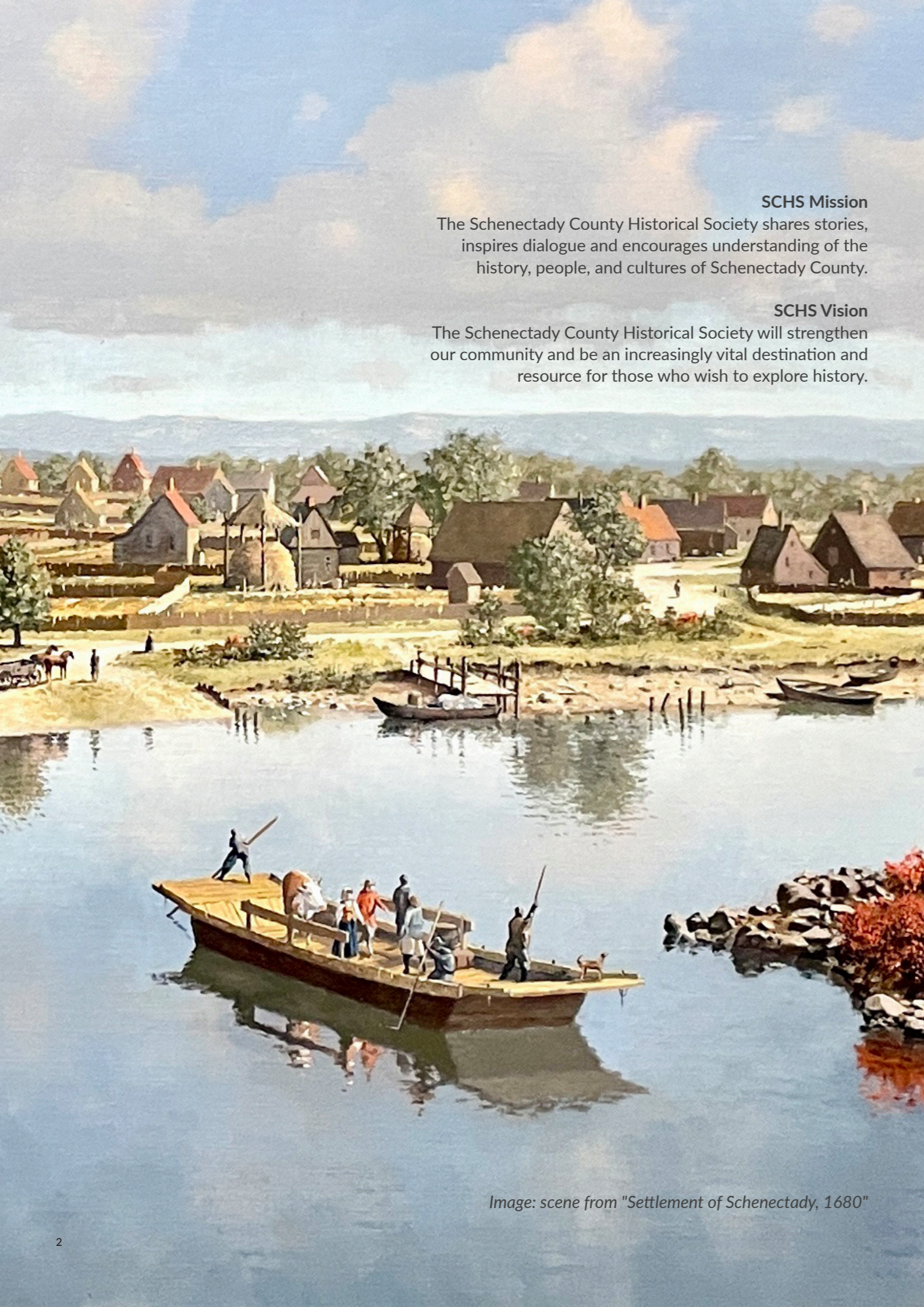




SCHENECTADY COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2023 - MARCH 2024



SCHS Mission

The Schenectady County Historical Society shares stories, inspires dialogue and encourages understanding of the history, people, and cultures of Schenectady County.

SCHS Vision

The Schenectady County Historical Society will strengthen our community and be an increasingly vital destination and resource for those who wish to explore history.

From the Executive Director

This letter marks my 10th year working for Schenectady County Historical Society. That's a full decade spent digging into local history, developing programs, and adapting our organization to the changes in the world around us.

Ten years and I'm not tired of it – not even close. I love what I do, and feel privileged to serve in this role. In fact, reflecting on the last twelve months, I notice how fresh everything still seems. That might be because 2023 saw a lot of newness!

New collections: A highlight from this year includes the acquisition of a collection of New York-crafted colonial era furniture, transferred to us from Colonial Williamsburg. It was a bit of a journey transporting it back from Virginia, but all artifacts – and both staff drivers – made it back in one piece. We also received an incredible donation from Sandra Lazo and Donald Layton: a new Len Tantillo painting depicting "Settlement of Schenectady, 1680." It's stunning.

New advocacy work: We started focusing intently on advocacy work this year by reaching out to local and state legislators and to local newspapers. Our goal is to advocate for public support of museums broadly, and our museum specifically. While this work is ongoing, two highlights include an op-ed published in the *Daily Gazette*, and a site visit from Lieutenant Governor Antonio Delgado.

New staff: Our esteemed office manager, Mary Treanor, retired at the end of 2023, and we welcomed Audrey Humphrey onto our staff. Audrey's been a great asset and a joy to work with.

And, of course, new challenges: Owning so many historic structures is a challenge in itself, but the Building and Conditions Survey we had conducted for us this year indicates we have more on our plates than we realized. Our engineers estimate over \$500,000 in preservation work will need to be completed at Mabee Farm in the next 5-10 years. Whew...

What's stayed the same this year – and in the ten years I've been working here – is SCHS' commitment to Schenectady's history and people. While we're always improving our interpretation, expanding our programs, and broadening our audiences, our mission stays the same. We share stories, inspire dialogue, and encourage understanding of our local history.

Thanks for helping make this a great year. If I didn't see you in 2023, I hope I'll see you in 2024 and beyond!

-Mary Zawacki, Executive Director

Image: scene from "Settlement of Schenectady, 1680"

From the President

As we look back on another successful year for our Society, with our usual wide range of programs and events for all interests and ages, I'm heartened by the frequent coverage of these by the Daily Gazette; several times on the front page! I still hope that we reach 1,000 members during my tenure as board president; please help by recommending membership to one or two friends who you feel might be interested.

I want to personally thank everyone who donated to our annual appeal at the end of last year. We raised over \$20,000 to cover most of the cost of critically needed structural repairs to the Brick House at the Mabee Farm. Our buildings and grounds team is getting quotes for the work as I write this, and we anticipate that the work will be completed this year. There are always maintenance requirements for our many buildings, and the team does a great job of handling them with a combination of staff/volunteer work parties and judicious use of contractors where needed.

One of the grants that we received last year will cover the cost of having a consultant from the NY Council of Nonprofits work with our governance committee to create a new Strategic Plan. This was last done in 2017, and much has changed since then. We look forward to discussing our financial position and ways to strengthen it, new ideas for programs, and new ways to use the latest technology to reach the next generation of program participants and members.

We have several outgoing trustees who I'd like to recognize on behalf of Mary and the Board. We've enjoyed working with them and wish them all well!

Sheri Lullo has been a wonderful partner and valuable participant on the governance and personnel committees. She has often provided insights and perspectives that others miss. We also have her to thank for a closer connection to Union College.

Kevin Richard-Morrow has been an active member of the buildings and grounds committee for years, and a key coordinator of our activities with the batteaux on the Mohawk.

Hannah Miller left the Board last fall to pursue a dream of working on historic preservation in England. Her wonderful wit and leadership of the governance committee from its formation, and her coordinating the assessment of the historic buildings at Mabee Farm, were contributions that will help the Society move forward for years to come.

Finally, I want to encourage everyone reading this to maintain a positive attitude about the future in the face of negativity in the press. Our shared interest in history should help to give us a well-informed perspective on present events. This country, and the world, have both seen difficult times in the past – some far more so than the present – and gotten through them. I think the key is to always consider yourself as part of the solution, and take action to help make things better.

- Mark Vermilyea, SCHS President





From the Vice President

I'd like to formally introduce myself as the new Vice President of the board: my name is David Trestick, and during this past year I was selected to replace our last Vice President, Hannah Miller. Hannah had the opportunity of a lifetime to relocate to London, England, and while we were sad to see her go, we were all thrilled to see her take on this next big step in her life. I have spoken with her recently and am happy to pass along that she is doing very well and loving her new home. Hannah left some big shoes to fill, but I am excited to serve on this board as Vice President, and look forward to helping the Society carry out our mission and goals.

As for myself, I currently work as a New York State accountant, and love this career and its challenges. I enjoy working in the public sector and getting to solve the complex problems and take on the intricate tasks that come our way. I live here in Schenectady with my fiancée who works as a veterinary technician, and we will be getting married later this year in Olympic National Park. When we aren't relaxing at home with our many pets, you might find us enjoying a beer at Great Flats or playing a round of disc golf in Central Park. We also enjoy hiking and traveling, hence our decision to get married across the country! During the winters, you can always spot me showing my Schenectady passion by cheering for Union College hockey games in Section M of Messa Rink.

My passion for Schenectady inevitably led me to the Schenectady County Historical Society, where I have the incredible opportunity to become your Vice President. SCHS has also given me the pleasure of meeting all of the amazing staff and volunteers here, who truly give

life to this organization through the various programs and events that they pour their time and efforts into. My favorite parts of our board meetings are hearing the staff go over the potential projects and events they are working on- it highlights their talents and creativity, and puts their passion on full display. Without our staff and volunteers, all of the amazing programs, activities, and events we all love to attend wouldn't be possible, and I am truly thankful for them every day.

Now I want to turn the focus to you- what is your passion? What can you do to get further involved in it, or help further in its purpose? All of us should be doing the best we can to be a driving force behind those interests and ideals that are important to us, but as someone in his early thirties, I want to call upon the younger generations especially to find your passions. Take inspiration from the city of Schenectady, a city known for its innovation and progression, and find ways to bring about positive changes through ingenuity and enthusiasm to those causes which are important to you.

Here at SCHS, we have a small group of staff, trustees, and volunteers who are all passionate about this organization. I strive to continue to move forward with our goals and progress, even if it is just a small amount at a time, to further serve our members, our mission, and our community in the best way we possibly can. I invite those of you with a passion for Schenectady and local history to join our little family and help our goals progress. And I call upon all of us to continue to pursue all and any of our passions, and find ways to effect change in any way that we can. I can promise, from experience, that it will add more value to our lives and community than one might expect.

- David Trestick, SCHS Vice President



Year in Review

Exhibitions and Interpretation

We opened two major exhibitions this year. At the Schenectady Historical Museum, we developed **“A New Nation: Schenectady in the Early Republic,”** which brings together the history and material culture of Schenectady, c. 1790-1830. This exhibition enabled us to unite many of our finest decorative arts pieces under a unifying theme. It will remain open through 2025 as we celebrate Rev250.

We also collaborated with miSci to develop **“Ground to Gourmet: Tracing the Origins of the Food We Love”** at Mabee Farm. The colorful exhibition takes visitors on a tour through the origins of New York State’s foods and the history that led them to our tables. Through interactive activities, displays, and historical records, “Ground to Gourmet” traces the surprising stories of culinary favorites.

We closed the long-running “Boomtown” exhibition at the museum, and replaced it with a scaled back version of “Crafted in Schenectady: the Building of a Community,” which will remain in place for 3-5 years. Finally, we conducted significant lighting upgrades in all of our exhibition galleries, made minor refreshes to ongoing exhibitions, began work on a complete redesign of the “Beyond the Pines” exhibition at the museum, and repainted an office room which will become a small exhibition space next year. We also made minor adjustments to the interpretation inside the Mabee House.

Collections

This year, we continued to photograph items in the collection, and continued working to identify and clean up duplicate records that have been added to the database over time.

We received a transfer of twelve pieces of **18th century New York furniture from Colonial Williamsburg.** The pieces were originally part of the Glen Sanders collection in Scotia, before spending several decades in Virginia. This January they made their way back north to their final home at SCHS. Most of the pieces are now on display throughout our exhibitions.

We also were the beneficiaries of an incredible gift from Sandra Lazo and Donald Layton. The Manhattan-based couple commissioned Len Tantillo to paint **“Settlement of Schenectady, 1680,”** which shows the tiny village in its earliest colonial days. SCHS received the bright, sunny painting in March, and it is on permanent display at the museum.



Programs and Special Events

We hosted over 135+ public programs this past year, with exceptional variety. We are proud that we can offer such a robust schedule year-round. Programs range from large-scale events with thousands of visitors to intimate workshops. Many programs are geared towards adults, while others target families.

Tours and More

Walking tours kept us busy throughout most of 2023. We offered standard public tours on a wide variety of subjects, along with seasonal tours like our October [Candlelight Tours](#) and December [Holiday Stockade Strolls](#). Various groups requested private tours as well. We continued to develop our nature trail use with our [Full Moon Walks](#). These evening programs have become incredibly popular, drawing more than 80 people at a time. Anecdotal evidence indicates that most of these guests are newcomers to the Mabee Farm, making this an excellent way to broaden our audience. Perhaps the most unique tour we offer, [Kayak Through History](#), continues to be popular.

Farm, Food, and Family Workshops

Throughout the year, SCHS hosted numerous family and adult programs, including the ever-popular [Mabee Maple Day](#). We were able to leverage our bumper crop of apples for a fall cider-pressing program. Many children and their families joined us throughout the summer for [Farm Kids Fridays](#). Craft workshops continue to be popular, none more so than our new felting classes. We also had a great turnout with our [Schenectady Wine Society](#) tastings and our [Drink the Seasons](#) workshops.

Winter Speaker Series

Following the successful format for the previous years, we designated the cold months for a series of expert talks with historians. Some were virtual and others were in person, for a total of 13 talks. Attendance ranged from 40-100 people.

Special Events

We hosted ten special events this year:

- [Earth Night at Mabee Farm](#)
- [Mohawk River Living History Weekend](#)
- [An Evening with Devin Lander, NYS Historian](#)
- [Howlin' at the Moon Concert Series](#), presented by Everest Rising
- [Independence Day Celebration](#), with Schenectady County
- [Mabee Farm Arts and Crafts Festival](#)
- [Mabee Farm to Fork Fundraising Dinner](#)
- [FallFest](#), with Schenectady County
- [Festival of Trees](#)
- [Liberty Flag Raising](#), with the City of Schenectady Historian



Education and Community Outreach

School Programs

2023 was a record high for attendance at our school programs. The spring season saw **2,300 students** from more than 30 different schools. In the fall, we hosted an unprecedented **1,200 students**. The vast majority of these students were 4th graders, though we also had several visits from high school and college students. This volume of traffic effectively pushed us to the limit of our operational capacity. Nearly every weekday in the relevant seasons was booked. Indeed we did have to turn a few inquiring teachers away for lack of capacity. Still, our staff, part-time educators, and volunteers did an incredible job rising to the challenge.

Integral to the success of our programs last year was a grant from the William Gundry Broughton Charitable Private Foundation. These funds were used to pay for buses, and enabled more than 700 4th grade students from the Schenectady City School District to attend our program in the fall of 2023. It is vital that we continue our fundraising efforts to continue this important partnership.

Summer Enrichment Programs

Likely owing to the success of our spring field trips, we were able to work with the Schenectady City School District to implement an extensive series of enrichment programs. This involved both in-class presentations and field trips to our site. These programs served more than 250 students multiple times throughout July and August. This is the second consecutive year we've done these programs and an optimistic sign for their longevity.

Outreach Programs

Our outreach programs served more than 500 people this past year. Most of these outreach programs cater to senior living homes, allowing us to reach an audience who largely cannot visit us at our various sites. Church groups, neighboring historic societies, and other non-profit organizations are also frequently reached through these programs, fulfilling our role as a community organization.



Library and Archives

Library Use

Visitors and research appointments: 189

Research questions: 223

Library blog pageviews: 113,200

New York Heritage Digital Collections pageviews: 11,880

PastPerfect Catalog pageviews: 8,622

Library Programs and Outreach

The library sponsored several great programs and participated in several outreach events throughout the year. Library programs included a genealogy talk by Jane Wilcox and two preservation presentations by Marietta Carr. In June, we partnered with the Schenectady County Public Library for two talks about the African American Historical Records Project and local Black history. Marietta partnered with Professor Jenn Dorsey to introduce [Siena College's History of New York Honors class](#) to archival research and biographical narrative using the Jones Family Letters collection on NY Heritage and the Harris Ottaway Collection, a correspondence collection from the 1970s-1990s.

Grant Funded Projects

The Capital District Library Council funded the digitization of our *Overseers of the Poor, Schenectady County* collection. These items were created by the overseers of the poor in Schenectady, Rotterdam, and Glenville and capture important information about the treatment and condition of poor people in Schenectady in the 19th century. The collection is available on our New York Heritage site.

We also received funding for [History Forge](#) through a National Endowment for the Humanities *Democracy Demands Wisdom* grant. We were selected as a testing partner for an open-source mapping program created by The History Center in Tompkins County, NY. History Forge combines historic maps, documents, and demographic data with a current online map to create a dynamic visual representation of our area's history. View our work on <https://schenectady.historyforge.net/forge>.

Collection Care & Preservation

The primary focus of our collections care work this year was conducting inventories of the library's books, periodicals, rare books, audio-visual collections, and digital media formats. Inventories are important projects that need to be done regularly to ensure our catalog and collections documentation are up to date and in sync with our preservation and access policies and procedures.

The library has continued to make progress in preserving and processing collections in our archives. Processing includes arrangement, description, and rehousing. This year we've completed processing on the following collections: additions to

1930

the Soroptimist International of Schenectady Collection, Hinsdill Parson Papers, Schenectady Photographic Society Collection, Pine Grove Dairy Collection, Van Epps and Poland Records, Carach Family Collection, and Melinda Myers Collection.

Digitization is an important component of the library's operations. Digitizing materials contributes to collection care and preservation by reducing the need for physical handling of materials, increasing the metadata and description for individual items, and increasing access through our online resources. Collections and materials digitized during this year include the Charles Steinmetz Glass Plate Negative Collection, Helen Marx Scrapbooks, and items from the Historic Manuscripts Collection, the General Photograph Collection and the Family Photograph Collection.

Library Resources Online

New York Heritage Digital Collections (<https://nyheritage.org/organizations/schenectady-county-historical-society>) is a free research portal to access primary sources and archival materials about the people, places, and institutions of New York State. We currently have 15 collections on our NY Heritage site, including two new collections added this year: "James Duane Letters" and "Overseers of the Poor, Schenectady County." Our most used collections this year were the Samuel Jones Family Letters, Schenectady Street Scenes, and Schenectady County Deeds.

We continued to add new posts on the Gremms-Doolittle Library Collections Blog, which can be found at <http://gremsdoolittlelibrary.blogspot.com>. The blog highlights materials from our library and archive collections as well as interesting pieces of local history.

New Library Resources, Donated and Purchased

The library added over 250 accessions of donated and purchased books, maps, photographs, genealogy research, ephemera and collections of personal/family papers and organizational records. The new archival materials in our collection include Vale Cemetery Records, Mont Pleasant and Linton High Schools Student Newspapers, Schenectady Jazz Collection, Schenectady Ancient Order of Hibernians Ladies' Division Scrapbooks, Goose Hill Neighborhood Memories Collection, and additions to the Yearbooks Collection, Documents Collection, General Photographs Collection, Family Photographs Collection, and Family Documents Collection.

Volunteers

Our volunteers are vital to the library and we appreciate their time and effort this past year! Our volunteers contributed 4,800 hours to the library and 6 new volunteers joined our team. Our volunteers worked on assisting researchers, answering remote research requests, inventorying materials, processing archival collections, creating finding aids and catalog records, digitizing materials, transcribing documents, creating metadata, and writing blog posts.



Life Saving Club
1930
Betty Oliver
Dorothy Hough
Sallie Smith
Mrs M.G. Miller - Instructor



Field Hockey
1930
Dorothy Hough
Ruth Kling
Pauline Kehoe
Betty Oliver
Barbara Reed
Wanda Jablonski
Mrs Miller - Instructor



African American Historical Records Project

For the past three years, the Schenectady African American Historical Records Project (AAHRP) has been working to preserve historical records created by African Americans in Schenectady, build relationships with memory-keepers and record creators in the Black community, and create opportunities for the general public to engage with local African American history. With funding from the Schenectady County Legislature and the Institute of Museum and Library Services, we continued the community survey phase of the project this year. The community surveys ask a range of questions that will illuminate events, people, places, and connections that are significant to local African American history. One survey requests information from individuals to better understand familial histories, interconnections and important memories of Black Schenectadians. The second survey is designed for organizations, particularly churches, community non-profits, and Black-owned businesses. This survey will

allow us to better understand Black historical networks and community spaces in Schenectady. Survey responses and conversations with members of the Black community will inform the creation of a catalog that will become a foundation for future research, preservation, and education.

An ongoing component of the project is the outreach and education campaign to promote the project and its goals, identify potential survey respondents, and educate the community on related topics such as local African American history, preservation and family history. This past year, we had information tables at events such as Juneteenth, the Common Unity Cup, Community Fathers' I AM FATHER FESTIVAL, Capital Region Kwanzaa Celebration, and the Schenectady Greenmarket. In June, we partnered with the Schenectady County Public Library to present two talks about the African American Historical Records Project and local Black history.

This past summer, we launched the Sankofa Youth Collective, an intergenerational program that would encourage and inspire Schenectady's youth around the importance of African American history, connecting to local history, and preserving the words and works of African Americans as part of the historical record. Working with the Schenectady County Connects Summer Youth Employment Program, we hired four young people to conduct oral history interviews, represent the project at community events, digitize archival materials, and research topics related to local African American history.

In the six week summer program, participants in the Sankofa Youth Collective recorded over seventy interviews with a variety of people from the Schenectady Black community, including City Council President Marion Porterfield, Rev. Catherine Patterson, DJ Ketchup, County Legislator Omar McGill, and Hamilton Hill Neighborhood Association President Marva Isaacs. These interviews cover a wide range of topics including personal experiences and memories of living and growing up in Schenectady, recollections about local Black-owned businesses and organizations, and commentaries on the current affairs of the city, particularly efforts to improve the lives of Black people. We plan to continue the Sankofa Youth Collective in the summer of 2024.

Two participants from our summer Sankofa Youth Collective (part of the African American Historical Records Project), Silas Harvard and Elijahjison Powell, elected to continue working with us after the summer program completed. Thanks to funding through the Schenectady County Connects worksite program, Elijahjison worked at the SCHS Library in the fall and early spring. He conducted research on local Black history, wrote posts for the library's blog, and helped with a variety of projects. Silas returned in January and is working on digitization projects in the SCHS Library.

Thank you to our project committee members: Miki Conn, Sophia Delamar, Philip Fields, Julia Holcomb, Johan Matthews, Adonis Richards, William Rivas, Sarah Schmidt, and Walter Simpkins. Thank you to our consulting archivists: Micha Broadnax and Kijua Sanders-McMurtry.



Brouwer House Creative

The site continued to operate as five artist studios and Sweet Sprig's retail shop. We are very grateful to the Kindl family for providing funds that enable us to preserve and share Schenectady's oldest house (c. 1735).

Volunteers

Volunteers are an extraordinary asset to SCHS and help us accomplish a variety of projects at our sites, including special events, library research, and buildings and grounds improvements. SCHS enjoys a reputation as a friendly and fun place to volunteer due to the welcoming, positive attitude of our volunteers. The board and staff at SCHS are grateful to our volunteers.

Internships

SCHS is pleased to offer internships to students in the community. This year we hosted two summer interns at our sites. They spent their time leading tours, working in collections, and writing newsletter articles.

Membership

During the past fiscal year, the Schenectady County Historical Society added 146 new memberships, resulting in a total of 853 membership units. Gift memberships were purchased for 6 people, and we had 14 business members.

We joined the North American Reciprocal Museum (NARM) Association, giving our members at the Sponsor+ levels free admission to a mosaic of 1,369 art museums and galleries, historical museums and societies, botanical gardens, children's museums, zoos, and more throughout North America. We also continued our enrollment in the Empire State Museums Reciprocal Program, enabling SCHS members to access over 30 museums, art galleries, historic sites, and other institutions across New York State at no charge.

Together, these two programs open the door to a world of discovery for our members.

*Report contributors:
Marietta Carr, Michael Diana, Audrey Humphrey, and Mary Zawacki*



2023 by the Numbers

The full profit & loss statement for fiscal year 2023/2024 is available upon request.

Operating Income: \$900,332

Operating Expense: \$699,489

Non-Operating Income:

Non-Operating Expense:

Grants: \$60,730

Depreciation: \$163,404

Special Funds/Misc: \$2,591

Grant Expense: \$61,855

Unrealized Gains: \$374,728

Other: \$225,259

Development

Foundation Support

- William G. Broughton Charitable Foundation: \$6,000
- Golub Foundation: \$500
- Mabee Family Foundation: \$1,000
- The Fred H. & Catherine Q. Kindl Family Fund: \$330,000

Grants

- County of Schenectady: \$4,000
- Erie Canalway Heritage Fund: \$2,460
- Institute of Museum & Library Sciences: \$43,000
- New York State Council of Arts: \$30,750
- New York State Archives Partnership: \$2,460
- Dutch Culture USA: \$5,000

Fundraisers (net)

- Farm to Fork: \$6,603
- Arts and Crafts Festival: \$9,000
- Festival of Trees: \$17,339

Donations

SCHS received 385 individual donations for a total of \$53,108. Thank you!

Business Sponsorships

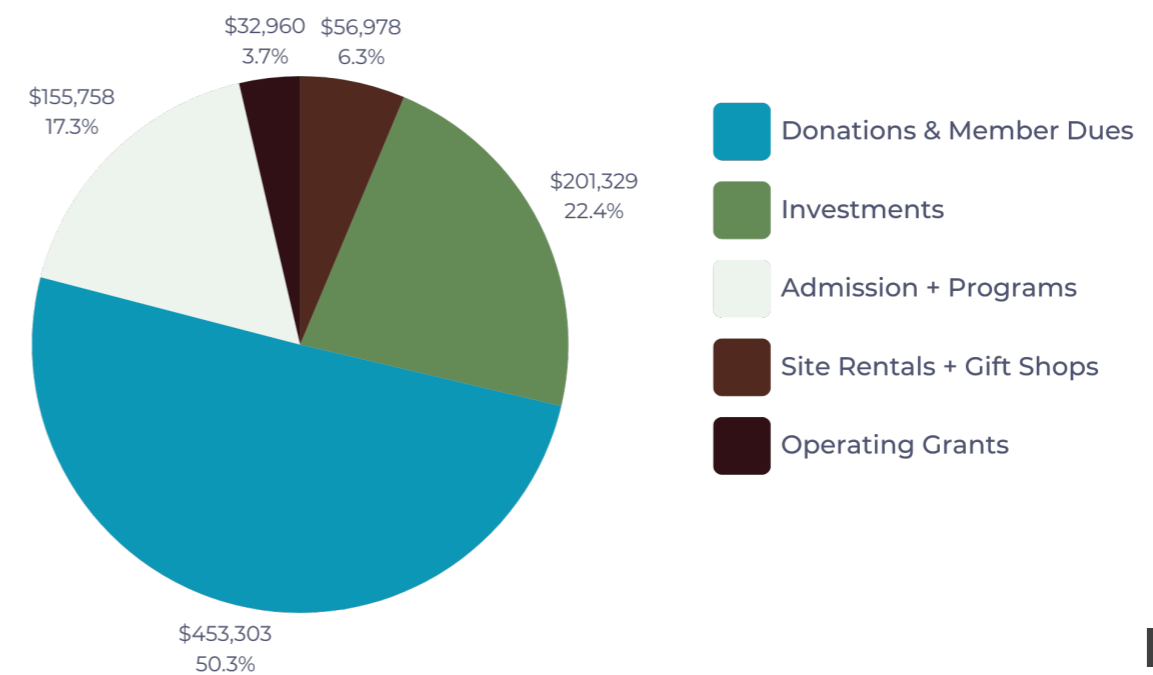
We had 14 Business Sponsors this fiscal year.

Lockkeepers

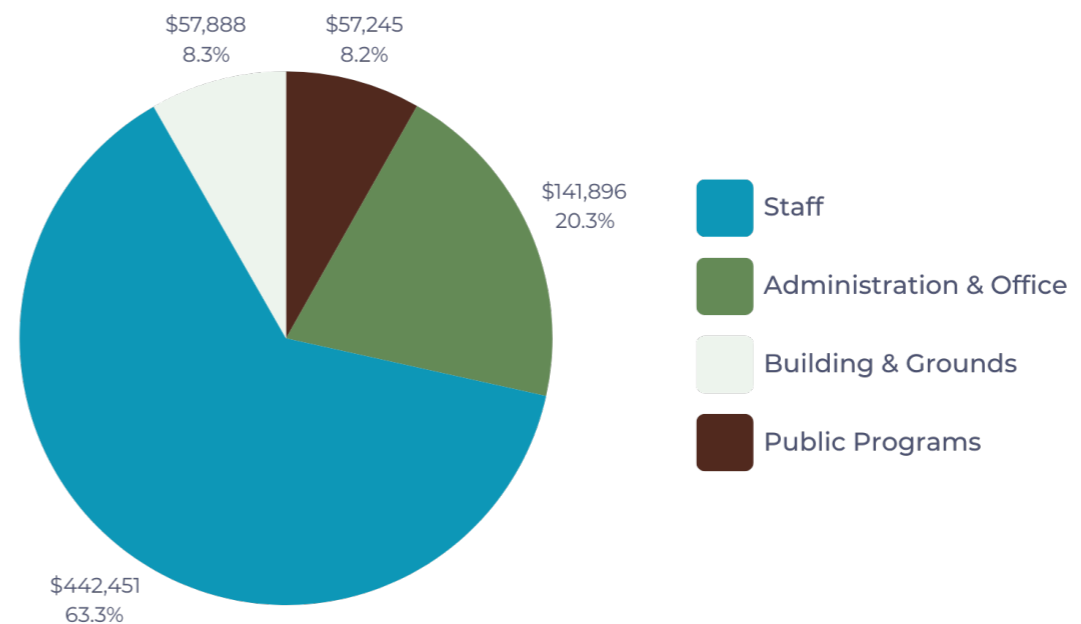
Our monthly donor program, the Lockkeepers, safeguard SCHS through consistent, monthly giving. At the end of this fiscal year, there are 12 Lockkeepers.

1661 Society

The 1661 Society, named for the year Schenectady was settled, recognizes those generous individuals who are leaving a future legacy to SCHS. We currently have 9 members.



Income



Expense



Buildings and Grounds

This year, we prioritized engaging an engineering/architecture firm to conduct a site-wide **Building Conditions Assessment** for the historic buildings at Mabee Farm. The final report reveals \$500,000 worth of preservation work, which we will be honing in on over the next five years.

Our Buildings and Grounds team also took on its usual set of challenges this year, ranging from small (installing LED lights in the museum ceramics display) to huge (the removal of the derelict building on the new property at 1180 Main St, next to Mabee Farm). Other projects included renovating the reception area at the Museum/Library with a new closet, renovating the front porch at the Brouwer House and building new steps and replacing the deck material, updating the track lighting in the galleries at all three sites, replacing the back steps to the Dutch Barn, and adding wifi to the Dutch Barn and Farmhouse.

We have an extensive list of projects for this coming year, and have already scheduled work parties for several of them. We are also in discussions with contractors for those requiring such services.

- Mark Vermilyea, B&G Committee Chair

Finance

The Profit & Loss Statement and Balance Sheet for fiscal year 2023/24 are available upon request. After our annual audit, final figures will form the basis for our IRS 990 form to be filed in August. Visit and register for the free website [www. guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org) to see our last 990 form or ones for any other not-for-profit organization in the United States.

- John Halstead, Treasurer



Minutes

Annual Meeting of SCHS | April 29, 2023

Director of Education Mike Diana opened the annual meeting of the Schenectady County Historical Society at 2:04 PM at the Franchere Education Center.

42 members attended the meeting. Trustees in attendance were: Marianne Blanchard, Bob Carney, Sarah Kirby, John Halstead, DJ Leblanc, Sheri Lullo, Chris Marney, David Trestick, and Mark Vermilyea.

Three new Trustees have been approved by the Board: Angela Commito, Chris Marney, and Bobby Mallozzi.

Four Trustees will be leaving the Board: Marianne Blanchard, Tom Dunn, Dale Wade-Keszey, and John Woodward.

The meeting was called to order at 2:04 PM by Mike Diana, who gave a summary of the past year's programs. He turned the meeting over to Mark Vermilyea to run the business meeting. Mark Vermilyea then conducted the annual business meeting. He reiterated Mike's thanks to members and volunteers, and encouraged all present to talk up the Society among their friends.

He also thanked the four board members who are departing this year for their service, and with Mike presented a plaque to Marianne Blanchard for her many years of service to the Society as she departs. He noted the names and brief backgrounds of the three new board members, and Chris Marney introduced himself to the attendees. Mark thanked the staff for their excellent work, and introduced Development Director Caroline Brown.

Finally, Mark described the two proposed bylaws changes: changing the range of trustees from 17-24 to 14-19, and increasing membership dues from 25/50 for individual/family to 35/65. Both motions passed unanimously.

It was asked how life members could use the reciprocal program to visit other museums; Mark and Sarah noted that their membership cards should work. Marianne noted that the life membership had been discontinued some time ago.

The business meeting adjourned at 2:20 PM. Mike then introduced our invited speaker, Dr. Lucianne Lavin, who gave a talk on Dutch-Native American Relationships in Eastern New Netherlands. Her talk ended at 3:45 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mark Vermilyea, acting for board secretary Bob Sullivan

Governance

This year the Governance Committee was approved for grant funding from DHPSNY to develop a new 3-5 year strategic plan. We will once again be working with NYCON for facilitator support on this venture, and intend to have the plan finished by the end of 2024.

In addition, the Governance Committee interviewed, and with full board support, approved five new Trustees that will be joining us pending membership approval at the Annual Meeting. We look forward to them bringing their energy and vitality to the group:

Jill Bogdanowicz-Wilson, a historic preservationist who earned the 2021 Community Recognition Award for her work within the Goose Hill neighborhood.

Russ Hart, a software developer and Infomatics professor in Schenectady.

Kim Waldin, an attorney and former museum educator with family ties to the construction of the Stockade in the 1600s.

Sonia Sandoval, who bridges the gap between science and creativity as a Learning Experience Designer at Union College.

Suzanne Unger, a retired high school social studies teacher who previously worked for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and served as the president of the Stockade Association.

- David Trestick, Governance Committee Chair

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY