

# *Trenton Historical Society*

## *2006 Annual Report*



Mercer County Courthouse  
Built 1903

*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 87 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**

The Trenton Historical Society is governed by a fourteen member Board of Trustees. The trustees are elected by the general membership each year at the Annual membership Meeting. The organization's officers were then chosen from the fourteen board members by the Trustees themselves. The 2006 Board of Trustees consisted of:

Michael Olszak	– President
David Collier	– Vice President
Sara Andre	– Corresponding Secretary
Wendy M. Nardi	– Recording Secretary
Jean Bickal	– Treasurer
Randy Baum	
Arthur Forman	
John Hatch, AIA	
Jerome Harcar	
Sally Lane	
Gary Nigh	
Joseph Teti	
Algernon Ward	
Helen Shannon	

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 is.

## **Committee Activity**

A vast majority of the work done by the Trenton Historical Society is handled by the organization three standing committee's, Artifacts, Education, and Preservation. The following section is an overview of the committees' activities over the course of 2006.

### **Artifacts Committee**

(Committee Chair – Gary Nigh)

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 obtained thousands 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 2006, the Artifacts Committee acquired 127 items. These objects included 56 documents, 28 images, 29 yearbooks, and 14 miscellaneous items. 10 of the items were purchased with money from the Artifacts fund and 117 of the items were gifts to the society.

The artifacts obtained by the Society in 2006 were representative of many different time periods in Trenton's history. Special thanks are extended to the following people for their generous donations:

Robert Blattenberger -	1892 Plan of Saint Francis Church Lands
Earl Delozier -	1944 Immaculata
Unknown -	1943 War Bond Drive Photo of Submarine on Montgomery Street
Unknown -	<i>A North American Family History</i> by Leo J. Titus, Jr.
Dorthea Wright -	Memorabilia (THS Newsletters, City's 250th Anniversary, Battle Monument)
Kirn Library (Norfolk, VA) -	Photo of Unidentified Man taken by Kemp, 137 South Broad Street
Artifacts Gallery -	Photo of Unidentified Trenton Street Scene, possibly the Feast of Lights
Rick Scully -	1949 Baseball Trophy/ piece of Snyder Trophy
Denise Fanelli -	Copy – 1946 Cathedral
Marie Matson -	Copy – 1950 Crucible

### **Education Committee**

(Committee Chair – Jean Bickal)

The Trenton Historical Society's Education Committee was founded in 2005 to fulfill the Society's mission of studying and interpreting Trenton's history. Over the past year, the education committee has become very active in the community and has increased the public visibility of the Trenton Historical Society immensely. The committee conducts tours, such as the weekly downtown walking tour and summer lunch-time tours, plans educational presentations, and produces the Society's brochures and newsletters. In 2005, the education committee arranged for creation of the society's new logo and created the new membership brochure which provides a map of and information on downtown museums, historical sites and research resources. A map brochure that outlines the sequence of events of the Revolutionary War Battles of Trenton was published in 2006. The Education Committee is also involved with other local groups such as the planning committee for the annual Patriots Week celebration in December and the Trenton Department of Recreation.

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



From May 30<sup>th</sup> through June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 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. The free lunchtime tours were held over the course of three days, with two tours leaving each day from the Lafayette Yard Marriott Hotel. Each day's tours explored a different aspect of Trenton's history.

This year's trolley tours covered the following topics:

5/30 - Trenton Moves West – Cadwalader Heights & Berkeley Square

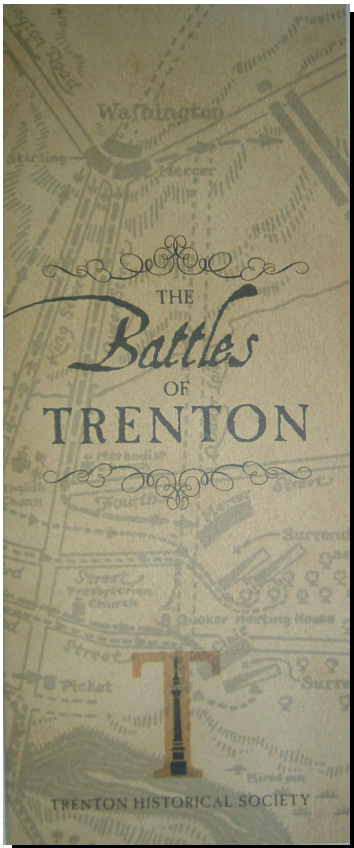
6/1 – South Trenton

6/2 – Mill Hill & Old Trenton

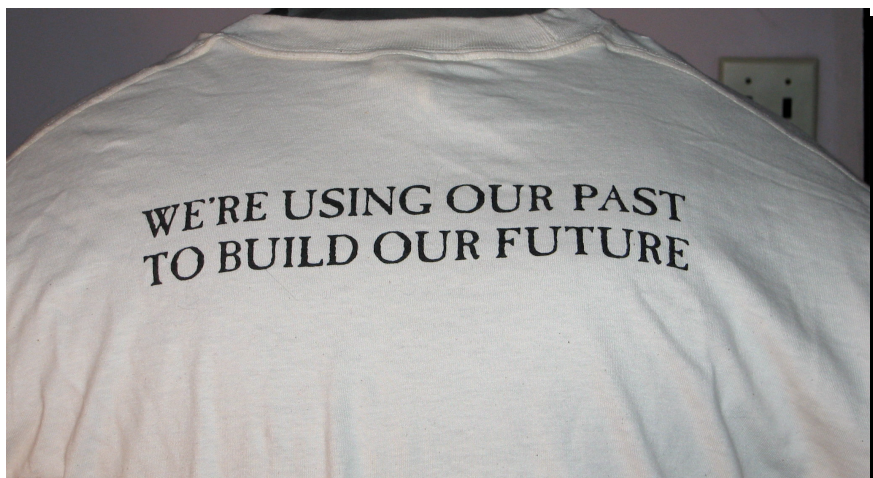




As part of the Heritage Day celebration, the Education Committee also took several historic photos of the City including streetscapes and aerials and had them blown up and mounted on weather proof material. These images were then hung on the construction fence in front of the New Jersey State House on West State Street. In the image at left, pedestrians take a look at one of the historic images. The Committee plans to add additional images to this collection for display at various public events.



Other 2006 Education Committee projects included a wonderful new brochure entitled "The Battles of Trenton" and new t-shirts that can be purchased from the historical society. The brochures feature written description of the First and Second Battles of Trenton accompanied by wonderful maps of the military movements within the city over the modern streetscape, which makes it easier for visitors to understand the sequence of events and to find key battle sites. The t-shirts feature the new Trenton Historical Society logo on the front and the Society's motto "We're using our past to build our future" on the back.





Education Committee Chair Jean Bickal also gave a Battle of Trenton Tour to New Jersey's new Commissioner of Banking & Insurance, Steven Goldman. In the photo at left, Jean stands third from the right. Mr. Goldman is to her left.

The Education Committee was also asked by local filmmaker Beth Daly to assist her in locating additional funds to complete her educational movie *Tribute to Trenton*. The Committee was successful in its efforts and the Society and Ms. Daly were awarded a grant of \$1,000 by the Mercer County Cultural & Heritage Commission.

### **Preservation Committee**

Committee Co-Chairs – John Hatch & Sara Andre)

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 2006, taking on a number of different projects including the completion of a physical stabilization project, a political candidates' forum on preservation, and the very successful 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Stop the Wrecking Ball fundraiser. The Committee's activities in 2006 are outlined below.



### *Candidate's Forum*

On April 19, 2006, The Trenton Historical Society sponsored a preservation forum for Trenton's mayoral and council-at-large candidates. The event was held at the Trenton Contemporary Club on West State Street. The event provided the candidates with an opportunity to share their positions on historic preservation and revitalization within the City. Instead of the traditional debate format, each candidate received a packet of information prior to the event, which included questions for the candidate to review and develop prepared responses that were then presented at the forum. The forum was moderated by Ron Emrich, Executive Director of Preservation of New Jersey and was extremely well attended.



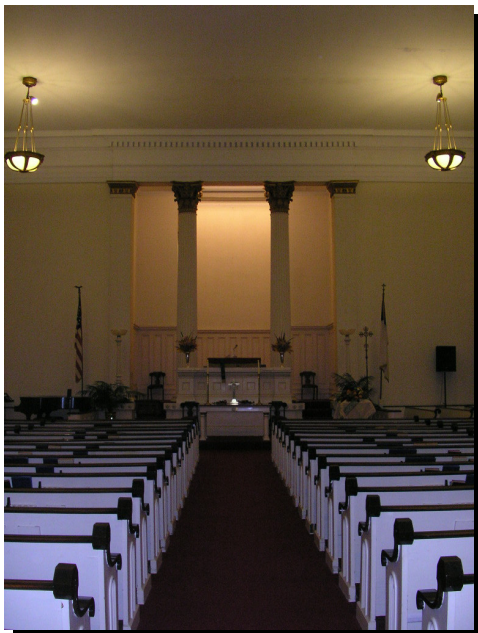
Audience members listen to the candidates.



The candidates and Moderator Ron Emrich.

### *Stop the Wrecking Ball*

Without question, the Trenton Historical Society's most successful and most anticipated event each year is the Stop the Wrecking Ball fundraiser, which raises money to support the activities of the Preservation Committee. The 2006 Stop the Wrecking ball was no exception. This year's event was held on Saturday evening November 18<sup>th</sup> at the historic First Presbyterian Church on State Street. Guests enjoyed live music by the Princeton University Gospel Choir and pianist, open bar, hors d'oeuvres and buffet stations, and a silent auction of Trenton memorabilia. We are very happy to announce that the 2006 Stop the Wrecking Ball was the most successful yet. The event was attended by 135 people and raised in excess of \$15,000 for preservation.



First Presbyterian Church Interior

This year's Stop the Wrecking Ball was a celebration of the Preservation Committee's past successes and the unveiling of the updated Trenton's Ten Most Endangered Buildings list. For Preservation Month in 2003, the Preservation Committee released its first Ten Most Endangered Buildings List. The good news is that not a single building from that first list has been lost. We are very proud to report that three buildings are successfully undergoing rehabilitation and have been removed from the list: Broad Street Bank, Golden Swan, and Ferdinand Roebling Mansion. However, the remaining buildings are still threatened. They are: Horsman Doll Factory, Trenton Psychiatric Hospital, Trenton Savings Fund Society, Mercer County Courthouse, General Philemon Dickenson House, The Delaware Inn/Champale Office, and Delaware & Raritan Canal Houses. This year, due to a combination of deterioration, neglect, and development pressures, Trenton Central High School, the Douglass House, and Higbee Street School have been added to the Endangered List.



Guests view Silent Auction Items

Wrecking Ball guests were also offered an opportunity to take a candlelight tour of First Presbyterian Church's historic cemetery. The cemetery is one of the oldest in the city and several notable historic figures from the City's past are buried there. Brief biographical sketches for eleven of the more notable individuals interred on the church property were prepared and included in the tour brochure. The biographical sketches were prepared by student members of Phi Alpha Theta, the College of New Jersey's history honors society. This wonderful group of students was kind enough to donate their time and research skills and also assisted in the preparations for this evening's event. The Trenton Historical Society extends its deepest thanks to the members of Phi Alpha Theta.

We would also like to extend our gratitude to event Chairs Glenn Modica and Natalie Featherston for organizing a wonderful event and to the sponsors of this year's event for their support of Trenton preservation:

### **President's Circle**

Bayville Holdings, LLC

### **Patrons**

Janssen

Jay Smith, Weidel Realtors

### **Friend**

Adams & Associates, P.C.

Cadwalader Heights Civic Association

Capital Health System – Fuld Campus

Clarke Caton Hintz

Coldwell Banke

Community News Group

CSG Environmental

Decorator's Consignment Gallery

Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission

H.M. Royal, Inc.

Harrison-Hamnett, P.C.

Holt Morgan Russell

Hunter Research

M.P. Hershman, PE

Mercer County Community College

Mercer County Office of Economic Development

New Jersey Chamber of Commerce

Old Barracks Museum

Richard Grubb & Associates

Segal Commercial Real Estate

Sterns & Weinroth

Trenton House Association

Wells Fargo Home Mortgage



Guests mingle at Stop the Wrecking Ball 2006



Princeton University Gospel Choir Performs



### *Trenton Landmarks Commission Preservation Award*

On May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006, the Trenton Historical Society was given a preservation award by the Trenton Landmarks Commission to acknowledge the Society's ongoing commitment to preserving, protecting, and increasing public awareness of Trenton's significant architectural gems, and specifically in recognition of the stabilization work on the Centre Street Queen Anne that was completed this year. The award ceremony was held at the City Museum at Ellarslie.

## **Other Programs & Events**

### *Annual Meeting*

In addition to the activities of the Historical Society's various committees, the organization traditionally holds its annual Membership Luncheon at the beginning of each year. The 2006 Annual Membership Meeting was held at the Roman Hall on January 15<sup>th</sup>. The program included the recognition of the 2005 Board of Trustees, and nominations and elections of the new Board for 2006. The business portion of the meeting also included a vote to amend Article V of the Society's by-laws concerning the election of the Society's officers.

The by-laws did read:

Article V  
Officers

Section 2. Elections: All officers shall be elected by the Board of Trustees from among its members *at the regular annual meeting of the Board of Trustees*, by majority vote of those present.

The amendment, which passed, reads as follows:

Section 2. Elections: All officers shall be elected by the Board of Trustees from among its members *at the first regular meeting of the Board of Trustees after the regular annual meeting of the general membership*, by majority vote of those present.

The program also included a silent remembrance for long-time Trustee Margaret Peg Zimmerman, a wonderful preview of Beth Daly's film "Tribute to Trenton", which, as mentioned above, the society was received a grant to support from the Mercer County Cultural and Heritage Commission. Finally, the members in attendance were provided with an overview of recent Trenton Historical Society activities by Sara Andre and John Hatch of the Preservation Committee, Gary Nigh of the Artifacts Committee, Jean Bickal of the Education Committee, and the Coordinator Jonathan Kinney.



Guests enjoying the Annual Membership Meeting

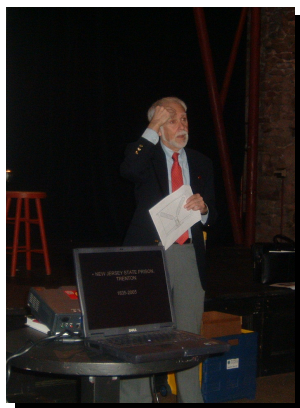


Beth Daly discusses her new film

### *Spring 2006 Program*

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Trenton Historical Society arranged a very special presentation by Harry Camisa & Jim Franklin. These two gentlemen are co-authors of *Inside Out: 50 Years Behind the Walls of New Jersey's Trenton State Prison*. The book described Mr. Camisa's fifty-year experience as a prison guard in the State maximum-security state prison.

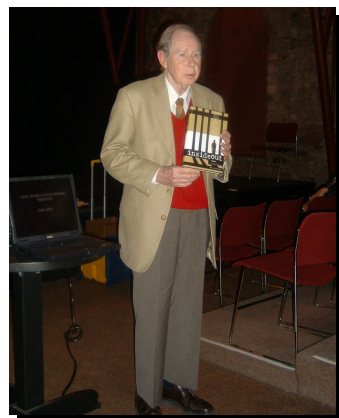
Mr. Camisa relayed fascinating stories regarding his time among some of New Jersey's most notorious criminals. His experiences included witnessing thirteen electrocutions, being taken hostage, gang wars, and inmate escape attempts.



Jim Franklin discusses the book



Mr. Camisa shares his experience with the audience



THS Vice-President David Collier displays a copy of *Inside Out*

### *Spirit of the Jerseys History Fair*

On May 6, Trustee Gary Nigh and Coordinator Jonathan Kinney attended the 2006 Spirit of the Jerseys History Fair, sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Parks & Forestry, Office of Historic Sites. The event is held annually at Washington Crossing State Park in Titusville, NJ. History fair participants included over one hundred different organizations including reenactment groups, historical societies, research organizations, artisans skilled in historic trades such as weaving and quilting, and other historical groups. It was a beautiful day and the event was very well attended!



Gary Nigh sits at the THS display table



### *Intern Program*

In early 2006, the Trenton Historical Society brought back its Internship Program in cooperation with The College of New Jersey's history department. At our first meeting held at the Trentoniana Room in the Trenton Public Library, we had a dozen TCNJ students show up to express their interest in an internship with the Society. Three students finally ended up working with us for the spring semester, Cassandra Demski, Julia Hughes, and Michael Garcia. The interns worked on a variety of projects such as transcribing volumes of the Edmund Hill diaries and obituary indexing, as well as other for Wendy Nardi, Trentoniana Curator and THS Trustee. THS also had interns during the summer and fall semesters, including one from Rutgers University.



Cassandra, Julia, and Michael

### *NJ Historical Commission Project Grant*

In September, the Trenton Historical Society applied for a New Jersey Historical Commission project grant and we are very excited to announce that the Society was awarded a grant of \$12,800 in November. This grant was awarded to the Society to carry out an exciting mapping project. The goal of this project will be the development of a detailed map of property ownership and land use for Trenton, New Jersey in the year 1775. The map will be constructed by Hunter Research, using cartographic computer software and research utilizing primary sources such as colonial conveyances, property deeds, mortgages, and road surveys. The purpose of the project will be to create numerous heritage tourism and educational opportunities for the downtown area by utilizing this map. It is also our hope that many unanswered questions will be solved by what promises to be the first clear picture of the configuration of the village of Trenton on the eve of the American Revolution and during the famous battles that took place here.

### *Formation of the Development Committee*

One final exciting event from this past year was the formation of the Trenton Historical Society's new Development Committee. The goals and objectives of this committee will be:

1. To seek new & innovative ways to raise funds that will support educational programs, operating costs, and other expenses of the Trenton Historical Society.
2. To seek out and build relationships with donors (local residents, businesses, etc) who are interested in supporting the organization and protecting Trenton's heritage.
3. To research grants and other fundraising sources that will benefit the Historical Society and the city.
4. To manage the membership of the Trenton Historical Society including the sending of renewal requests, collecting dues, and soliciting new members whenever possible.

The formation of this committee was inspired when Treasurer Jean Bickal and Coordinator Jonathan Kinney attended a financial workshop on April 19<sup>th</sup>, sponsored by the New Jersey historical commission and presented by the Non-Profit Finance Fund. The event was held at East Jersey Olde Town in Piscataway. The workshop was very informative and dealt with non-profit financial issues and how to effectively manage fundraising and property management as a small non-profit organization.



# Budget – Calendar Year 2006

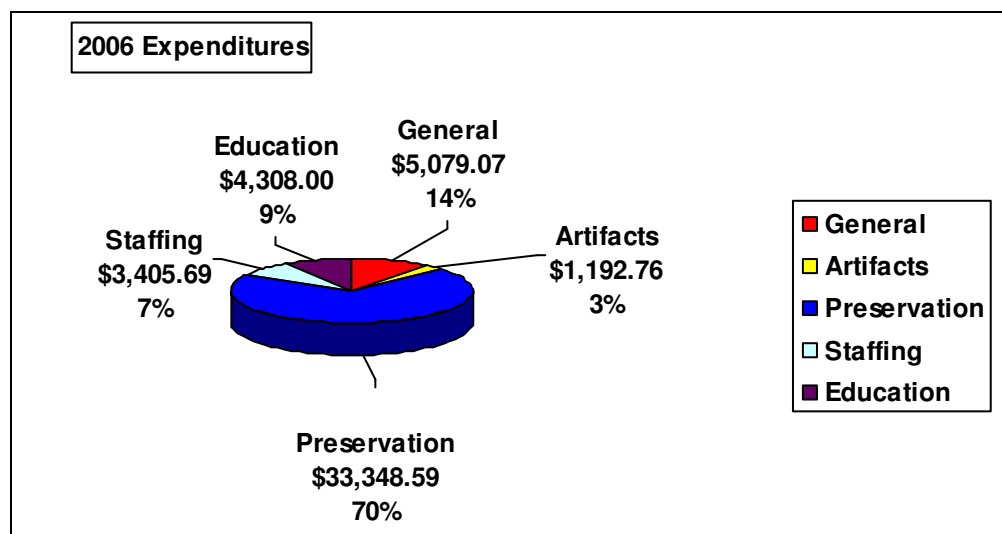
The Trenton Historical Society is a New Jersey Non-Profit Corporation and has a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.

<b>2006 Starting Balance:</b>			<b>\$59,641.72</b>
<b>General Fund</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Income</b>	
Membership	--	\$3,570.00	
Donations	--	\$1943.00	
Interest	--	\$433.50	
Annual Corporate Filing	\$25.00	--	
Charitable Registration	\$60.00	--	
Postage/Copies/Admin	\$532.30	--	
P.O. Box Rental	\$9.30	--	
Dues/Memberships	\$640.00	--	
Website/Computer	--	--	
Sunshine Fund	\$79.90	--	
Telephone	\$272.99	--	
Annual Dinner	\$1,320.07	\$1,366.45	
Banking Fees	\$34.10	--	
Audit Fees	\$1,750.00	--	
Stationery/Supplies	\$105.41	--	
Donations by THS	\$250.00		
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$5,079.07</b>	<b>\$7,312.95</b>	
<b>Ending Balance</b>			<b>\$9,728.01</b>
<b>Artifacts Fund</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Income</b>	
Purchases	\$1,192.76	--	
Research Services	--	\$759.97	
Donations	--	\$5.00	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,192.76</b>	<b>\$764.97</b>	
<b>Ending Balance</b>			<b>\$420.28</b>
<b>Preservation Fund</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Income</b>	
Donations	--	\$5.00	
Fundraising Events	\$6,698.11	\$22,877.05	
Projects	\$23,010.39	--	
Calendars	\$3,640.09	--	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$33,348.59</b>	<b>\$23,985.05</b>	
<b>Ending Balance</b>			<b>\$33,126.38</b>
<b>Staffing</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Income</b>	
Part-Time Coordinator	\$2,082.10	--	
Accountant	\$700.00	--	
Federal & State Taxes	\$623.59	--	
2006 General Operating Support Grant	--	\$3,500.00	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$3,405.69</b>	<b>\$3,500.00</b>	
<b>Ending Balance</b>			<b>\$7,903.91</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Income</b>	
Education Committee (Speakers, Brochures)	\$4,308.00	--	
Donations	--	\$160.00	
Travel & Tourism Grant - Battle Map	--	\$3,240.00	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$4,308.00</b>	<b>\$3,400.00</b>	<b>\$92.00</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$47,334.11</b>	<b>\$38,962.97</b>	<b>\$51,270.58</b>

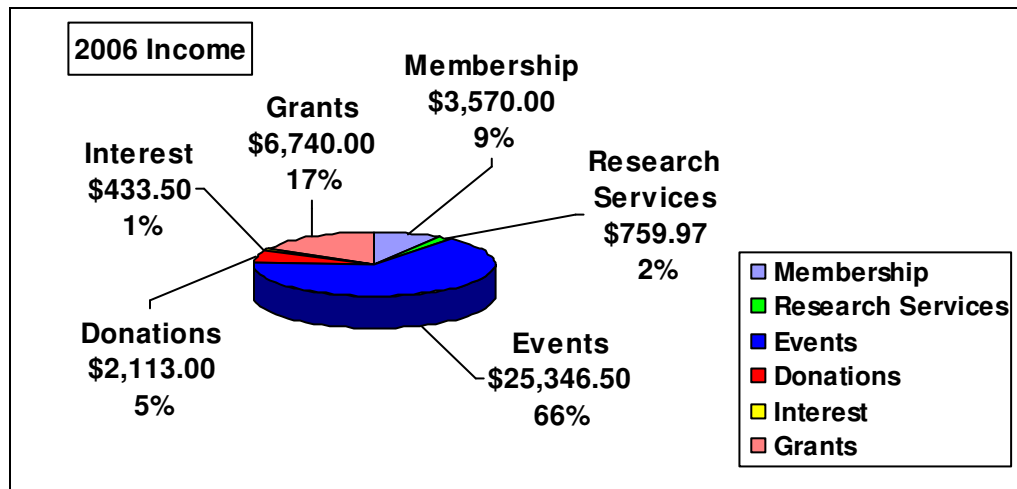
The table on the previous page summarizes the Trenton Historical Society's income and expenditures for 2006. Over the course of the year, the organization spent \$47,334.11 and took in \$38,962.97. This income figure does not include the \$12,800 grant award from the New Jersey Historical Commission to conduct the 1775 Trenton mapping Project. This entire amount will be paid to Hunter Research for the completion of that project. This table does include the staffing category. Made possible by an Operating Support grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission, the Trenton Historical Society hired and pays a part-time staff member as of June of 2005.

The remaining financial activities of the THS are divided into four categories, General, Preservation, Education, and Artifacts. The General category includes program activities, membership, operating expenses, and other items not covered by the Preservation, Education, 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 Stop the Wrecking Ball and Centre Street stabilization project.

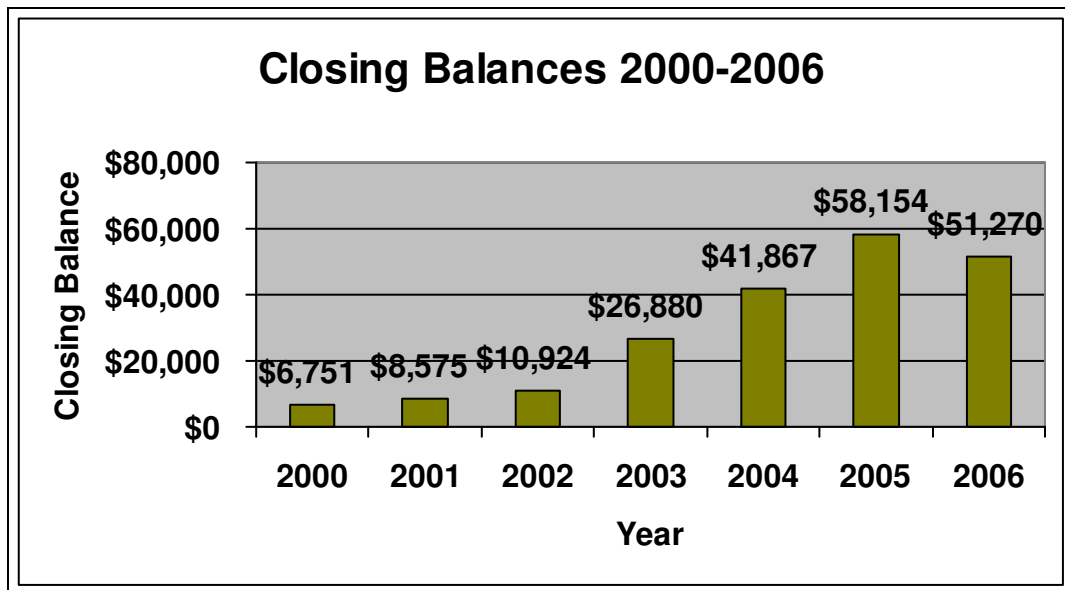
The following graph illustrates the breakdown of the society's expenses.



The Trenton Historical Society's income was taken in through six main sources: membership, research services, donations, fundraising events, interest, 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 2006 and helped to make it a very successful year!



In 2002, the Trenton Historical Society's total closing balance was \$10,924. As you will see in the following graph, the Historical Society's 2006 closing balance was \$51,270.58. Once again, the organization has had a strong financial year, which has allowed the Society to tackle new and exciting projects such as its first bricks and mortar stabilization of an endangered building.





## **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 continue to explore the possibility of obtaining office space or other physical space for the Society to operate out of.

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

To begin a restoration grant program for private homeowners in the City to facilitate façade repairs and historic rehabilitation/restoration work.

To update and restructure the Society's membership program to more efficiently manage membership renewals and expand the membership as much as possible.

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

**The Trenton Historical Society would like send its warmest wishes for a speedy recovery to long-time trustee and former President, David Collier.**