

*Trenton  
Historical  
Society*

**2004  
Annual Report**

Trenton Ferry  
Historic District

**1835**

# **Trenton Historical Society**

## **2004 Annual Report**

Founded in 1919 the Trenton Historical Society is devoted to the study and interpretation of Trenton's history, preservation of its historic buildings and dissemination of information about New Jersey's capital city and its illustrious past. 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. Over the past few years, 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. This annual report reflects the activities of the Trenton Historical Society during the 2004 calendar year.

### Outline - 2004 Annual Report

1. Committee Activities
  - Preservation
  - Artifacts
2. Outreach
  - Website
  - Programs/Education
3. Operations
  - Organizational Structure
  - Officers
  - Budget
4. Looking Ahead

## **Committees**

### ***Preservation***

The purpose of the Trenton Historical Society's Preservation Committee is to preserve Trenton's historic assets and to encourage heritage-oriented redevelopment by:

- Informing the public about the importance of historic preservation and facilitating community involvement in the preservation process
- Advocating for stabilization and preservation of important assets
- Advocating for changes in state and local policy and procedures that increase the opportunities for preservation

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

Since its formation, the committee has held Candidate Forums on Preservation and Redevelopment, published Trenton's first list of Top Ten Endangered Buildings, held a series of meetings and events focused on Trenton's Historic assets, researched and led tours of numerous city neighborhoods and buildings, raised thousands of dollars to preserve and stabilize buildings, focused attention on the plight of the Broad Street Bank Building, documented the Ferry District of South Trenton for a National Register of Historic Places nomination, and worked with the city to move buildings off demolition lists and stabilize them.

This year was another very successful and productive year for the Trenton Historical Society's Preservation Committee. The following is a brief description of the Committee's activities and events in 2004.

On April 21<sup>st</sup>, the Preservation Committee celebrated the 105<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Broad Street Bank Building. A pre-celebration gathering was held at the Tremont Lounge, 332 East State Street, across from City Hall. Following the pre-celebration, a candlelight ceremony was held at the Broad Street Bank Building on the corner of East State and South Montgomery Street. Candles were provided to all those in attendance and the crowd had a great time singing Happy Birthday along with "Marilyn Monroe." The media coverage was very gratifying, and everyone who attended had a great time. Sweety Peety donated a cake to the event and the candles were donated by Frank Weeden. While the event was quite fun, it also served as an important reminder to the current owners and to government officials that the Trenton Historical Society is determined to work towards preserving and restoring this important Trenton landmark.



On May 15<sup>th</sup>, The Trenton Historical Society presented "Stephanie Plum's Trenton by the Numbers". This event was a bus tour that brought to life the people and places immortalized in Janet Evanovich's best selling novels about bail bondswoman Stephanie Plum. Guests began their tours with breakfast at the Masonic Temple and were then taken by bus to visit several sites around the Chambersburg area, where the popular books are set.

The tour stops, all very familiar to fans of the Stephanie Plum series, included a typical "Burg" home like the one Stephanie's parents live in, a bail bond office, a funeral

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home, a local beauty parlor, a police station, and a typical “Burg” street with a visit to a bakery and a Catholic Church.

Cindy Manion as Stephanie Plum



ABC Bail Bonds



Chiacchio Funeral Home

Special thanks are owed to ABC Bail Bonds, Chiacchio Funeral Home, Deb Foca, Italian Peoples Bakery, Panorama Musicale, Larry’s Way of Hair, and the Trenton Police Department for participating in the tour and for sharing their time, their homes, and their businesses with the participants. Also, thanks to Roman Hall Bar & Restaurant and Marsilio’s Restaurant for providing lunch for the tours. Along the way, the visitors were entertained by actors portraying well-known characters from the books including Stephanie Plum played by Cindy Manion, Grandma Mazur played by Janet Bickal, Trenton Police Office Joe Morelli played by Noel Santiago, Ranger played by Sergey Olhovsky, Lula played by Ava Johnson, Vinnie Plum played by Tom Juarez, Connie Rosolli played by Michelle Turansick, Mrs. Plum played by Maureen Brophy, and Mr. Plum played by Don Forbes. Special appearances were made by Joe Juniak and Bobby V, who are personally mentioned in the Stephanie Plum books. Tours were hosted and led by Jim Carlucci, Cathy DiConstanzo, Karl Flesch, John Hatch, and Sally Lane.



Actors bring Janet Evanovich’s characters to life for tour goers

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The event was a great success. Over one hundred tickets were sold and all who attended had a great time. Most importantly, over \$5,700 was raised for the Historical Society's Preservation Committee.

On Tuesday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, The Trenton Historical Society in conjunction with the Lambertton Historic District Committee, the Office of Smart Growth, and Preservation New Jersey, co-sponsored an interactive program at First Baptist Church in Trenton.

The program was an interactive tax credit workshop demonstrating the value of the proposed Historic Property Reinvestment Act (S1416/A781) to owners of historic homes and commercial properties and to the communities in which they live and work. The Act provides homeowners and corporations with an economic incentive to help revitalize older neighborhoods and reuse historic structures by providing a State tax credit for their rehabilitation. Ron Emrich of Preservation NJ gave a presentation as did Rhonda Coe of the Trenton Housing & Economic Development Department. Bill Hoffman of CityScape Capital Group explained the financial benefits of the potential tax credit as did Carlos Rodriguez, AICP. John Hatch of the THS Preservation Committee ran through several case studies, showing how the proposed tax credit would encourage redevelopment. Residents Tom Reeves and Michael Lee spoke about the Lambertton Historic District and how the tax credit would benefit its residents. NJ Assemblyman Reed Gusciora was in attendance along with neighborhood residents and preservation professionals.



John Hatch speaks at the Tax Workshop





Guests mingle at the Tax Workshop

### *Stop the Wrecking Ball*

*"The Corner Historic"  
Wachovia Bank Building*



The Trenton Historical Society's most important fundraiser of the year, the Second Annual Stop the Wrecking Ball, was held on November 20<sup>th</sup> in the Wachovia Bank Building on Trenton's famous Corner Historic. Once again, this elegant black-tie fundraiser was an enormous success. Over 100 guests and friends of preservation joined us for an evening filled with food, music, and entertainment for the wonderful cause of raising awareness and funds for preserving Trenton's past. Guests mingled beneath N.C. Wyeth's famous mural of George Washington's triumphant return to Trenton during his journey to New York to be inaugurated in 1789. The painting depicts Washington riding through the town astride a beautiful white horse. Above him stands the Trenton Victory Arch, a piece of which can be seen today in the Trentoniana Room of the Public Library. The building itself opened to the public in 1930 as the First Mechanics Bank. During the event, a silent auction was held to benefit the Trenton Preservation Fund. Items up for auction included works by local artists and Trenton Memorabilia such as 19<sup>th</sup> century ceramics, handmade quilts, antique photographs of city landmarks, books and postcards, and an autographed photo of Mary G. Roebling. Overall, the event raised \$8,839 for the cause of preservation.

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N.C. Wyeth's Mural of Washington's Return to Trenton



Guests enjoy their evening at Stop the Wrecking Ball 2004

Other important 2004 events included the completion of the 250 page draft report to for the nomination of the Trenton Ferry Historic District by Richard Hunter and his associates. This historic district in South Trenton is comprised of the neighborhood bounded by South Broad Street, Route 1, Federal Street and Route 29, with an extension to the banks of the Delaware River. This project was made possible by a grant awarded to the Trenton Historical Society by the New Jersey Historical Commission.

## *Artifacts*

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

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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 2004, the Artifacts Committee acquired 251 items. These items included 197 documents, 49 photographs, and 5 other objects. Of the 251 items acquired in 2004, 239 were original artifacts and 12 were copies. 124 of the items were purchased with money from the Artifacts fund and 127 of the items were gifts to the Society.

The artifacts donated to the Society in 2004 were representative of many different time periods in Trenton's history. Mary Whiting donated a collection of papers belonging to Harold Magee, the former Medical Director of Trenton State Hospital in the 1950's. Princeton High School donated a collection of photos of the Trent Theatre. The OMHS donated several items pertaining to the history of Sacred Heart Church and School. THS Treasurer Gary Nigh donated his extensive collection of Trenton related, nineteenth century letters. Pat Levinson donated five old photos of West State Street. The Mercer County Association of Realtors donated a nine volume set of Art Work of Trenton from 1900. Larry Clarici donated two high school yearbooks from the 1950's. Rebecca Wade donated two photos of Mrs. A.J. Shaw. THS board member Jean Bickal donated three bottles from Trenton businesses Kerns, Mercer, and C.O. Johnson. Ann Rosenberg donated items from her family's past related to the state civil service in Trenton during the 1950's and 1960's. Doug Monroe donated a large trunk manufactured by G.A. Mishler of Trenton in the early 1900's.

Ms. Marie Louise Stokes made a very generous donation of over sixty items related to her family, a prominent Trenton family that has produced both leaders of industry and politicians. The collection included photos, letters, and business documents from the Civil War period through the twentieth century.



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Ms. Connie Pflug donated nine scrapbooks from the early twentieth century that belonged to Edmund Hill, a well-known and fascinating Trentonian who kept detailed diaries for much of his adult life. Samples of Edmund Hill's diaries are posted on the THS website. The scrapbooks provide a detailed look at Hill's travels to places like Venezuela, Russia, the West Indies, England, and the American West.

## Outreach

### *Website*

The Trenton Historical Society's website, launched in 2001, continued to grow throughout 2004, and has proved to be an increasingly useful tool for sharing historical data and information on upcoming Society events with the community. The website saw a dramatic increase in use this year when compared to 2003. The following clearly illustrates this growth.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Visitors to the Website</b>	<b>Number of Page Views</b>
2003	18,566	81,403
2004	55,224	214,321

As you can see, the number of visitors to the site in 2004 was roughly 2.6 times the number of visitors in 2003. The number of page views was roughly 3 times the number of the previous year. Once again, the most popular section of the website was the obituary section. This section received 7,215 visits in 2003 and 35,712 visits in 2004.

In addition, the Trenton Historical Society received 276 emails requesting assistance with research on a wide array of topics.

### *Programs/Education*

Each year, the Trenton Historical Society presents several educational lectures on various Trenton and New Jersey history topics. The Lecture series is the Society's principal method of fulfilling its educational mission.



On March 21, for the Spring Lecture Program, Professor Michael Fowler of Brookdale College presented a program entitled "Lifesavers of the Jersey Shore". The event was held in the Founders Room of the Old Barracks. With 40 years experience as a Monmouth County lifeguard, Professor Fowler presented an historic overview of lifesaving along the State's approximately 100 miles of coastline. Starting with the 18<sup>th</sup> century's lighted

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beacons guiding ships safely away from the sandy shoals, historic prints, and archival photographs were used to illustrate a history that included the methods, equipment and training of personnel to rescue stranded mariners and endangered swimmers. The program was both entertaining and informative.



Professor Fowler presents "lifesavers of the Jersey Shore"

From May through October of 2004, the Trenton Historical Society continued its successful Walk This Way Tour program. The tours were given every Saturday at 1:00 PM and began in front of the Trenton Convention & Visitors Center at the corner of Barrack and West Lafayette Streets. Walk This Way presented guided walking tours that explored more than 300 years of momentous events and places in the heart of New Jersey's capital city. Those individuals enjoying the tours learned the answers to questions such as:

“Why is South Montgomery Street so much wider than other streets in the area?”

“ Why the first professional basketball game was played in Trenton and where?”

“What is the meaning of the curious marks on the clock in front of the Kelsey Building?”

Each tour lasted approximately two hours and the cost was five dollars. All proceeds from the tours went to the Trenton Preservation Fund.

This year, the Trenton Historical Society also began a new program entitled Discover Historic Trenton, which consisted of a lunchtime walking tour program that offered Trentonians a fun and educational break from their normal work day. The lunchtime walking tours were offered on the first Friday of every month and were approximately 15-20 minutes in duration with an optional extension. The tours began on the corner of West State and Warren Street and each month offered a different tour route. Customized tours were also offered with prior notice. The tours covered historic buildings and sites from State & Warren to the Broad Street Bank Building, Warren from State Street to the Battle Monument, and South Broad Street.

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The Society's fall lecture program was held on October 31<sup>st</sup> at the Mill Hill Playhouse. Richard Hunter of Hunter Research presented a program on Trenton Textiles, particularly the Eagle Cotton Factory. The program, entitled "Trenton Textiles and the Eagle Factory: A First Taste of the Industrial Revolution," was the unveiling of Mr. Hunter's fascinating research into the Eagle Factory, which was located on the south bank of the Assunpink Creek between South Broad Street and South Warren Street. On this site in the second decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Trenton's first foray in the Industrial Revolution occurred and two of the earliest large-scale textile manufacturing ventures in the Delaware Valley took root. The centerpiece of this complex was the Eagle Factory, a massive five-story brick cotton mill constructed in 1814-1815. Mr. Hunter's lecture was attended by over forty people and a good time was had by all.



Other noteworthy events were a \$150 donation from the Trenton Historical Society to towards the opening night festivities of the Trenton Fire Museum on October 6, 2004 and the formal organization of the Trenton Historical Society's Education Committee. The Committee was formed to promote interest in Trenton's history and the activities of the Society. The talented and dedicated volunteers that make up this new committee will no doubt provide the City and its citizens even more unique and informative lectures, tours, and other assorted programs.

## Operations

The Trenton Historical Society is governed by a Board of Trustees elected by the membership every year at the Annual Meeting. In 2004, the Board of Trustees consisted of: President David Collier, Vice President Michael Olszak, Recording Secretary Wendy Nardi, Corresponding Secretary Sara Andre, Treasurer Gary Nigh, Mark Applegate, Randy Baum, Jean Bickal, Art Forman, Jerry Harcar, John Hatch A.I.A., Joseph Teti, and Algernon Ward. Each one of the Board Members brought their own special talents and ideas to the Society and helped to make 2004 the most productive and most successful year to date for the organization. The Board, along with a diverse membership made up of concerned citizens, volunteers their time and energy to the cause of preserving Trenton's past and bringing the city's rich heritage to life for the public.

The 2004 Annual Meeting and Luncheon for the membership was held on January 4<sup>th</sup> at the Baldassari Regency. The featured speaker was James F. Turk, Ph.D., curator of Cultural History for the New Jersey State Museum. Mr. Turk presentation was entitled

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“Taverns and Churches in Revolutionary New Jersey”. At the annual meeting, the THS constitution was amended to increase the number of board members to 14 and the organization also approved a new mission statement. It reads:

*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.*

Several other noteworthy items from the Annual Meeting include the naming of Emil Gambosi as a Trustee Emeritus, the retirement of Program Chair Mary Alice Quigley, and the honoring of past President Benjamin Whitmire, who passed away in 2003.

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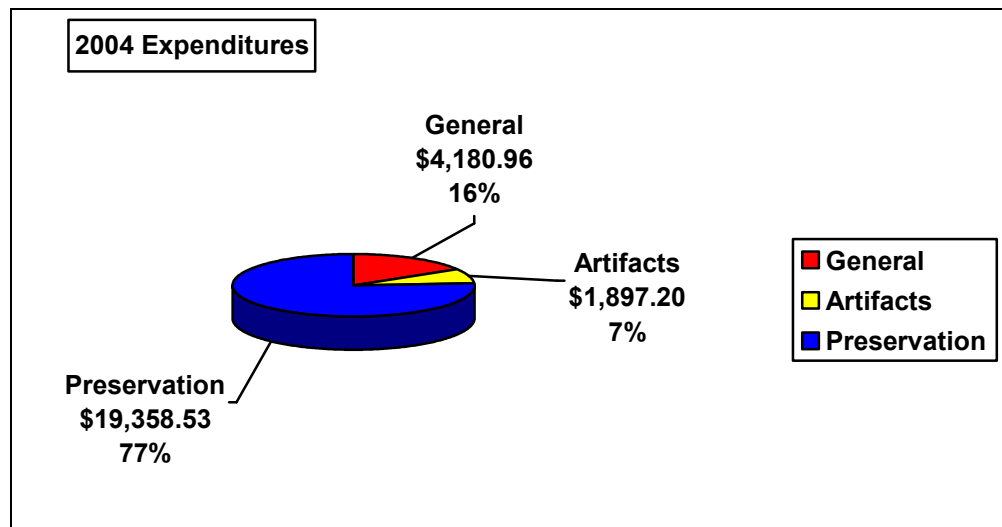
***Trenton Historical Society - Budget - Calendar Year 2004***

<b>2004 Starting Balance:</b>			<b>\$26,880.72</b>
<b>General Fund</b>			
<b>Starting Balance</b>			<b>\$5,105.41</b>
Membership	--	\$1,825.00	
Donations	--	\$61.67	
Interest	--	\$155.88	
Annual Corporate Filing	\$25.00	--	
Charitable Registration	\$60.00	--	
Postage/Copies/Admin	\$3.95	--	
P.O. Box Rental	\$48.00	--	
Dues/Memberships	\$285.00	--	
Website/Computer	\$119.95	--	
Sunshine Fund	\$58.00	--	
Telephone	\$161.68	--	
Annual Dinner	\$842.30	\$1,441.33	
Program Mailings	\$170.20	--	
Program Speakers/ Expenses	\$406.88	--	
Accounting Fees	\$2,000.00	--	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$4,180.96</b>	<b>\$3,483.88</b>	
<b>Ending Balance</b>			<b>\$4,408.33</b>
<b>Artifacts Fund</b>			
<b>Starting Balance</b>			<b>\$1,341.06</b>
Purchases	\$1,897.20	--	
Research Services	--	\$2,097.95	
Donations	--	\$327.42	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,897.20</b>	<b>\$2,425.37</b>	
<b>Ending Balance</b>			<b>\$1,869.23</b>
<b>Preservation Fund</b>			
<b>Starting Balance</b>			<b>\$30,415.00</b>
Donations	--	\$5,585.00	
Fundraising Events	\$9,129.94	\$23,848.19	
Projects	\$9,569.48	--	
South Trenton/Ferry Historic District	\$155.46	--	
Publicity/Education	\$504.65	--	
Tours		\$75.00	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$19,358.53</b>	<b>\$29,508.19</b>	
<b>Ending Balance</b>			<b>\$40,564.66</b>
<b>Staffing Fund Donation</b>			<b>\$5,000.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$25,436.69</b>	<b>\$40,417.44</b>	
<b>2004 Ending Balance:</b>			<b>\$41,861.47</b>



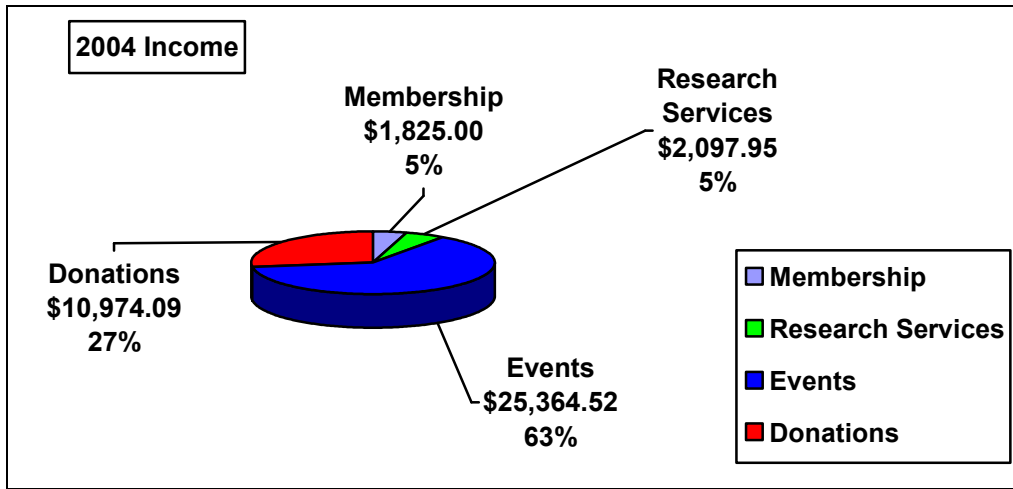
## Annual Report

The table on the previous page summarizes the Trenton Historical Society's income and expenditures for 2004. Over the course of the year, the organization spent \$25,436.69 and took in \$40,417.44. The financial activities of the THS are divided into three main 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 General Fund accounted for 16% of 2003's expenditures with \$4,180.96. The Artifacts Fund accounted for 7% of the expenditures with \$1,897.20, all of which went to purchasing Trenton related items. The Preservation Committee accounted for 77% of the expenditures with \$19,358.53. This money was used to organizing and to support various fundraising events and preservation projects, such as the Trenton Ferry District Nomination. The Trenton Historical Society is a New Jersey Non-Profit Corporation and has a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.

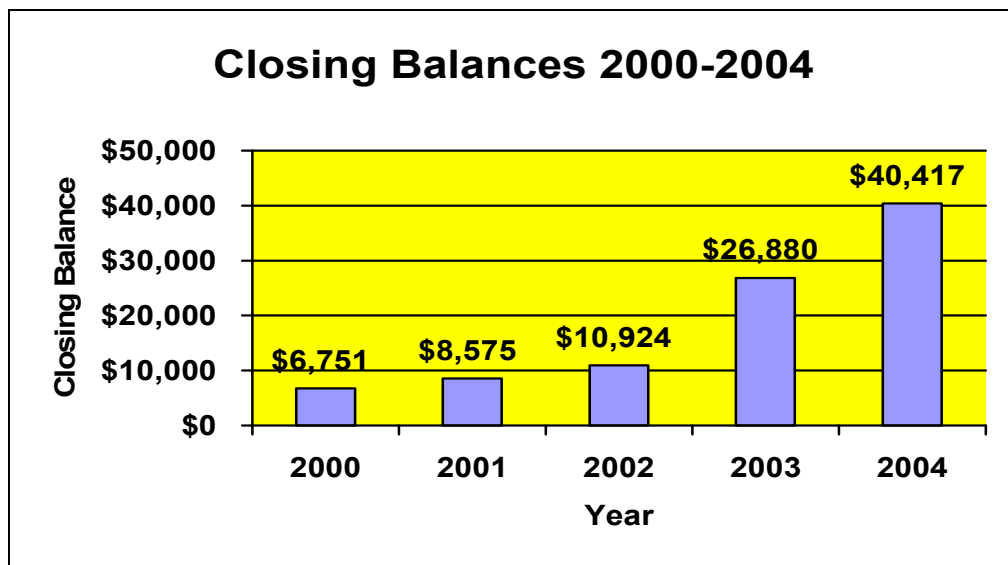


As the following graph illustrates, the Trenton Historical Society's income was taken in through four main sources, Research Services, Membership, Events, and Donations. Fundraising events such as the Stop the Wrecking Ball accounted for 63% of the Society's income. The Research Services provided by THS as well as donations also accounted for a large percentage of the 2004 income. The Society would like to extend a very special thanks to the generous folks that made donations to the Society in 2004 and helped to make it the organization's most successful year to date!

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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. Once again, the organization has shown remarkable 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 2005 are:

- To promote Trenton's history and physical heritage while also promoting awareness of the City's endangered buildings and historic sites.
- Find innovative ways to combine tourism with historic preservation
- 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.
- Continue to acquire Trenton related artifacts for the Trentoniana Collection
- Hire Professional staff – Coordinator, with responsibility for Administration and Operations, Grant-Writing, Fundraising, Education, Historic Neighborhood Redevelopment and Stabilization, and Communication, Outreach and Community Relations.

The Historical Society is at an important crossroads. We have made extraordinary strides over the last few years. We have expanded our role in Trenton's civic life and have had a tangible, positive impact on life in the Capital City. We can continue to do this excellent work with our group of volunteers, or we can expand to the next level and make a truly unprecedented positive impact on Trenton.

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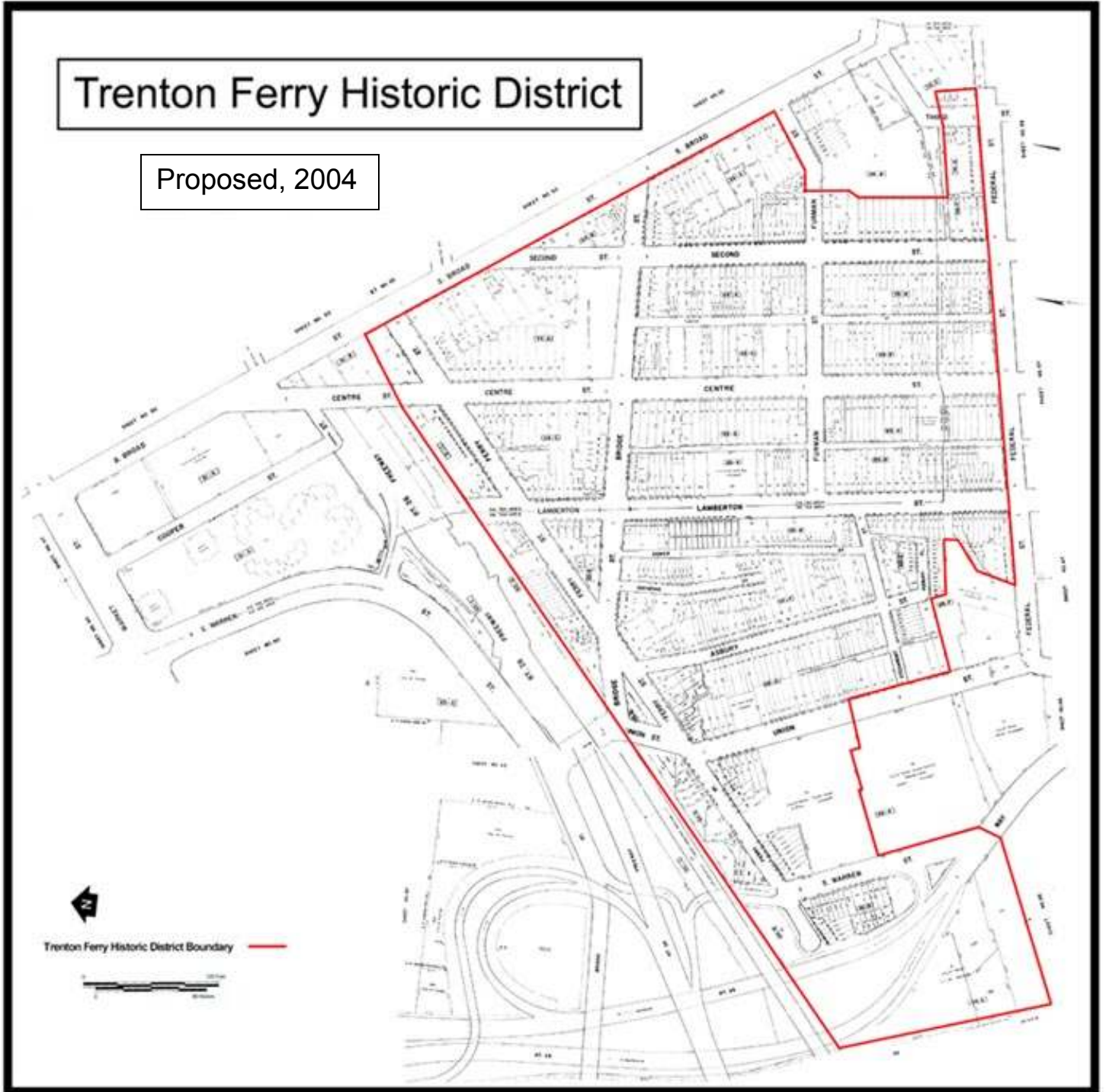
[www.trentonhistory.org](http://www.trentonhistory.org)

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



# Trenton Ferry Historic District

Proposed, 2004



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