

2004

Minnesota Historical Society *Annual Report*

“The Minnesota Historical Society has faced adversity numerous times during the last 155 years but invariably has gone on to gain new strength and vitality. Despite the severity of recent budget cuts, I expect that the Society once again will draw inspiration and support from the many Minnesotans who cherish their history.”

William C. Melton, President, Minnesota Historical Society

For 155 years, the Minnesota Historical Society has taken us back to the places and people of times gone by through collecting, caring for and interpreting the state's historical treasures. At the same time, it has envisioned Minnesota's future, looking forward and anticipating the need of people to know about those who came before them.

Over the last three years, a series of reductions in state funding has greatly reduced the programs and services we can offer to Minnesota's people. As the state struggles with an unstable financial condition, the Society struggles as well. We are deeply concerned that any further reductions will be devastating to the Society's program. However, despite these difficult times, the Society continues to fix its eye not only on what has been, but also on what will be.

Through the efforts of our Executive Council, a new five-year strategic plan imagines a creative and bold future for the Society. This vision includes greatly expanded web services for genealogists, researchers and educators that will be available to Minnesotans from Moorhead to Winona, Windom to Two Harbors. It imagines a revitalized Historic Fort Snelling that houses a major project on the World War II generation and an innovative center dedicated to preserving the languages of Minnesota's native people. It asks that we bring more of our collections into the open through visible storage and that we work with all of Minnesota's communities to record and preserve the stories and experiences of our time for generations yet to come.

Our dedication to Minnesota's future is perhaps best seen in our efforts to educate the state's schoolchildren. Minnesota history is, for the first time, a required part of the state's educational system. Using the Society's Minnesota history curriculum, "Northern Lights," thousands of students will discover how their families and communities have contributed to the state's development. Students involved in our History Day program continue to distinguish themselves at the national level, and the Minnesota History Center, Mill City Museum and our historic sites ring with the sounds of children engaged in learning.

The Society is grateful to you—our members, donors, volunteers, staff, governing board members and the people of Minnesota—and to Governor Tim Pawlenty, the Minnesota Legislature and local officials around the state for supporting Minnesota history. We are especially grateful to all those who have worked diligently to keep our endangered historic sites open to the public. With your commitment to preserving the past, we will be able to continue our reach toward the future.


Nina Archabal, Director

2004 HIGHLIGHTS

THE SOCIETY'S REACH KNOWS NO BOUNDS

In record numbers, Minnesotans—and people around the world—reached out to the Minnesota Historical Society this year. Nearly 4,000,000 individuals visited our museums, historic sites, libraries, collections, public programs and award-winning web site, which received 2.9 million hits. The History Center welcomed more than 300,000 visitors, including 87,000 enthusiastic schoolchildren, 237,700 museum goers and 31,900 library patrons.

VISITORS FLOCK TO HISTORIC SITES

Historic sites entertained 528,700 visitors, including nearly 200,000 schoolchildren. Long valued resources for citizens across the state, the sites' importance to the people of Minnesota became even clearer as communities from Elk River to Grand Rapids to St. Paul rallied their support to make up for reduced state funding. At the Ramsey House, work continued on a revitalization project for the interior. The reception room, library and girls' bedroom were refurbished, part of a long-term project to make the house furnishings and setting more accurate. And major work began on the James J. Hill House's retaining wall restoration, mushroom cave reconstruction and landscaping.

MILL CITY MUSEUM OPENS TO WIDESPREAD ACCLAIM

September 13, 2003, marked the opening of the Society's newest addition to its statewide network of museums and historic sites. More than 10,000 people attended a gala weekend of exciting events, activities and performances. Built within the ruins of the National Historic Landmark Washburn A Mill on the banks of the Mississippi River in downtown Minneapolis, the museum tells the story of flour milling and its impact on Minneapolis, the nation and the world. In its first nine months of operation, nearly 100,000 visitors experienced the innovative new museum, which has won numerous awards, including the 2004 Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and a 2004 Silver Anvil Award of Excellence from the Public Relations Society of America for its grand opening marketing campaign.

**“GOING PLACES: THE MYSTIQUE OF MOBILITY”
OPENS IN JANUARY**

A major new exhibit, “Going Places: The Mystique of Mobility,” part of the Minnesota Transportation History Network, opened at the History Center in January. The exhibit, which traces how the American passion for traveling has shaped life in Minnesota for nearly 200 years, lets visitors climb aboard a 1950s Soo Line boxcar, crank the engine of a 1915 Model T, experience a “blast-off” in a fantastical rocket ship and delve into the personal papers of travelers from all walks of life.

**MHS PRESS PUBLISHES RECORD NUMBER OF BOOKS,
WINS MULTIPLE AWARDS**

The Minnesota Historical Society Press published a record 23 books, including the award-winning “The Language of Blood” by Jane Jeong Trenka. The Press also licensed a Korean publishing house to publish a Korean-language edition of Trenka’s book. Another 25 titles were brought back into print through a new digital short-run publishing initiative. MHS Press was honored with five Minnesota Book Awards, the Barnes & Noble’s 2003 Star of the North Award and the Minnesota Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians’ annual Gebhard Award for “Cap Wigington: An Architectural Legacy in Ice and Stone.”

ADDITIONS TO SOCIETY’S COLLECTIONS RUN THE GAMUT

Additions to the Society’s collections included a milk carton kayak/paddle boat from the 1971 Minneapolis Aquatennial, memorabilia from the Minneapolis Millers baseball team and a Civil War sword used by a soldier with the 7th Minnesota Volunteer Infantry. In all, 653 artifacts were added to the Society’s collections and 16,156 archaeological items were accessioned at the History Center and Historic Fort Snelling. Former Gov. Jesse Ventura’s official papers and files were processed, cataloged and made available to an interested public.

**CHANGING EXHIBITS BRING VARIETY TO
HISTORY CENTER, HILL HOUSE**

A series of smaller, changing exhibits attracted new visitors to the History Center, including “Small Wonders, Little Giants,” which looked at the phenomenal popularity of action figures. Other changing displays included a summer fishing display, a rare ca. 1906 Bjella automobile, newly acquired items in the Society’s craft collections, an elaborate Ramsey family sleigh and Minnesota medical devices. At the James J. Hill House, gallery exhibits showcased the Society’s art collection with exhibits on 20th century landscapes, the work of Swedish immigrant painter Elof Wedin and a display of quilts made in Minnesota over the last 100 years.

2004 HIGHLIGHTS (CONT.)

FOREST HISTORY CENTER OPENS EXPANDED VISITOR CENTER, NEW EXHIBITS

The Society's Forest History Center, a recreated ca. 1900 logging camp that first opened in Grand Rapids in 1978, celebrated its newly expanded visitor center and new exhibits with a weekend of activities in June. Nearly 2,000 people attended the event, enjoying such new exhibits as the "EcoLog," a full-scale mature white-pine log that visitors can crawl through to discover the flora and fauna of the forest, as well as the site's popular living-history lumber camp.

"CLOUDY WATERS" ADDS DAKOTA PERSPECTIVE TO GRAND EXCURSION

As part of the Upper Midwest commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Grand Excursion of 1854, the exhibit "Cloudy Waters: Dakota Reflections on the River" explored the complex connection of the Dakota people and the Mississippi River. The exhibit offers a non-traditional museum experience that blends images reflected on a flowing pool of water and the sounds of nature interspersed with the voices of the Dakota.

LIBRARY ADDS TO ONLINE SERVICES

Services at the library were transformed by the stunning growth of e-commerce. Ordering from the popular death certificate index and research services were made available online, both leading to large increases in orders. More than 8,000 images also were added to the Visual Resources Database, which now totals more than 188,000 online records of the Society's historical photograph collection. The "Guide to Family History Resources at the Minnesota Historical Society" was published in December by MHS Press. And the Society's genealogical strengths were lauded once again when Family Tree Magazine named the web site as one of its 101 Best of 2004 for the second year in a row.

"NORTHERN LIGHTS" REACHES STUDENTS ACROSS MINNESOTA

The all new second edition of the Society's popular "Northern Lights" curriculum reached students across the state. More than 15,000 copies were purchased by about 250 schools in nearly every county in Minnesota. The curriculum received an award of merit from the American Association of State and Local History, its highest honor, and a Minnesota Book Award for youth non-fiction. The Society's History Player in the classroom program served 5,916 students and adults at 130 schools and organizations across the state.

**SOCIETY ADDS NATIONAL REGISTER LOCATIONS,
AWARDS GRANTS**

Thirteen properties representing 11 counties were listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including a historic wayside; an overlook; a fire station; junior and senior high schools in Morris, International Falls and Winona; a Romanian Orthodox church; a city hall and an outdoor stadium. Oheyawahi, or Pilot Knob, in Dakota County was determined to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places by the Keeper of the National Register. Although hard hit by state budget cuts, the Society made 17 State Grants-in-Aid matching grants to nonprofit organizations and institutions, totaling \$48,000. Fifteen State Capital Grants for County and Historic Preservation Projects matching grants were awarded, totaling \$321,413. And 10 Certified Local Government matching grants, totaling \$68,650, were made.

**MINNESOTA STUDENTS TAKE TOP HONORS
AT NATIONAL HISTORY DAY**

Continuing a tradition of excellence that has grown over the last 26 years, 12 Minnesota students placed first in five categories at National History Day. Fifty-three students advanced to the finals and 10 entries won national honors. The program, which is sponsored by the Society and the University of Minnesota, was participated in by nearly 30,000 young Minnesotans and is a model for states across the country.

SUMMER MUSIC SERIES ATTRACT THOUSANDS

This year, Mill City Live joined the Society's popular Nine Nights of Music outdoor summer concerts. More than 6,400 attended the Nine Nights series on the History Center's Laura Jane Musser plaza, while 550 attended the first two Mill City Live concerts in the eight-part series (total attendance 2,405) in the Mill Ruins Courtyard.

Fiscal Year 2004 Financial Highlights

The Society received \$22.1 million in operating support from the State of Minnesota in fiscal year 2004. This amount reflects a 15.3% biennial budget reduction in State support from the previous biennium.

In these difficult times for state dollars, however, the Society's members, friends, corporations and foundations stepped up to provide \$6 million in funding for the Society's programs. This compares to \$5.2 million in the previous year. This additional support has been crucial, especially in view of the transfer of seven historic sites to community-based funding this year.

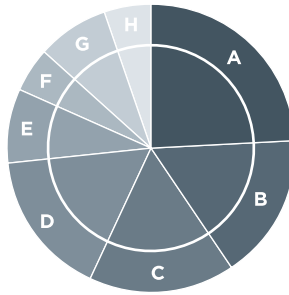
Meanwhile, non-investment revenues were up 19.1% over last year.

In part, increased revenue reflects a successful first year of operations at the new Mill City Museum. During fiscal year 2004, \$3.2 million of support and revenue for capital improvements and operating expenses resulted in the museum ending the fiscal year with a small surplus.

52.8% of the Society's fiscal year 2004 budget was for salaries and benefits.

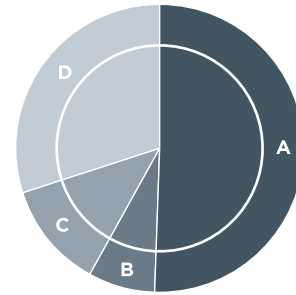
Over 1,700 volunteers and interns contributed 39,000 volunteer hours across the state.

The market value of permanent and board-designated endowment increased by 22% to \$25.3 million during fiscal year 2004. This increase reflects \$1.1 million of new endowment gifts as well as improved market conditions compared to the prior year. These funds are used to support activities at a number of historic sites, conservation and preservation initiatives, as well as general operating support.



Percentage of Expenses by Program Area

A Historic Sites	24.4%
B Library Collections and Archival Services	16.5%
C Museum Operations	16.3%
D Administration, Development, Support and Technology	16.1%
E History Center	8.5%
F Outreach and Preservation	4.9%
G Mill City Museum	8.1%
H Publications and Research	5.2%



Sources of Support and Revenue

A State Appropriations	50.6%
B Federal, State and County Grants	7.5%
C Support from Individuals, Corporations and Foundations	11.9%
D Earned Income	30.0%

Condensed Balance Sheet Year ended June 30, 2004

(000's omitted) With summarized information as of June 30, 2003

	Unrestricted			Temporarily restricted		Permanently restricted	Total	
	Undesignated	Plant fund	Board designated endowment	State appropriations	Other		2004	2003
Cash and investments	\$3,202		\$11,186	\$1,336	\$ 8,199	\$14,245	\$ 38,168	\$ 29,579
Receivables	2,687			3,314	3,581	361	9,943	14,719
Museum shop inventories	924						924	809
Property and equipment net		\$90,847					90,847	90,757
Total assets	\$6,813	\$90,847	\$11,186	\$4,650	\$11,780	\$14,606	\$139,882	\$135,864
Payables and accrued liabilities	\$1,222		\$ 40	\$1,062	\$ 424	\$ 394	\$ 3,142	\$ 3,644
Net assets:								
Unrestricted	5,591	\$90,847	11,146				107,584	105,440
Temporarily restricted				3,588	11,356		14,944	15,269
Permanently restricted						14,212	11,511	
Total net assets	5,591	90,847	11,146	3,588	11,356	14,212	136,740	132,220
Total liabilities and net assets	\$6,813	\$90,847	\$11,186	\$4,650	\$11,780	\$14,606	\$139,882	\$135,864

These statements are excerpts from the Society's audited financial statements, which are available upon request.

Statement of Activities Year ended June 30, 2004

(000's omitted) With summarized information as of June 30, 2003

	Unrestricted		Temporarily restricted		Permanently restricted	Total		
	Undesignated	Plant fund	Board designated endowment	State appropriations		Other	2004	2003
Support and revenue:								
Support:								
Private contributions	\$ 830		\$ 20		\$ 3,314	\$ 1,059	\$ 5,223	\$ 4,527
Federal grants					2,193		2,193	1,971
State agency grants					(3)		(3)	0
County and other grants					1,120		1,120	104
State operating appropriations				\$22,057			22,057	25,622
State capital appropriation				294			294	6,173
Total support	830	0	120	22,351	6,624	1,059	30,884	38,397
Revenue:								
Admission fees	1,902						1,902	1,311
Museum store sales	1,661						1,661	1,431
Membership	790						790	702
Publication sales	1,383						1,383	1,140
Program fees	340						340	205
Contract service fees	690						690	648
Digital product fees	378						378	369
Investment return	52		2,921		540	1,622	5,135	1,666
Auxiliary services	739						739	744
Other sales and fees	252						252	280
Total revenue	8,187	0	2,921	0	540	1,622	13,270	8,496
Total support and revenue	9,017	0	2,941	22,351	7,164	2,681	44,154	46,893
Net assets released from program restrictions	28,237	\$ 1,609		(27,217)	(2,629)			
Total support, revenue and net assets released from program restrictions	37,254	1,609	2,941	(4,866)	4,535	2,681	44,154	46,893
Expenses:								
Program services:								
Library collections and archival services	6,295	245					6,540	7,692
Publications	2,057	10					2,067	1,936
Museum operations, exhibits and education	6,205	240					6,445	7,182
Historic sites	9,409	273					9,682	9,076
Outreach and preservation	1,933	7					1,940	2,979
Mill City Museum	2,764	442					3,206	2,773
History Center	3,091	286					3,377	3,559
Total program services	31,754	1,503	0	0	0	0	33,257	35,197
Supporting services:								
Management and general	5,605	15					5,620	6,113
Development and membership	755	2					757	678
Total supporting services	6,360	17	0	0	0	0	6,377	6,791
Total expenses	38,114	1,520	0	0	0	0	39,634	41,988
Increase (decrease) in net assets before transfer	(860)	89	2,941	(4,866)	4,535	2,681	4,520	4,905
Reclassification of net assets	1,046		(1,072)		6	20		
Changes in net assets								
Unrestricted	186	89	1,869				2,144	9,303
Temporarily Restricted				(4,866)	4,541		(325)	(5,519)
Permanently Restricted						2,701	2,701	1,121
Net change in net assets	186	89	1,869	(4,866)	4,541	2,701	4,520	4,905
Net assets at beginning of year	5,405	90,758	9,277	8,454	6,815	11,511	132,220	127,315
Net assets at end of year	\$ 5,591	\$90,847	\$11,146	\$ 3,588	\$11,356	\$14,212	\$136,740	\$132,220

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The people of Minnesota generously supported the Society through appropriations made by the Legislature and approved by the Governor. In addition to state support, we gratefully acknowledge the following donors who have generously supported our ongoing programs and special projects this year.



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The Minnesota Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the leadership support of the following North Star Circle members who contributed \$1,000 or more to the Annual Fund between July 1, 2003 and June 30, 2004. Thanks to the commitment and generosity of these donors, the Society continues to offer quality programs and services that engage the public and offer new perspectives on Minnesota history.

For information on the North Star Circle, please contact Bonita Jenné at 651-284-4801 or bonita.jenne@mnhs.org.

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During the past year, the individuals listed below notified the Society that they have provided for its long-term future through an estate or life income gift. Deferred gifts are a wonderful way for individuals of all financial circumstances to leave a lasting legacy, supporting a program or historic site that is of special interest to them. To learn more about these opportunities, please call Keith Bartz, Director of Planned/Major Gifts, at 651-205-4575 or 1-888-293-4440 or e-mail to keith.bartz@mnhns.org.

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