

# 2005 Annual Report



*The Trenton Historical Society's mission is the study and interpretation of Trenton's history, preservation of its historic buildings and artifacts, and dissemination of information about New Jersey's capital city and its illustrious past.*

## **Introduction**

The Trenton Historical Society was founded in 1919.... For 86 years, the society has stayed true to its purpose. Recently, the group has gone through an extraordinary renaissance, recommitting to its mission through new and reinvigorated projects. The Board of Trustees has taken on new tasks while continuing to present the programs that have been the Society's mainstay for so many years. It is safe to say that the Trenton Historical Society has never been so active and effective. We have raised more money, taken on more projects, and had the support of more volunteers than ever before.

## **Organizational Structure**

A Board of Trustees elected by the general membership each year at the Annual Membership Meeting governs the Trenton Historical Society. The 2005 Annual Meeting was held at Katmandu on Sunday, January 9<sup>th</sup> and featured a presentation entitled "Washington's Forgotten Victory", by guest speaker Wayne Daniels. The organization's officers were then chosen from the fourteen board members by the trustees themselves. The 2005 Board of Trustees consisted of:

Michael Olszak	- President
David E. Collier	- Vice President
Gary Nigh	- Treasurer
Wendy M. Nardi	- Recording Secretary
Sara Andre'	- Corresponding Secretary
Randy Baum	
Jean M. Bickal	
Robert Coumbe	
Arthur S. Forman	
Jerome J. Harcar	
John D. S. Hatch	
Sally Lane	
Joseph Teti	
Algernon Ward	

Each one of the society's trustees brings his or her own unique talents and expertise, professional experience, and innovative ideas to the organization. This diversity, coupled with the Trustees' common love of history, concern for the city and people of Trenton, and dedication to preserving the City's rich historical past, make the Trenton Historical Society the strong and successful organization that it has evolved into.

# Artifacts Committee

The Trenton Historical Society's Artifacts Committee is committed to saving Trenton's past one small piece at a time. The committee's goal is to identify and acquire items from Trenton's past, to preserve them, and to make them available to historians, researchers, and the general public. The repository for the items acquired by the Artifacts Committee is the Trentoniana Room of the Trenton Public Library. Artifacts sought by the committee fall into several categories including:

- Schools – Trenton's educational institutions, especially through their publications (yearbooks, newspapers, etc.) provide an invaluable record of the many generations of Trentonians who have passed through their doors.
- Industries & Businesses – The slogan, "Trenton Makes, The World Takes" reflects the importance industry played in the creation of our city. Industrial catalogs, along with other records, provide a glimpse of not only what was made here, but also of the lives of the industrialists and workers who lived here.
- Middle/Working Class Families – The stories, images, and words of members of Trenton's elite families are well represented in collections of historical material. Photographs, letters, and other documents that reveal "ordinary" living are needed. We're looking for snapshots of kids at play, photos of a club outing, church bulletins, etc.
- Ethnic Groups – Items that shed light on the contributions that different ethnic groups have made to Trenton, such as records or publications of community, religious, or social groups are a specific focus of the Artifacts Committee.
- City Neighborhoods – While some city neighborhoods are strongly tied to a specific ethnic group, others are not; they are communities with an independent identity. Their stories, as told in civic association records and photos of neighborhood activities (picnics, clean-ups, meetings, etc.), reveal the vibrancy of urban life.
- Buildings – The Committee is always interested in obtaining items relating the City's historic buildings, whether the structure is a well-known landmark or a private residence. Trenton's building stock is an incredible link to the past and items such as old photos of buildings help us to better understand the city's physical history.

Since its formation in 2003, the Artifacts Committee has purchased hundreds of documents, artifacts, and photographs relating to Trenton's history. These fascinating, tangible items will help bring Trenton's past to life for future generations. In 2005, the Artifacts Committee acquired 97 items. These objects included 61 documents, 19 photographs, 11 yearbooks, and 6 other miscellaneous objects. 56 of the items were purchased with money from the Artifacts fund and 41 of the items were gifts to the society.

The artifacts donated to the Society in 2005 were representative of many different time periods in Trenton's history. Special thanks are extended to the following people for their generous donations.

Earl Delozier - 1944 and 1946 Immaculata from Immaculate Conception HS

Mrs. Karl Jens - 1931 Cathedral from Cathedral High School with a list of that's years graduates

Jean Bickal - March 11, 1811 United States Gazette

Delores Eveland - old photo of GAR Wilkes Post

Albin Wilcenski - 1958 and 1959 Immaculata Yearbooks

Joe Frysz - Blank pad from Griffith Electric

Carl Voz - 1840's Trenton, NJ letter

Candy Jens - 1931 Cathedral Yearbook,

Gary Nigh, Chair of the Artifacts Committee, generously donated 35 items to the collection including advertisements from old Trenton businesses, photographs, a birth certificate from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and concert programs.

The most spectacular artifact purchased by the Committee in 2005 was a mosaic fireplace surround. The 19<sup>th</sup> century fireplace comes from the music room of the mansion of business tycoon and former Trenton mayor "Mighty" Frank Magowan. Magowan built the mansion on Clinton Avenue (part of which still stands) and then lost everything he owned when in 1897 he fell in love and ran away with the wife of a business partner. This beautiful reminder of Trenton's past is currently on display in the Trentoniana Room in the Trenton Public Library.



Frank Magowan



The Magowan Fireplace

## Education Committee

2005 saw the formation of the Trenton Historical Society Education Committee. The Education Committee was created to fulfill the society's mission of studying and interpreting Trenton's history. The group conducts tours, plans educational presentations, and publishes the Historical Society's newsletter. It is also involved with other local groups such as the planning committee for the annual Patriots Week celebration in December. In its first year, the Education Committee has already accomplished a great deal.

In 2005, the Education Committee arranged for the creation of a new logo for the Trenton Historical Society. Board member and Education Committee Chair Jean Bickal had the idea and her sister-in-law, Kristin Bickal, a graphic designer who lives in Minneapolis made it a reality.

The Battle Monument represents Trenton's important part in the Revolutionary War. The big "T" looks like an I-beam, which represents Trenton's place in the industrial history of this country.





A new membership brochure was also designed which contains a map of and information on downtown museums, historical sites, and research resources. Also, work has already begun on a new map brochure that outlines the sequence of events of the Revolutionary War Battles of Trenton and their relationship to the current streetscape. This map will be a valuable tool for residents, students, and tourists seeking to understand the dramatic events of 1776-1777 amid the busy modern streets of downtown Trenton.

### **Bank of America Trenton Heritage Days Tours**

From May 31st through June 3rd, The Trenton Historical Society along with the City of Trenton's Department of Recreation, Natural Resources and Culture held a series of tours to enlighten and entertain the public in conjunction with the Bank of America Heritage Days celebrations. Three lunchtime tours were offered using a trolley to take tour-goers to sites around the city. Starting at 12:15 and again at 1:15 from the Lafayette Yard Marriott Hotel, these free half-hour trolley tours explored three different themes in local history. The tours were a great success and over 200 tour goers filled up every trip.



Heritage Days Trolley Tour

#### *Industrial Trenton on Tuesday, May 31<sup>st</sup>*

The slogan "Trenton Makes, The World Takes" recalls the days when Trenton was an industrial powerhouse. This tour visited some of the sites that bear testament to this lofty slogan. Sites included the location of Trenton's first industry: Mahlon Stacy's gristmill on the Assunpink Creek; one of the few remaining pieces of the 1830's Water Power; the old N.J. Steel & Iron works, now Katmandu Restaurant; and some of the remaining structures of the Roebling factories.

#### *Trenton African-American History on Wednesday, June 1<sup>st</sup>*

This tour touched on some of the people and places that are important to Trenton's Black Community. Churches, particularly the Mt. Zion A.M.E. and Shiloh Baptist, and institutions, such as the Higbee-Nixon and Lincoln schools and the former Carver Center, were the focus of this outing.

### *Revolutionary War Battlefield on Friday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>*

For many people Trenton history means the Battles of Trenton. Little remains of the sleepy colonial town that saw a crucial turning point in American history except the streets. While traveling these thoroughfares the tour guide recounted the events of the battles. Important locations included the Trenton Battle Monument, where American forces entered the town and the Broad Street Bridge where most of the action of the second battle took place.

### **Downtown Walking Tours on Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup>**

In addition, to the themed trolley tours, walking tours of downtown Trenton were offered during the Heritage days weekend. Covering more than 300 years of Trenton history, tour-goers walked the streets where history was made. These tours were made possible by the financial support of the Bank of America and the N.J. Historical Commission.

### **Lunch Time Walking Tours**

On the second Friday of each month during the summer, the Trenton Historical Society's Education Committee offered free 30-minute downtown walking tours geared toward workers on their lunch break. The tours left from the corner of State & Broad Street and covered a variety of historical sites and topics. The sites included:

#### *May 13 - Mill Hill Park*

While the park itself is little over 30 years old, it contains within its borders some of the most important sites in Trenton's over 300 years of history. Along the Assunpink Creek at the Broad Street Bridge crossing the first European settlement of what became Trenton took place. It was this bridge that was also the major focus of fighting during the Second Battle of Trenton in January of 1777. Twelve years later, these events were commemorated with a famous reception of George Washington on his way to New York for his inauguration. As Trenton grew during the 19<sup>th</sup> & early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, this area was developed at the expense of preserving this important historical site. With renewed interest in the events that took place here due to the approaching Bicentennial, Mill Hill Park was created in the early 1970's.

#### *June 10 - Trenton's Two City Halls*

The old City Hall, built in 1838, has a varied & storied past, while the new City Hall reflects a vibrant, booming Trenton at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The highlight of this tour was the Edward Shinn mural in the council chambers of the new City Hall.

#### *July 8 - Historic Churches*

Religion played an important part in the lives of early Trentonians. The churches explored on this tour include the Friend's Meeting House, Saint Michael's Episcopal, and the First Presbyterian Church. Despite a summer downpour, a hand full of tour-goers were welcomed into these downtown houses of worship.

#### *August 12 - Fraternal Lodges in Downtown Trenton*

A variety of social groups thrived in Trenton during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. While many of these groups have dwindled, some of the beautiful buildings they erected remain. The first and third Masonic Temples and the former Elks lodge were the focus of this tour. Fortunately, tour-goers were welcomed into the former Elks lodge, which is undergoing restoration by a local environmental firm that has taken up residence on the first floor.

## Patriot's Week

Members of the Trenton Historical Society were also involved in the city's annual Patriots' Week celebration, held each December. Trustee and Education Committee Chair Jean Bickal gave a presentation on Friday December 30<sup>th</sup> at Gallery 125 entitled, "Women's Clothing in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century." The presentation covered various aspects of Revolutionary War era women's fashion including types of garments, and differences in materials and styles.



Gary Nigh and Jean Bickal in 18<sup>th</sup> Century attire.



Visitors enjoying the presentation



Jean demonstrating various period garments

## Preservation Committee

Trenton has two of the most important resources needed to reinvent itself: an incredible building stock and intact, historic neighborhoods. These assets, combined with our parks, monuments and public buildings, comprise Trenton's physical heritage – a heritage that is unique, potentially very attractive, and increasingly in demand. Across the country, progressive cities have capitalized on their heritage assets to redevelop themselves into desirable places to live, work, and play. From Boston and Providence to Baltimore and Savannah, city leaders have recognized the latent value in dormant structures and tired landscapes. The renovated buildings that were once eye-sores are now the very reason that people choose to visit, invest, and live in these neighborhoods.

Early in 2001, a small group of preservation minded Trentonians came together in response to the threat of demolition of a large number of buildings across the city. During these discussions, it became apparent that for Trenton to reap the many benefits of preservation, more people would need to be educated and involved. We need a broad base of preservationists that can be proactive, and not merely react to each crisis. This is the idea behind the Trenton Preservation Committee.

The purpose of the committee is to preserve Trenton's historic assets and to encourage heritage oriented redevelopment by:

- Informing the public about the importance of preservation and the opportunities that exist
- Advocating for preservation and stabilization of important assets
- Advocating for change in state and local policy and procedures that increase the opportunities for preservation

- Engaging in projects that stabilize, preserve, and market these historic buildings

The Preservation Committee was very active in 2005, taking on a number of different projects including physical stabilization of endangered buildings, sponsoring preservation oriented lectures and events, and the completion of a nomination of the Trenton Ferry District to the National Register of Historic Places. The Committee's activities are outlined below.

## Top Ten List



Broad Street Bank

For Preservation month in 2003, the Preservation Committee released the Trenton's Ten Most Endangered Building List. In the historical society's Summer 2005 Newsletter, we provided updated status reports on the buildings. Fortunately, since the list was created, none of the buildings were lost and we are hopeful that several of them may soon be saved. Unfortunately, many remain vacant and continue to deteriorate.

### 1. Broad Street Bank

The Broad Street Bank Building is the only example of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century skyscraper in Trenton. It was built in three phases: an eight-story structure in the style of Louis Sullivan built in 1900, followed in 1913 by a 12-story addition and by another 8-story addition in 1923. The additions use architectural details from the original structure so the entire building appears as one cohesive design. The building includes a number of city milestones. Besides being the first skyscraper in Trenton, it had the first steel superstructure (built of I beams invented in Trenton), the first elevator, and the first revolving doors. It stands today as an important reminder of Trenton's prosperity in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

*Update: The bank building has been purchased by a private developer who wants to put retail and office space on the lower levels and apartments above. At the end of 2005, construction on the building had already begun.*

### 2. Horsman Doll Factory

The Horsman Doll factory complex was the main manufacturing location of the very popular Horsman family of dolls. Built in the early 1930's, it was once considered the largest doll factory in the United States. The one-block square complex, which at its peak had more than 800 employees, consists of two connected, three-story, brick mill buildings, plus several one story brick additions. Because this site is the dominant feature in an otherwise residential neighborhood, it provides an important reminder of a time when workers still walked to work from homes clustered around places of employment. Doll manufacturing at the site ceased in the 1960's, though sections of the complex housed various enterprises for some time thereafter. The complex has been completely vacant for approximately 10 years, leaving a substantial vacuum in the neighborhood. But these handsome buildings are structurally sound and offer enormous market-rate redevelopment potential. Unlike many other cities, preservation minded builders in Trenton have not put loft-style condominiums and apartments in former factories. Since there are at least a dozen other buildings in the Trenton vicinity with similar prospects, the Horsman Doll Factory could exemplify for the entire region the way the new housing can be provided in sensitively converted industrial buildings.

*Update: The building is still vacant and quickly losing its windows to neglect and vandalism. Although there are no current plans to demolish the building, there are no development plans.*

### 3. Mercer County Courthouse

Soon after the formation of Mercer County in 1838, steps were taken for the erection of a courthouse. Built at the corner of Broad and Market Streets, the original Greek Revival structure served the public until 1903.

Trenton and Mercer County have grown enormously since their founding, and the current grand, classical Beaux Arts structure was built to accommodate this growth. This impressive sandstone building, with its pediments, columns and arches, occupies an important downtown gateway. Not only a Trenton landmark, the Court House is perhaps one of the best-known buildings in Mercer County. Still in daily use, the building is in dire need of restoration. Talk of renovation coupled with whispers of demolition have won this building a high ranking on the Top 10 Endangered List.

*Update: No work is currently planned. The County Executive has stated that the courthouse functions will move to a new building.*

#### 4. Trenton Psychiatric Hospital

The New Jersey State Hospital Historic District occupies much of the Trenton Psychiatric Hospital's approximately 100 acre campus in Trenton and Ewing Township. The hospital was founded in 1848 at the urging of Dorothea Dix and was first known as the New Jersey Lunatic Asylum. It was the first institution established in New Jersey for the mentally ill. The hospital today includes an extensive campus with large, primarily stone buildings constructed from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries amid beautifully landscaped grounds. Noted Philadelphia architect John Notman and nationally significant landscape designer Andrew Jackson Downing were responsible for the property's original plan. The historic district buildings include the main hospital, a cafeteria, a laundry, a firehouse, a shop, a laboratory, a powerhouse, the gatehouse, and several residences for the Superintendent, the Commissioner, 12 doctors, and a nurses' dormitory. The New Jersey State Historic Preservation Office has determined that the site is eligible for inclusion on the State and National Register of Historic Places. The primary threat to the complex is demolition, although neglect is also taking its toll on the district.

*Update: The hospital complex is still an unacknowledged and underused resource of incredible value, between the open space and historic buildings, this property is a valuable asset. A new threat lies in the possibility of some of the buildings and open space being sold by the State for possible redevelopment.*

#### 5. Trenton Savings Fund Society

The Trenton Saving Fund Society was incorporated in 1844 and began business on July 20, 1847, in an office in the original Trenton City Hall. After moving several times, the managers decided to build a new banking house at the current location on East State Street, which was completed in April 1901. The white granite, steel structure building, designed by New York architects Moweray and Affinger in the Beaux Arts style, is one of Trenton's most beautiful buildings. An equally distinguished classical vocabulary was used on the building's interior, intended to give all who did business there a sense of pride and security. The central banking room's stained glass ceiling was covered over with acoustic tiles as part of an ill-advised modernization. Now vacant for several years, the building is beginning to show signs of deterioration, neglect, and vandalism.

*Update: The building is still vacant and continues to rapidly deteriorate from neglect.*

#### 6. The Delaware Inn/Champale House

During the late 1700's and early 1800's, it was common for timber to be moved by raft down the Delaware River from upstate New York to Philadelphia. Timbers were laid side by side and lashed together, then dismantled and sold at their destination. The sight of these rafts at Trenton was common; in the spring of 1828, as many as a thousand rafts containing some 50 million board feet of lumber passed by on the river. The raftmen invariably made an over-night stop in Lambertton (now part of Trenton's South Ward), where several inns were established to accommodate this traffic. Of these, the Red Tavern, later known as the Delaware Inn, was among the most popular. With deforestation and the increasing popularity of railroad transportation, the river was used less for transporting logs and the inns suffered. In 1891, the Trenton Brewing Company, owned by the Kuser Family, was built on the adjacent property and the Delaware Inn was taken over for the brewery offices. During World War II, Champale was manufactured at the plant and the site prospered until December 31, 1986, when it closed. The brewery was demolished in 1998 but the Delaware Inn was spared. Vacant and neglected, this riverfront structure is an ideal candidate for re-use.

*Update: A housing development near the building is proposed and some plans have been discussed for the building but nothing solid has materialized. For instance, the Trenton Port Museum is interested in using the site.*

#### 7. D&R Canal Houses

The Delaware and Raritan Canal opened for business on June 25, 1834. Trenton, at 56 feet above sea level, was the summit with several locks lifting boats between Bordentown and Trenton and seven more locks lowering them from Trenton to New Brunswick. Trenton was the hub of a transportation network that connected the city to major markets in Philadelphia, New York, and Baltimore, and to raw materials (primarily coal) from Pennsylvania. At the blast of a coal boat or the whistle of a yacht, bridge tenders swung Trenton's bridges aside to make way for canal traffic. Each lock tender and bridge tender was provided with a home as a condition of his employment. In December of 1932, the canal closed to commercial traffic. The D&R Canal, along with the houses, was entered on the State and National Registers of Historic Places in 1973 and the following year Governor Brendan Byrne signed a bill creating the D&R Canal State Park. The three canal houses in Trenton have had tenants over the years, but both the Calhoun Street and Hanover Street houses are now vacant and in disrepair.

*Update: No change.*

#### 8. Ferdinand Roebling Mansion

John A. Roebling, German immigrant, inventor of wire-rope cable, and designer of the Brooklyn Bridge, left a legacy of creative thinking to the three sons – Washington, Charles, and Ferdinand – who would carry on the family business. The Roebling brothers built several grand homes along West State Street from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but 222 West State Street is the only Roebling mansion still standing. It was the home of Ferdinand W. Roebling Sr., secretary-treasurer of John A. Roebling & Sons Company. Both his son, Ferdinand W. Roebling Jr. (the driving force behind the fundraising effort to build Trinity Cathedral) and grandsons lived in the house over time. Later, it was used for legal offices. The building is listed on both the State and National Registers of Historic Places and has weathered several bouts of controversy since 1990, when a local developer wanted to demolish it for a new office building, and later when the city planned demolition. Saved by the efforts of local preservationists and the City of Trenton, there is talk of restoring and expanding this important site, but currently it stands vacant and neglected.

*Update: The NJ State League of Municipalities is purchasing the property from the City of Trenton. Construction documents for the renovation and expansion of the structure are complete and currently out to bid.*

#### 9. Golden Swan/Caola Building

For almost two centuries, the building at the southwest corner of Front and Warren Streets stood as an important commercial establishment. When built, it was one of the largest structures in town. It has been the home of the Golden Swan Tavern, the Sign of the Swan, the Swan Inn, and Mechanics Hall. In addition to taverns, the building at one time housed the Daily True American. Later uses included an upholstery business, a furniture store, a tinsmith shop, and from 1921 until the 1990's the Caola locksmith business. A keystone of the Warren Street Historic District, the building is currently an eyesore. Recent development possibilities raised hope for the restoration of the building but the future of the site is uncertain.

*Update: The building has been purchased by a developer and is marked for rehabilitation. Recently, a rear wing portion was removed as the structure was failing.*

#### 10. General Philemon Dickinson House/The Hermitage

This stone house was originally built and occupied by the Rutherford family. It was purchased in 1776, shortly before the Battle of Trenton, by General Philemon Dickinson, commander-in-chief of the New Jersey militia during the Revolutionary War. The house was occupied for many years by the Dickinson family, which entertained many famous people within its walls including George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, John Witherspoon, Generals Greene and Knox, and Joseph Bonaparte. The exterior

of the house was considerably remodeled in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and its interior was altered for us as an apartment house in 1905. Listed on both the State and National Registers of Historic Places, this important piece of Trenton’s history is a prime candidate for rehabilitation.

*Update: This building was recently purchased by a new owner, but currently sits vacant and deteriorating.*

### **Library Tour**

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, the Trenton Historical Society partnered with the Friends of the Trenton Public Library and the Library itself on a bus tour of Trenton’s libraries. About 25 tourgoers met at the headquarters of the Library on Academy Street. After a tour that included the Trentoniana room, the group took a bus to each of the Library branches, East Trenton, Skelton, Cadwalader, and Briggs.

At each location, tourgoers learned about the history of the branch from THS volunteers while Library staff talked about the diverse communities that they serve.



Tour-goers visiting several of the Trenton Library branches

### **Building Blocks**

On Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, the Trenton Historical Society Preservation Committee kicked off Preservation Month with a free historic preservation event for adults and children called “Building Blocks.” The event was held at the New Jersey State Museum Auditorium on West State Street. For the adults, the programs included a showing of *New York: The City and The World 1945-2000*, episode seven of the PBS/American Experience documentary series produced by Ric Burns. For children, there were hands-on activities and exploration of West State Street to learn more about historic preservation. The film showing and activities were followed by a reception, where guests talked about the film, how lessons learned from New York City apply to Trenton and other New Jersey cities, and how to get involved in addressing these issues. Building Blocks was sponsored by CitySmiles, the Trenton Preservation Committee/Trenton Historical Society, and Friends of the New Jersey State Museum.



Children participating in Building Blocks

### **Architectural Tour of Trenton Central High School**



On May 14<sup>th</sup>, The Trenton Historical Society, along with students of Trenton Central High School, sponsored an Architectural Tour of the extraordinary Trenton Central High School building. Two tours were held in the morning and started in the buildings front lobby. Student and historical society tour guides escorted participants through the entire building, showing off the architectural highlights, as well as the current educational programs. Preservation Committee members John Hatch, Glenn Modica, and Karl Flesch provided tour goers with information about the renovations proposed for the building. The tour was a fantastic opportunity to learn about Trenton Central High School's history, its architecture and future plans for renovation and expansion.

Trenton Central High School was completed in 1931 and includes marble walls in the lobby and auditorium, beautiful



plaster detailing and a grand, Georgian-revival exterior. Visitors got a chance to see the gorgeous auditorium, typical classrooms, the current library and the proposed library, as well as locations special to students and alumni. It is our hope that this event was the first of many where the Trenton Historical Society and the students of Trenton Central High School will work in partnership to learn about Trenton's history. Proceeds went to the HS Scholarship fund and the Trenton Historical Society. Over 90 people attended, including TCHS alumni, local residents, and architectural fans.

### Clean Up on Centre Street



The Preservation Committee is extremely excited to announce that in 2005, it began its first hands-on preservation project in conjunction with the Lambertson Historic District Committee. On Saturday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, at 125-127 Centre Street. Committee members and other volunteers spent the morning removing debris and clearing vegetation from the yard of an abandoned Queen Anne house. This building was selected to be the first of what are hoped to be many hands-on preservation & stabilization projects undertaken by the committee. This grand old Queen Anne

style house had fallen on very hard times and this event was a great way to get it started back on the road to recovery.



Volunteers cleaning up the backyard

### Stephanie Plum Daze Festival

On June 25, from 1 to 5 PM, Crime Stoppers of Greater Trenton hosted the first annual Stephanie Plum Daze Festival celebrating the fictional Trenton bounty hunter and her creator Janet Evanovich and her newest novel, *Eleven on Top*. As part of the festivities taking place on West Lafayette Street in front of the Lafayette Yard Marriot Hotel, THS partnered with Crime Stoppers to run bus tours of Chambersburg and other Trenton landmarks found in the novel.

### Stop the Wrecking Ball

On Saturday, November 19th, the Trenton Historical Society held its fourth annual Stop the Wrecking Ball fundraiser for historic preservation. The event took place at Liederkrantz Hall, located at 1027 South Clinton Avenue. This historic site was built in 1887 as a German community hall and served as one of the centers of the immigrant community's social life. In the spirit of the buildings wonderful history, guests that evening were treated to a performance by the Main Squeeze Orchestra, the only all-female Accordion Orchestra in the western world. The building is currently being rehabilitated for use as headquarters of the EFK Group (a local public relations firm).

A wonderful selection of appetizers was catered by Chambers Walk and for the first time, Wrecking Ball guests were able to enjoy an open bar. Once again, those in attendance were able to bid on original artwork, Trenton memorabilia, and goods and services donated by Trenton businesses as part of the Wrecking Ball's silent auction. This year's auction included some great items including a classical revival fireplace mantle circa 1895, and a beautiful quilt depicting the Ferdinand Roebling Manson at 222 West State Street, made by Nancy Breland. All of the proceeds from the Stop the Wrecking Ball went to support the work of the Preservation Committee.



Quilt depicting 222 W. State St. by Nancy Breland



Trentoniana display set up by Wendy Nardi



Main Squeeze Orchestra



Silent Auction Items

*Special Thanks to everyone who was gracious enough to donate to the Silent Auction. They are:*  
Artifacts Gallery                      Gallery on Lafayette                      Michael Olszak

Cie Stroud  
Dr. Nancy Breland  
Joe Teti  
Diamonds  
Hunter Research  
Lisa Kasabach

David Collier  
Jean Bickal  
Sara Andre'  
Karl Flesch  
Jeff Andre'  
Sally Lane

Conduit  
Peter & Elizabeth Yull  
Evans Chiropractic  
Beverly Kidder  
John Hatch & David Henderson  
Nelida & Raphael Valentin



*Special Thanks to each individual and organization that supported the Wrecking Ball through the purchase of an advertisement in the event program. They are:*

Bayville Holdings  
Clarke Caton Hintz  
Hunter Research  
Trenton Makes  
Coldwell Banker  
Environmental Connection  
Richard Grubb & Associates

1100 Dental  
EFK Group  
Old Mill Hill Society  
Wachovia  
Triangle  
Hiltonia Association  
Trenton Downtowner

Bollinger Insurance  
Harrison Hamnett  
Segal Commercial Real Estate  
Adams & Associates  
Cadwalader Heights Civic Association  
Kelly Ingram Decorative Finishes  
Weidel Realtors

A special note of thanks must go out to the 2005 committee chair, Jennifer Leynes. After steering the ship for the past three years, Jennifer has handed over the reigns to Glenn Modica who will chair the committee in 2006. Jennifer has been involved with the Wrecking Ball since the very beginning and has selflessly given her time and effort to ensure that the event was successful each year. Thanks for all of your hard work Jennifer!

The 2005 Wrecking Ball Committee:

Jennifer Leynes  
John Hatch  
Sally Lane  
Megan Ruf

Sara Andre'  
Jerome Harcar  
Glenn Modica  
Jean Shaddow

Jean Bickal  
Karl Fleisch  
Gary Nigh

# 2005 Programs



## **1864 Baseball Game**

On October 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Trenton Historical Society sponsored a vintage 1864 baseball game between the Flemington Neshanic Baseball Club and the Mutual Baseball Club of New York. The teams are non-profit organizations dedicated to educating the public on the history of the sport of baseball while entertaining the public and having a great time playing. The two clubs utilized authentic nineteenth century baseball uniforms and equipment. In the spirit of the day, the Trenton Historical Society sold bags of

peanuts and lemonade. Held in historic Cadwalader Park, the game was well attended and the weather was beautiful.



And the pitch.....



Fans getting a lesson on 19<sup>th</sup> Century baseball rules

## **Hunter Research Presentation of Eagle Tavern Artifacts**

*Voices from the Past.....Faces out of the Earth.*



On Sunday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, the Trenton Historical Society hosted their annual fall program at the Carriage House Visitors Center of The William Trent House. Over sixty guests showed up to hear Richard Hunter of Hunter Research talk the treasures uncovered from the yard of the historic Eagle Tavern. Those in attendance learned about this “cultural

trove unsurpassed in the archaeological record of American stoneware” and interconnections between this important local site and other early industrial locales in Trenton. The program was made possible by a grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission.



THS Vice President David Collier introduces Richard Hunter



Incredible artifacts discovered in Trenton



Richard Hunter addresses the audience

## *Other Important 2005 Events*

### **Website Update**

The Trenton Historical Society's website, launched in 2001, has proved to be an increasingly useful tool for sharing historical data and information on upcoming Society events with the community. In the summer of 2005, the website received a complete makeover, which made it both more attractive and easier to use. Thanks to an operating support grant that the Society received from the New Jersey Historical Commission, the Society's website was updated and now features an "About Us" section that includes the THS mission statement, a roster of the Board of Trustees, and the Society's Annual Reports. Plans are in the works to add additional material including the Society's Bylaws, the Mill Hill Park and Eagle Cotton research reports, and the full text of the Trenton Ferry District application. A navigation bar was also added to the site to make it more user-friendly. The website can be visited at [www.trentonhistory.org](http://www.trentonhistory.org). In addition to the website update, in 2005 the Trenton Historical Society received 428 emails requesting assistance with research on a wide array of Trenton related topics. This is a substantial increase from the 276 emails we received in 2004.

### **Recognition by NJ Historical Commission**

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Trenton Historical Society website. At the top left is the logo, which features a large blue 'T' with 'TRENTON' above it and 'HISTORICAL SOCIETY' below it. To the right of the logo is a navigation bar with links for Home, Our Society, Our History, Our Community, Our City, and Special Days. Below the navigation bar is a 'Welcome' section. The main text reads: 'The Trenton Historical Society, founded in 1919, is a non-profit, non-ecopsi volunteer organization dedicated to studying and preserving Trenton's history, preserving its historic buildings, and educating the general public about New Jersey's capital city and its distinctive past. Learn more about us through these pages. Our Preservation Committee is focused on protecting and restoring our historic neighborhoods as well as individual structures of care. The Education Committee is working on communicating education about Trenton's history to residents, visitors and students. Our Artifacts Committee works to save and make available to researchers the smaller pieces of our heritage. Your membership dollars allow us to continue and enhance the on-going curatorial and projects of the Society. Explore the pages of this website or contact us to learn more. The Trenton Historical Society has regular committee meetings, as well as, special educational activities events. Please join us!' Below this is a section titled 'Our city's history can be explored through the website's pages. Some of the sights and sounds that tell our story can be found here, as well as, written history such as the 1929 History of Trenton and Trenton Old and New. These narrative histories are supplemented with the first person accounts of prominent Trentonian Edward Hill's diaries, the day-by-day event chronicles found in the Daily Free Press's Chronological Index, and advertisements about some of the way Trenton could have. Various other documents about Trenton, its history and the historical society are also available through the website.' Another section says: 'If you're seeking your Trenton ancestor try our research services at look for yourself through city directories, city directories, high school yearbooks, and cemetery listings.' A final section states: 'More information about the City of Trenton is available through pages on buildings, our historic district, a detailed historical overview of the North Ward, and information on how Trenton voters got their names. Through our local links page, explore other websites that offer information about our area, its history, and interesting facts: 1999'. At the bottom, there is a logo for 'Historical Commission' and a message: 'The Trenton Historical Society received an operating support grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission, a division of the Department of State. We thank the HHC for its generous support.' At the very bottom, there is a small 'Site Map' section with links to various website pages.

In April of 2005, Trenton Historical Society Trustees Gary Nigh and Jean Bickal represented the Society at a ceremony, held at the War Memorial, to recognize recipients of grants from the New Jersey Historical Commission. This year, the Society received two grants from the Historical Commission. The first was a project grant that was used to assist the Society in preparing a National Register nomination for the Trenton Ferry Historic District in South Trenton. The second was an operating support grant.



### **First Staff Member Hired**



The Trenton Historical Society is happy to announce that in 2005, the organization's first paid staff member was hired. Jonathan Kinney accepted the part-time position of Coordinator in June and his duties will include assisting with administration, operations, programs, education, historic neighborhood redevelopment and stabilization, and communications/outreach. Jonathan will be working closely with the various committees and the board to help the Society accomplish its goals.

Jonathan is originally from northern New Jersey. He graduated from The College of New Jersey with a B.S. in Law & Criminal Justice in 1999 and an M.A. in History from William Paterson University in 2005.

### **A Note from the Coordinator**

Dear Friends of Trenton History,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Trenton Historical Society's Board of Trustees for inviting me to be a part of their organization. In the short time that I have been a part of the Society, I have already seen what an important role this organization plays in the local community. I am truly impressed and inspired by the dedication and hard work of the Trustees as well as the other volunteers and committee members who do so much for the City of Trenton. It is an honor to be working alongside others who share my passion for history and who are committed to preserving our history for future generations. I am very excited to be part of the Historical Society's effort to utilize Trenton's rich and fascinating history to benefit the city and its residents. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Jonathan Kinney  
Coordinator  
Trenton Historical Society

# Budget – Calendar Year 2005

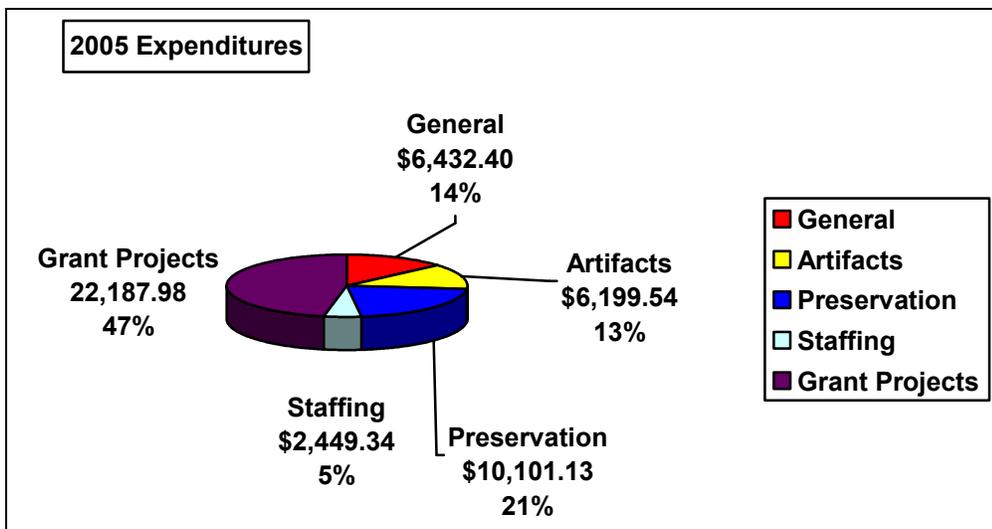
The Trenton Historical Society is a New Jersey Non-Profit Corporation and has a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.

<b>2005 Starting Balance:</b>		<b>\$49,885.20</b>	
<b>General Fund</b>			
	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Income</b>	
Membership	--	\$3,610.00	
Donations	--	\$220.00	
Interest	--	\$316.55	
Annual Corporate Filing	\$25.00	--	
Charitable Registration	\$30.00	--	
Postage/Copies/Admin	\$322.14	--	
P.O. Box Rental	\$48.00	--	
Dues/Memberships	\$211.00	--	
Website/Computer	\$119.95	--	
Sunshine Fund	\$100.00	--	
Telephone	\$128.08	--	
Annual Dinner	\$1,195.50	\$727.36	
Banking Fees	\$198.49	--	
Education Committee (Speakers/Brochures)	\$4,054.24	--	
Tours	--	\$1,672.56	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$6,432.40</b>	<b>\$6,546.47</b>	
<b>Ending Balance</b>			<b>\$5,185.23</b>
<b>Artifacts Fund</b>			
	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Income</b>	
Purchases	\$5,502.24	--	
Research Services	--	\$4,606.55	
Donations	--	\$1,100.00	
Professional Development & Training	\$697.30	--	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$6,199.54</b>	<b>\$5,706.55</b>	
<b>Ending Balance</b>			<b>\$848.07</b>
<b>Preservation Fund</b>			
	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Income</b>	
Donations	--	\$1,020.00	
Fundraising Events	\$8,878.64	21,156.05	
Projects	\$97.64	--	
South Trenton/Ferry Historic District	\$1,124.85	--	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$10,101.13</b>	<b>\$22,176.05</b>	
<b>Ending Balance</b>			<b>\$42,489.92</b>
<b>Staffing</b>			
	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Income</b>	
Part Time Coordinator	\$2,449.34	\$80.00	
Grants	--	\$7,000.00	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$2,449.34</b>	<b>\$7,080.00</b>	
<b>Ending Balance</b>			<b>\$9,630.66</b>
<b>New Jersey Historical Commission Grants</b>			
	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Income</b>	
Fiscal Year 04 & 05 Project Grants	\$14,839.43	\$14,130.00	
Fiscal Year 05 Operating Support Remainder	\$7,348.55		
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$22,187.98</b>	<b>\$14,130.00</b>	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$47,370.39</b>	<b>\$55,639.07</b>	
<b>2005 Ending Balance:</b>			<b>\$58,153.88</b>

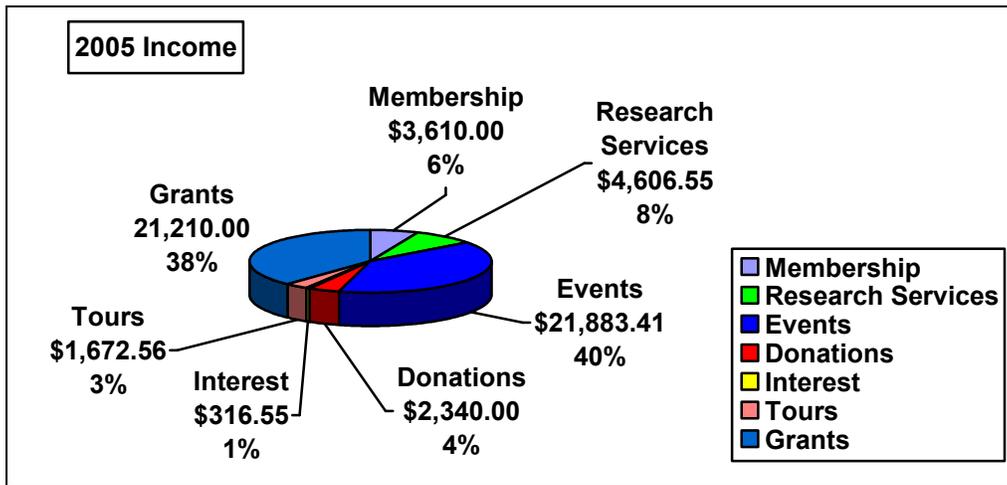
The table on the previous page summarizes the Trenton Historical Society’s income and expenditures for 2005. Over the course of the year, the organization spent \$47,370.39 and took in \$75,587.98. These figures include funds that were awarded by the New Jersey Historic Commission and that were subsequently spent on projects funded by those grants. The first project was the analysis of the important artifacts retrieved from the Eagle Tavern site performed by Hunter Research. The second project was the preparation of a National and State Register of Historic Places nomination for the Trenton Ferry Historic District. The grant funded financial activities also included the staffing category. Made possible by an Operating Support grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission, the Trenton Historical Society hired and paid a part-time staff member beginning in June of 2005.

The remaining financial activities of the THS are divided into three categories, General, Preservation, and Artifacts. The General category includes educational program activities, membership, operating expenses, and other items not covered by the Preservation Fund or Artifact Fund. The Artifacts Fund was used to purchase Trenton related objects of historic value. The Preservation Committee expenses went towards organizing and supporting various fundraising events and preservation projects, such as the Trenton Ferry District Nomination.

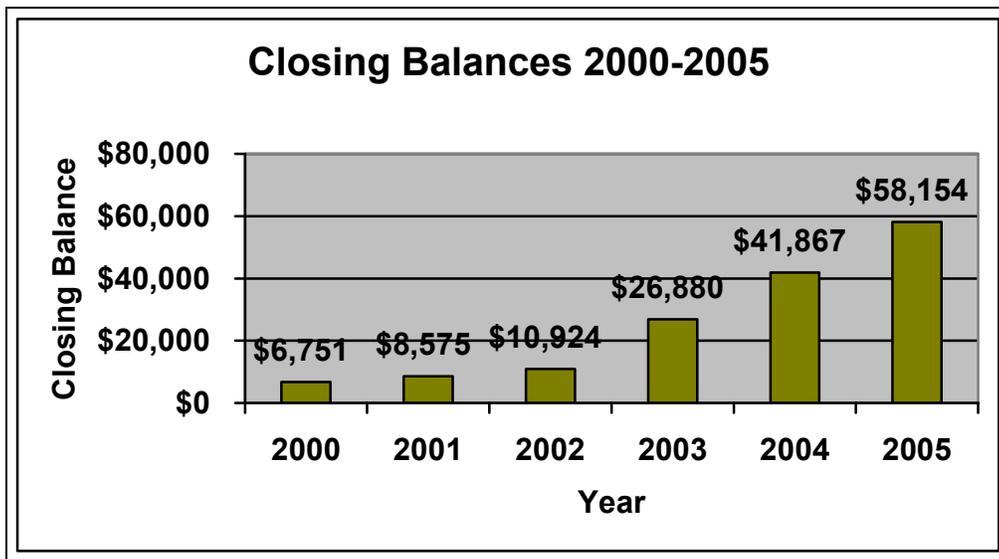
The following graph illustrates the breakdown of the society’s expenses.



The Trenton Historical Society’s income was taken in through seven main sources: membership, research services, donations, fundraising events, interest, tours, and grants. The following graph illustrates the breakdown of the society’s income. The Trenton Historical Society would like to extend a very special thanks to the generous folks that made donations to the Society in 2005 and helped to make it the organization’s most successful year to date!



In 2002, the Trenton Historical Society’s total closing balance was \$10,924. In 2003, the closing balance was \$26,880. At the end of 2004, the Society’s closing balance was \$41,861.47. As you will see in the following graph, the Historical Society’s 2005 closing balance was \$58,153.88. Once again, the organization has shown consistent financial growth that will allow it to take on even more challenging preservation oriented projects and to have an increasingly large impact on the community.



## *Looking Ahead*

The Trenton Historical Society's goals for 2006 are:

To continue to promote Trenton's history and physical heritage while also promoting awareness of the City's endangered buildings and historic sites.

To continue the Society's series of successful preservation and history oriented events including lectures, tours, workshops, and fundraisers as well as adding exciting new events and programs to the schedule.

To continue to acquire Trenton related artifacts for the Trentoniana Collection

To restart the Society's internship program in conjunction with local colleges.

To explore the possibility of obtaining office space or some other physical location for the Society to operate out of.

To continue to find innovative ways to combine tourism with historic preservation.

Trenton Historical Society  
P.O. Box 1112  
Trenton, NJ 08606  
(60) 396-4478

***We're using our past to build our future.***