

Historical Society of Pennsylvania's 2009 Annual

Report

*Understand the past.
Engage in the present.
Create a better tomorrow.*

As for many nonprofit organizations, the 2008/09 fiscal year was one of highs and lows for the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The lows were a 26 percent drop in our investments and the need to cut staff positions and programs. The highs included the development of a new strategic plan and a 28 percent increase in the demand for our services. In the end, HSP emerged with a plan in place to better serve our audiences and create a stronger base of operations over the next four years.

Serving scholars, family histor

Preserving our past

HSP staff processed 28 collections, accessioned 114, and conserved more than 1,758 items.

More than 5,000 researchers visited HSP's reading room this fiscal year, an increase of 7 percent. Another 3,239 accessed HSP's research/reference-by-mail services, an increase of 20 percent. In an effort to make its documents more accessible, HSP posted 34 more **finding aids online**. Additional search tools were made available to on-site visitors, including Ancestry.com Library Edition, JSTOR, and Historic Map Works Library Edition.

HSP's archival staff processed 28 collections totaling 560 linear feet. Of these, the processing of seven collections was generously paid for through the **adopt-a-collection program**. Highlights include the papers of Christopher Marshall (a revolutionary-era pharmacist and political leader); Edith Madeira (who served as chief nurse with a 1919 American Red Cross delegation to Palestine); and Caroline Katzenstein (a leader in Pennsylvania's women's suffrage movement). The archives department also accessioned 114 new collections or collection additions through donation or purchase.

The conservation department treated more than 1,758 items and mentored 18 **interns** from a number of area colleges including the University of the Arts, Drexel University, University of Delaware, and Moore College of Art and Design. One of the most notable accomplishments was the conservation of materials from the Plastic Club, a Philadelphia art club founded in 1897 by and for female artists. The collection includes a magnificent Alphonse Mucha



lithograph (pictured on the cover) dating to the early 20th century that was so brittle that it had broken into 16 separate pieces. This lithograph and the entire collection has been processed, catalogued, and conserved thanks to a generous grant from Dr. Dorothy del Bueno.

Archives and conservation staff continued their work to process and preserve the 288-linear-foot **Chew family papers**. They completed this two-year project in July 2009 and posted a 650-page finding aid online.

Over half a million dollars of funding for the **Digital Center for Americana** was secured with support from the Barra Foundation, Robert McNeil Jr., Collin Farquhar McNeil, the McLean Contributionship, and the Raab Collection. This major new initiative has enabled HSP to purchase a Hasselblad digital camera and the necessary equipment to establish a digital photographic studio, acquire a digital asset management system, and employ staff for two years. Combining a new and innovative approach to processing collections in breadth and creating digital facsimile "signposts" to aid understanding of the materials, the pilot phase will focus on 51 of HSP's Civil War collections and digitize up to 5,000 manuscripts, maps, graphics, works of art, and photographs and make them available online in time for the Civil War Sesquicentennial.



ians, and genealogists.

Sharing our stories

More than 4,700 people attended programs or exhibits sponsored by HSP, and thousands more received history stories through e-mail and blogs.

HSP organized 25 **public programs** in 2008/09, which, excluding the summer months, averaged around three a month. Highlights included several lecturers, including Dr. Saul Cornell, who discussed the origins of gun control in America; Dr. Robert A. Selig, who spoke about the British occupation of Philadelphia; Kaye Wise Whitehead, who discussed the diary of a young free African American woman from the 1860s; and Stacey C. Peeples, who shared the history of America's first hospital. In October 2008, HSP organized a **panel discussion** about freedom of the press and reporter's privilege. Another panel discussion shortly after the November presidential election examined Pennsylvania politics, past and present.

The quarterly **scholarly journal** *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* (PMHB) featured a special issue on Pennsylvania politics in October 2008 to coincide with the federal elections. *PMHB* continued to be offered online through the History Cooperative Web site, and in April 2009 the back files were added to JSTOR, an online repository that offers scholarly journals to major research organizations throughout the world. In the first five months, 21,000 people viewed *PMHB* articles online and printed 10,000 of those.

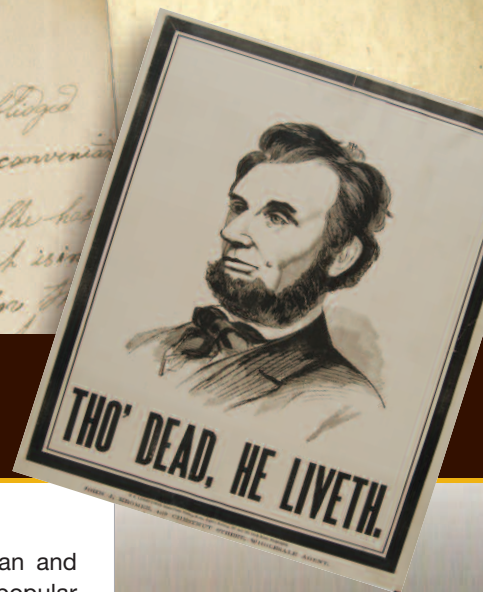


In the past year Dr. Daniel Rolph, historian and head of reference services, produced the popular **History Hits e-stories** attracting a following of more than 3,500 subscribers—a 100 percent increase from the previous year. Dr. Rolph also published the Hidden Histories blog (accessed via HSP's Web site www.hsp.org), which averaged 500 hits a month from 44 states and 29 countries.

In January HSP's regular Question of the Week began to be posted online, and stories from HSP's collection began to reach more than half a million readers by being featured in the Sunday edition of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* under the title "**Memory Stream.**" Written by Cary Majewicz, technical services archivist, these short stories and related images coincide with anniversaries and special moments in local history and have gained a steady following.

HSP celebrated the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth in February with an **on-site and online display** of Lincoln images and documents from our collection, including a signed copy of the Emancipation Proclamation. The display was accompanied by a lecture by Civil War historian Karl Purnell as well as a "**Documents and Drinks**" event for HSP's Treasures Society.

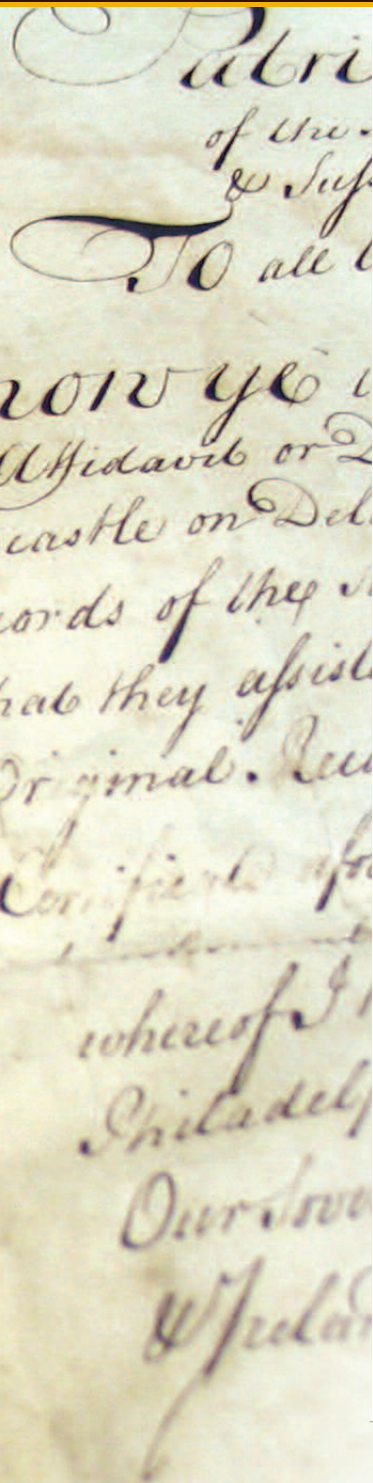
A large crowd turned out for the **exhibit** of India Merchants: Philadelphia and the Quest for India after the Revolution at HSP curated by Dr. Krishna Lahiri, Mallika Sircar, and HSP programs associate Michael Ryan. The opening lecture by Dr. Susan S. Bean, curator of South Asian and Korean Art at the Peabody Essex Museum, was followed by an Indian music performance and a cocktail reception. The event was cosponsored by the Council of Indian Organizations in Greater Philadelphia and supported by Southwest Airlines and the South Asia Center at the University of Pennsylvania.



Louis Meenan



Serving educators, and historians



Inspiring our future

Through teacher workshops, lesson plans, and a robust fellowship program, HSP inspires tomorrow's leaders.

HSP held two **teacher workshops** in May 2009 and developed four **lessons plans** in conjunction with PhilaPlace, a history and culture Web site that is scheduled to launch in early December 2009. "Exploring Ethnic History with Map Models" introduced teachers to Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping and showed how it can be a valuable tool to assess immigration and ethnic change over time. The second workshop, "Mapping Our History," suggested approaches for developing local history mapping lessons and discussed ways to incorporate immigration and oral history into such projects. A total of 35 teachers and other public history professionals attended. In addition, HSP partnered with Greenwich Township to host two teacher workshops, which were funded through a Teaching American History grant.

As part of **National History Day** in the spring, HSP welcomed 40 teachers from across America who explored the topic Philadelphia: The First City. HSP published a *Legacies* magazine on suffrage in Pennsylvania, which featured a lesson plan on women's right to vote using HSP's Caroline Katzenstein collection and related papers. The magazine also included an article by the First Lady of Pennsylvania, Judge Marjorie Rendell, encouraging us to become more "civic minded."

HSP continued its successful **fellowship program** with the

Library Company of Philadelphia hosting 14 graduate and/or postgraduate scholars, and also one fellow associated with the Philadelphia Area Consortium for the History of Science. These scholars researched topics as varied as the Quaker peace testimony, prison reform, "colored" orphanages, the 19th-century stage, and the biblical art of Henry Ossawa Tanner displayed in Wanamaker's store. HSP also independently funded two Balch fellowships in immigrant, ethnic, and 20th-century history.

Collaborating with others

HSP worked closely with more than 100 of the Philadelphia area's arts, culture, and history organizations.

A highlight of the year was the exhibition at the Art Institute of Philadelphia titled **Philadelphia Stories: Yours, Mine, Ours**. The exhibit featured images from the City of Philadelphia's Department of Records archive and HSP's PhilaPlace neighborhood history project. The exhibition attracted approximately 1,500 visitors, including more than 150 people who attended the opening and an additional 50 who attended curator Maria DiElsi's exhibition talk in January.

Joan Saverino, PhilaPlace project director, was invited to speak about **PhilaPlace** at several universities (Syracuse, Drexel, and Temple Universities) and conferences, including the American Association of Museums and the National Council for Public History meetings and the Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia symposium.





Louis Meehan

y and heritage organizations.

HSP, through the PhilaPlace project, is partnering with the Mural Arts Program on a two-year initiative—titled **Journeys South**—that explores South Philadelphia's immigrant history through a series of four public art projects created and conceived by local artists and the community. Journeys South is funded by the Pew Center for Arts and Heritage, through the Heritage Philadelphia Program. The PhilaPlace team will serve as advisors on the historical and community outreach aspects of the project, and the artists' installations will live on in a digital format on the PhilaPlace Web site.

In April 2009, HSP was pleased to host a two-day workshop to discuss the creation of an **Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia**. More than 200 attended the workshop, which was sponsored by the Barra Foundation. Under the leadership of the three editors Drs. Howard Gillette, Randall Miller, and Charlene Mires, this gathering of scholars, curators, administrators, consultants, producers, and journalists discussed ways to gather the Philadelphia region's history and how to format and distribute an encyclopedia.

HSP continues to be the home of the **Civil War History Consortium**, more than 60 organizations that are working together to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. Under the direction of Executive Director Laura Blanchard, the consortium worked with the Pennsylvania

Historical and Museum Commission and the Pennsylvania Civil War 150th initiative to launch a new statewide Web site (www.pacivilwar150.org) and create a regional site (www.civilwarphilly.net). The consortium also participated in the Lincoln 200 Festival, created a new cell phone tour of Philadelphia Civil War sites (call: 215-399-9898), linked events through the PhillyFunGuide, and created a Flickr site of images.

The staff of HSP continued to serve on boards and advisory committees of more than a dozen organizations, including the City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program, the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collections Libraries, the Pennsylvania Digital Newspaper Project, the State Historical Records Advisory Board, and the Pennsylvania Historical Association. In addition, library staff began historical research for the Philadelphia Award and stewarded the archives of the Union League as that institution prepares to open a new Heritage Center.



On April 30, the 2009 Founder's Award celebrated the American flag at *A Star-Spangled Evening* honoring John C. and Chara C. Haas, Joseph M. Torsella, and Barbara L. Greenfield. Through the inspired leadership of event chairs Deborah Dilworth Bishop and Alice Lea Tasman, the event raised \$115,000 for HSP's operations and featured a display of original documents, including a handwritten copy of "The Star-Spangled Banner" by Francis Scott Key and the flag that hung behind George Washington on his April 30, 1789, inauguration, kindly lent by Thomas S. Connelly. Guests enjoyed musical entertainment by the Valley Forge Military Academy Regimental Choir, the Quaker City String Band, and harpist Alison Simpson.



Kelly & Massa

Annual Operating Revenue & Expenses

Revenue

42%

Income from Investments

30%

Contributions

16%

Grants for Special Projects

5%

Earned Income

4%

Founder's Award Dinner

3%

Membership

Expenses

37%

Library

22%

Education and Special Projects

18%

Occupancy

13%

Administrative

10%

Development

For a copy of HSP's audited financial statements, please contact mhairston@hsp.org.

With appreciation

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 through historical understanding.*