



GREENE-DREHER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

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Mission

To preserve, protect and promote the history of Greene and Dreher Townships and to assure that this legacy is passed on to future generations.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The publishing of our Annual Report is a comprehensive way for the Greene-Dreher Historical Society as well as its members to take stock of the year past and all that was accomplished.

As this was the second year of the pandemic, we again had to work in ways that were altered from those previous. We offered outdoor events such as tours and programs several times throughout the summer, and we were able to hold an open house onsite in the fall. We held educational programs at the Promised Land State Park, and we partnered with the Newfoundland Public Library as well.

Our Strategic Plan allows us to look to the future while rooted in the present. A strong plan enables us to make day-to-day decisions based on our long-range goals. This plan encompasses our many facets—buildings, collections, finance, publishing, and the many programs and offerings we wish to bring to our members and the public.

Museums and Collections had an exciting 2021. Among our endeavors, we partnered with East Stroudsburg University and loaned to them our Native American artifacts which were put on display at the university. A relationship has been established between us that we hope to build upon in the future.

There is no escaping expenses and, as always, our biggest items were the maintenance of our buildings and the preservation of the historic cemeteries. We received a technology grant that enabled us to purchase equipment that allowed the Board of Directors to meet via Zoom. We anticipate using this platform to offer workshops and engage with members as opportunities arise.

Echoes from the Greene Hills has been well received. The format has allowed our members to be more involved with short articles, photos, memories, and “Letters to the Editor,” and they have been encouraged to do so. Our website continued to offer informative articles and virtual exhibitions, most notably “Upcountry Quilts.” Several video presentations were posted on our YouTube channel, and we continued to post updates and promote events on our Facebook page.

Mentioned earlier, our cemetery preservation endeavors are ongoing and daunting, but it is an important part of who we are and what we do. So many of these historic graveyards have been abandoned, and they hold the key to so much of our history. This year the restoration work was completed at Kiptown Cemetery with a rededication event taking place onsite.

We would not have been able to accomplish any of this without *you*, our members, especially those listed on the last page of this Annual Report. Your belief in what we do continues to drive us forward as an organization. It is humbling, and for that we say *thank you!*

—Carla Smith, President

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Our Strategic Plan is intended to be a guide and a resource for the Board of Directors in making decisions on the welfare and actions of the organization. In reviewing and updating our Strategic Plan, we defined five primary goals:

- Develop a strong leadership team to improve community involvement, programming and communication.
- Establish solid funding sources and financial practices to become financially sustainable.
- Improve the preservation of GDHS collections and provide better interpretation to the community.
- Advance knowledge and understanding of local history through research, writing, speaking engagements and various publishing projects.
- Assess the condition of our facilities to determine how best to preserve their historic character and maintain their long-term viability.

We further defined strategies to achieve these goals. Lastly, we broke them down into actions that were reasonable and attainable within a three-year period. Our Strategic Plan is an evolving document that will change over time as our actions have effects.

MUSEUM & COLLECTIONS

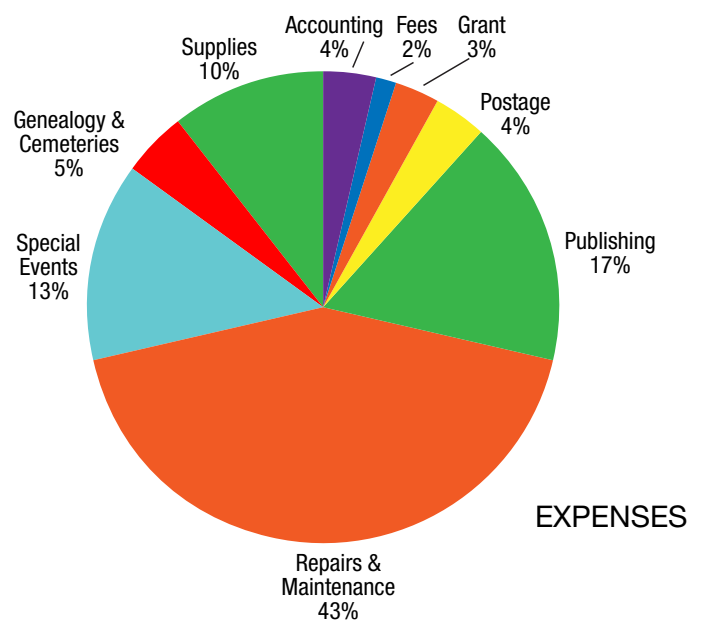
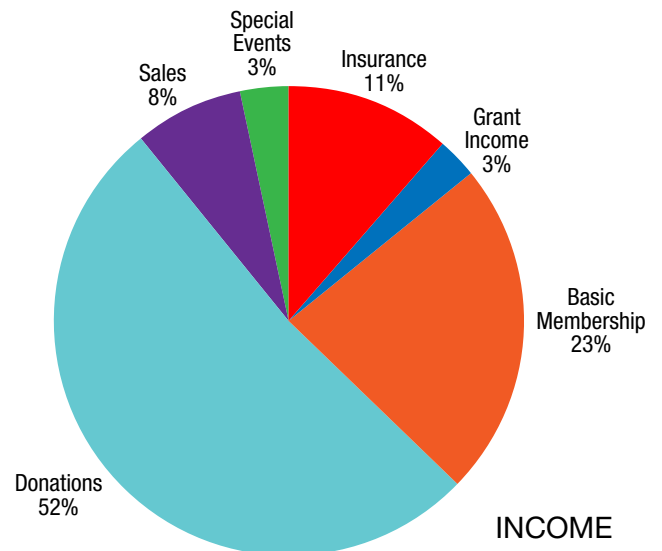
In partnership with East Stroudsburg University, the Society loaned its collection of Native American artifacts to the university for its new exhibition, “Living Legacies—Community Connections.” The opening in November coincided with Native American Heritage Month.

We provided photographs and narratives to the Wayne County Historical Society for a new exhibition at their Museum featuring the area’s first pharmacies.

With Peggy Bancroft Hall remaining closed through September, the Collections Committee continued to work through a backlog of donations and bring order to the storage rooms. Research was done to ensure that our collected objects are interpreted correctly and preserved with the highest standards of care and processing.

A comprehensive Collections Policy was created by the committee and adopted by the Board of Directors, and updated accession procedures were implemented to guide our volunteers during the process of accepting items that relate to the history of the Greene-Dreher area.

FINANCIALS



Income—As in previous years, the majority of the Society’s income was derived from membership dues and public support, including generous donations from individual members and Business Partners. The Society was the beneficiary of a \$900 grant for a technology upgrade. Most of the remaining income came from the sale of our books and other publications.

Expenses—The largest expenditure was for repairs and maintenance of Peggy Bancroft Hall, including the museum, grounds and outbuildings. Printing was the second highest expenditure, followed by administrative costs. Finally, the ongoing preservation of six historic cemeteries is an important part of the Society’s work, and this expenditure is offset by donations to the GDHS Cemetery Preservation Fund.

TELLING OUR STORIES

For more than four decades the Historical Society has preserved and celebrated the rich history of Greene and Dreher Townships and the Wallenpaupack Valley. We believe that the stories of the people who lived here and their cultural and economic circumstances and experiences are worth remembering and preserving for tomorrow's generations. The Board of Directors conducted a member survey in early 2021 in which members cited learning about local history and being part of a community as their most valued member benefits. The response rate was 26 percent. Members expressed interest in attending virtual presentations and more than half viewed content on our website and YouTube channel. While in-person programming resumed in 2021, we continued to build a stronger online presence and employ new strategies for sharing our narratives and museum collections with those beyond our Greene-Dreher borders.

PUBLICATIONS

Echoes from the Greene Hills— Our newsletter contains announcements about the Society, its programs, recent acquisitions, and other activities. A new section called “Stories from the Past” continues our longstanding tradition of first-person narratives and family histories, as well as carefully researched articles. Other new features are “Member Musings” and “Hearing From You.”

GDHS Website — The website is an easy way for members and friends to stay connected to Greene-Dreher's past. The articles under “Learn & Share” cover a wide array of topics and are illustrated with photos, maps, and other images selected from the Society's extensive archives. They are written to inform and entertain readers who are interested in the history of the Wallenpaupack Valley and its region. Virtual exhibitions offer new possibilities for visitors to view our collected items. For example, “Upcountry Quilts” features a gallery of full-color photographs of locally made quilts from the late 1800s through the early 1900s, with an accompanying article about Ladies Aids and the women who made them.

GDHS YouTube Channel

Our “History at Home” series on the GDHS YouTube channel, created in 2020, features six video presentations on various topics of interest, including “The History of Leather Tanning in Ledgedale” and “Greene-Dreher Veterans of the Great War.” With hundreds of views and 20 new subscribers, this has proven to be an effective means of engaging a wider audience in the unique history of our community.

GDHS Facebook Page

With 732 engaged followers, our Facebook page allows members and friends to connect with each other and with the community and to share photographs, memories, suggestions or just chat. It has also proven to be an effective way to keep everyone up to date on what's happening at GDHS—new initiatives, current events, fundraisers, and helpful resources.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

With Peggy Bancroft Hall remaining closed for most of the year, the Society forged new partnerships with community organizations to deliver educational programs at offsite locations and reach new audiences. Talks and workshops were held in the auditorium or the amphitheater at Promised Land State Park, and in the Community Room at the Newfoundland Public Library.

- *History and Tour of Historic Ledgedale* by Bernadine Lennon. Guided tour included Lacawac Sanctuary and the James Beard cabin at Goose Pond Scout Reservation.
- “*History and Technique of Fly Fishing*” by Gene Shultz
- “*Stone Age in the Poconos*” by Russell Cramer
- “*Flintknapping Stone Tools and Arrowheads*” by Richard Poirier
- “*The Technology of the Atlatl Spear Thrower*” by Richard Poirier
- “*The Infamous Walking Purchase of 1737*” by Frank Salvati
- *On the Road to Women's Suffrage—Pennsylvania's Justice Bell* by Carla Smith and Bernadine Lennon

CEMETERY PRESERVATION

The Society operates a Cemetery Preservation Program for five of the six abandoned cemeteries in our area—Gilpin, Hazelton, Wolfe, Simonstown, and Kiptown Cemeteries—and volunteers with our Adopt-a-Cemetery Program care for their grounds on a regular basis. The restoration work completed at Kiptown Cemetery culminated in a special event held at the cemetery in May. The “*Rededication of Kiptown Cemetery*” included remarks by Ellen Drake on the historical significance of the site, a rededication ceremony led by Pastor Arthur Frey and a vocal selection by Julie Hazelton Gebhart, followed by a tour of the cemetery.

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Your Gift, Your Legacy

To ensure our future financial stability, the Historical Society established a Legacy Fund in 2020. The fund is managed by the Wayne County Community Foundation. You can leave a lasting legacy to the GDHS Legacy Fund by simply naming the Historical Society as a beneficiary on any of your assets, such as a life insurance policy or IRA, or through a will or trust. Planned Giving allows you to set up financial instructions that support the charities you believe in and ensure that they will continue to have a positive influence on the community far into the future. Certain types of Planned Giving may have the additional benefit of reducing estate taxes, taxes paid on capital gains and federal income tax. For more information on the GDHS Legacy Fund, please contact Bernadine Lennon at 570-857-0882 or info@greenedreherhs.org.