

HISTORY CENTER

OF OLMSTED COUNTY

2023 ANNUAL REPORT





OUR VISION

To become a gathering place for the broader community that inspires and encourages the exploration of history.

OUR MISSION

Give people of all ages and backgrounds access and opportunity to learn about the past through interpretive programs and exhibits, research, publications and events.

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Chuck and Linda Willihnganz

David Winkels

Master Gardeners



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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

By Paul Scanlon | President

2023 was a busy year at the History Center,

with many programs and lectures and numerous new exhibits. The year has also been characterized by increased membership, paired with growth in staff and board, expanding to meet the services needed by the community.

A few highlights include the October Creepy Doll contest and party, which were popular once again and succeeded in bringing a younger demographic to the History Center. We established a 100th Anniversary Committee to plan the celebration of our Centennial Year in 2026. We have had several months of sponsorship for free admission during which visitation has increased.

Local writers had a big year in 2023, contributing to historical vignettes in the Post Bulletin and Rochester Magazine, particularly Tom Weber and Lee Hilgendorf. During 2023, we saw publication of new local history books, including Anrew Wood's "Life at High G-Force: The Quest of Mayo Clinic Researcher Dr. Earl H. Wood", Mary Beth Sartor Obermeyer's "When Winter Came: a Country Doctor's Journey to Fight the Flu Pandemic of 1918", as well as my (Paul Scanlon's) "Rochester Memories: Historic Tales from Med City". Less than six months before, we saw publication of Amy Jo Hahn's "Hidden History of Rochester Minnesota" and Virginia Wright-Peterson's "Rochester: an Urban Biography"

During 2023, we completed most of the work to restore the George Stoppel smokehouse and caves. We have now developed plans and begun to acquire funding for restoration of the barn with addition of educational facilities in the lower level. Restoration of the house will be the last step in the George Stoppel Farmstead Restoration. Plans are being developed for a capital fundraising campaign including businesses, individual donors, and estates. Matching funds are pledged from the Jeffris

Foundation. Wayne and the staff have developed a George Stoppel Farmstead Interpretive Plan for which they recently received a Minnesota History Award from the Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums.

In 2023 we began discussing the possibility of leasing a small portion of our campus (i.e. 3 acres) to SPARK Children's Museum. Partnering with them offers numerous opportunities for joint programming and complementary use of facilities and grounds. As we have addressed that opportunity, we have initiated a longer term planning process for more intensive use of our 50+ acre campus, particularly for educational programming. The campus plan includes more functional roadways and traffic flow, better movement of visitors, better use of outbuildings, fields and gardens, improved exhibition space, increased storage, better donor recognition and much improved presentation of our agricultural legacy. The proposed campus plan will be exhibited at the Annual Meeting of the Historical Society.

Meanwhile, we have requested and received a modest increase in funding from the City of Rochester. Olmsted County considered a further reduction in our funding (in addition to a \$48,000 cut in 2022). After hearing impact statements from the community, they did not impose the reduction. We are seeking expanded funding from the county comparable to county funding provided to historical societies in Stearns (St. Cloud) and St. Louis (Duluth) Counties.

At the end of this Annual Meeting, I will have concluded by second year as Board President and my third year as a board member. I will remain as a member of the board (non-officer) in the first year of my second three-year term. Thank you for your support of the History Center.

2023 IN REVIEW:

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Wayne Gannaway | Executive Director

2023 was a year of reclaiming the past and building a bridge to the future. Volunteers, donors, board members, and staff all played a big role in setting a course for transformation and planting seeds for future growth.

HCOC donors and members have been extraordinarily generous and last year was especially noteworthy. Your contributions really made the difference, pointing the way toward a sustainable future. Our 2023 History Mystery challenge campaign and end-of-year annual appeal raised more than in recent memory, with more people participating. A big part of creating that momentum is due to our History Mystery anonymous donor, who challenges us each summer to match their \$10,000 gift. In addition to making the match, their one other requirement is to make philanthropy fun. I also want to recognize the chair of our development committee, and in-coming president, Dr. Mark Warner. Mark is a generous donor, but he also spurred us on to create History Makers, a giving society intended to grow our family and philanthropy at HCOC.

2023 also saw many physical improvements at HCOC, for historic preservation and "curb appeal," as one of our energetic volunteers describes it. We preserved the Stoppel Smokehouse with a Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage (Legacy) grant and contributions from individual donors. Thanks to dedicated volunteers, the museum building and the schoolhouse received much needed repairs. And we replaced our timeworn c. 1980s marquee with a new, brighter sign featuring our logo.

We continued to extend our reach into the community by co-curating exhibits with community organizations and businesses. Rochester Recordings: Mosh Pits and Memories and 70 Years of KTTC spotlighted important



cultural and broadcast history in Rochester. First Alliance Credit Union once again stepped up as an exhibit sponsor, underwriting To Have and To Hold: 10 Years of Marriage Equality in Minnesota. Look for more exhibit partnerships in 2024.

Members enjoyed more members-only events in 2023, along with a great line up of lectures (free to members) and discounts on events and Mayowood regular season tours. Sponsors helped more folks experience the History Center through our Free Summer Admission program. Thank you, Home Federal and First Alliance!

We also planted the seeds of transformation. In addition to creating an interpretive plan for the George Stoppel Farmstead, HCOC began critically important master planning for our entire 54-acre property. A committee of the board continues that work in 2024. The goal is to create a long-range plan to make the entire property more interconnected, more engaging and friendlier to the public, and enhance infrastructure to support the vision.

Our plans for the farmstead helped us secure a major challenge grant from the Jeffris Family Foundation. If we match this two-to-one grant by June 2026, the foundation will contribute \$833,000 to farmstead restoration.

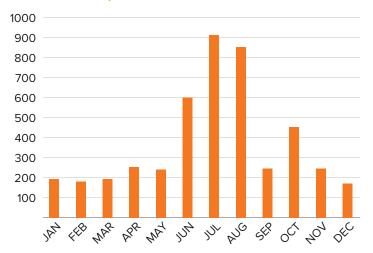
Friends, we're just getting started.



HISTORY CENTER 2023 STATS

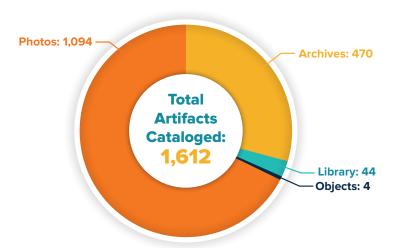
MUSEUM ATTENDANCE

4,552 Total Attendees



CATALOGED ITEMS

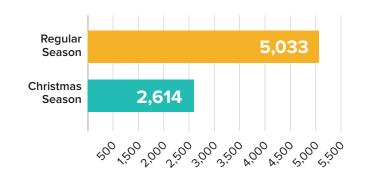
693 artifacts from donations



NEW & UPDATED EXHIBITS



MAYOWOOD TOUR ATTENDANCE



VOLUNTEER HOURS

(700 hours for Build Crew)

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS:

F1 10,920 | ② 2,149 | **У** 1,016 | **№** 286

EVENTS & PROGRAMS

Events were off to the races in 2023 with a host of classic and new events and programs.

New items included donor and member only events and weekly story times, with our classics—Hootenanny, Creepy Dolls, and Fall Fest—reappearing.

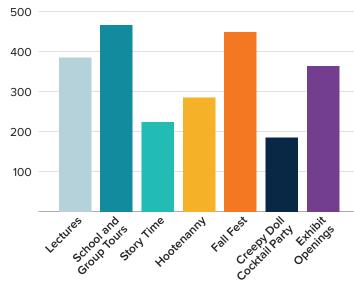
Fall Fest continues to see hundreds of smiling faces, and Creepy Dolls did so well we're returning to the Chateau Theatre for round two. Overall, we are excited for new opportunities in 2024, and we hope you are too!

COLLECTIONS

The collections departments kept plugging away at processing new and existing content, guided by a revised Collections Management Policy designed to keep staff from being overwhelmed with new donations while also making sure we focus our collecting on quality items that can play an active role at the History Center. Much time also went toward refreshing displays and creating and collaborating on new exhibits.

PROGRAMS & EVENTS

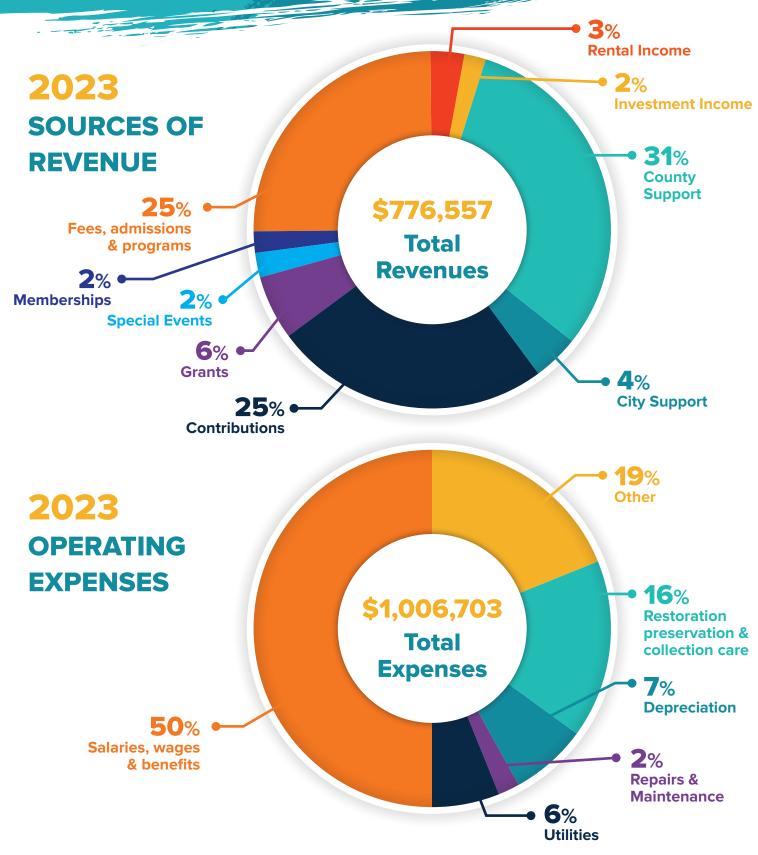
7.889 Total Attendees







FINANCIALS



STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

	2023	2022	Variance
Revenues			
Olmsted County	\$ 239,515	\$ 287,515	\$ (48,000)
City of Rochester	28,080	27,000	1,080
Contributions and grant income	247,381	698,314	(450,933)
Special events, net	13,059	25,189	(12,130)
Memberships	12,975	14,690	(1,715)
Fees, admissions, and programs, net	194,614	182,567	12,047
Rental income	25,536	24,793	743
Investment income	13,980	7,809	6,171
Miscellaneous income	1,417	1,370	47
Total Revenues	776,557	1,269,247	(492,690)
Expenses			
Salaries, wages, and benefits	498,119	384,748	(113,371)
Utilities, waste removal and security monitoring	63,016	53,942	(9,074)
Repairs and maintenance	23,977	28,589	4,612
Supplies, postage, and printing	28,455	30,061	1,606
Collection care	4,826	27,758	22,932
Professional fees	40,950	38,675	(2,275)
Contracted services	208,170	300,436	92,266
Insurance	18,317	18,012	(305)
Advertising	36,397	13,737	(22,660)
Telephone, internet, computer software and supplies	10,910	12,724	1,814
Exhibits	2,148	2,663	515
Travel, dues, conferences, meals and entertainment	6,546	5,398	(1,148)
Depreciation	64,872	64,890	18
Total Expenses	1,006,703	981,633	(25,070)
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	\$ (230,146)	\$ 287,614	\$ (517,760)



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olmstedhistory.com