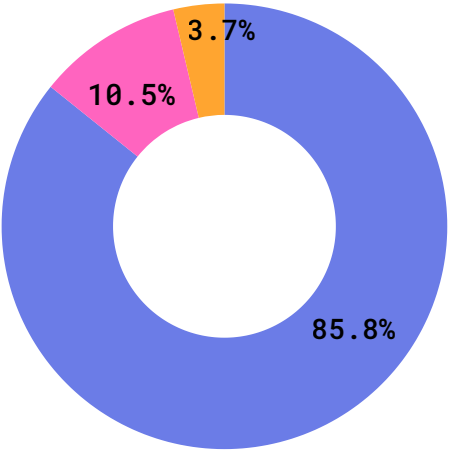
TOTAL REVENUE	TOTAL EXPENSES	CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	INDIVIDUAL DONORS
[$406,206]	[$305,202]	[+25%]	[1,085]

FINANCIAL HEALTH



- REVENUE
- EXPENSES

INCOME SOURCES



- INDIVIDUALS
- OTHER
- PROGRAMS SERVICE REVENUE

FISCAL YEAR: JANUARY - DECEMBER

REPORTING NOTES: THIS DATA REFLECTS 2025 FINANCIALS, PRIOR TO THE HIRING OF OUR THIRD FULL-TIME STAFF



THANK YOU

FOR SUPPORTING VIDEO GAME HISTORY & PRESERVATION

Because of donors like you, we can preserve the history of video games, save disappearing stories, and share the work that shaped a global culture.

Your donation goes directly to supporting video game history preservation, and ensuring the stories you care about are not lost, but celebrated.

Make your gift here:

gamehistory.org/donate

Other ways to support:

- Join our Patreon for early access to content, chat with us in our private Discord, and get a front row seat to preserving game history
- Check out our merch shop, or membership to our monthly vintage video game magazine subscription