

Annual Report of the Hastings Historical Society, June 2016-2017

The volunteers at the Historical Society spent a good portion of the summer and early fall of 2016 putting together the first of an ambitious three-part series of exhibits covering the growth of our village. "Growing Hastings: The Early Years" opened in early November and spans the history of Hastings from Native American times till 1899, when the Warburton Avenue Bridge was dedicated. We've had many visitors and groups (including high school students and weekend hiking organizations!) come to see it, and the feedback has been positive; quite a few folks have come back more than once, given how much information is presented. If you're local and want to take a look, come to the Cottage by September 16th, when the exhibit is scheduled to come down. Part 2 of the series will open on Sunday, November 5th and will cover the period 1900 to World War II.

In December of 2016, the Historical Society received a digitization grant in the amount of \$10,000 from a local foundation. Some of you may remember our major fundraising drive over 10 years ago, which enabled us to hire an archivist to create a database and digitize our 10,000+ photographs, maps, pamphlets and postcards. Given the all-volunteer nature of our organization, in recent years we had fallen behind on getting newer materials digitized. With this 2016 grant, we were able to hire a couple of part-time professionals to get our database back up to date. This effort is currently underway; we anticipate a completion date sometime this fall.

Introduced in December 2016, Dava Sobel's book "The Glass Universe" brought renewed attention to the women who, behind the scenes, funded and worked on astronomical discoveries at the Harvard College

Observatory; more significantly to Hastings, the wife and niece of Henry Draper are key figures in the book. Anna Palmer Draper donated her husband's telescopes and provided funding, while niece

memoration of our village's past will eventually be in place at the waterfront. While we have a lot of information on Hastings' industrial activities, the effort to concisely convey the major facts involved and display



Our June 11th Hastings Road Show fundraiser was a big success! Area residents brought their items in to the Cottage to be evaluated — and had fun in the process. Many thanks to our appraisers Tom Lecky, Marc Rosner and Ruth Taylor (Marc and Ruth shown at right in this photo). Photo courtesy of Michael Holstein.

Antonia Maury was an astronomer there. The Historical Society helped Ms. Sobel with her preliminary research and are excited to have her as a lecturer for our *How High the Moon* exhibit this fall.

While we won't see it for awhile, a \$50,000 grant to research and display the history of Hastings' waterfront was part of the consent decree signed in January 2017 between the village of Hastings, Riverkeeper and Atlantic Richfield. Right now, work has commenced to demolish Building 52 (the last building standing on the waterfront); remediation of toxic materials in the soil will proceed after demolition. The Historical Society is pleased that some sort of com-

memoration of our village's past will eventually be in place at the waterfront. While we have a lot of information on Hastings' industrial activities, the effort to concisely convey the major facts involved and display

them in an appropriate way will no doubt be a major future undertaking. Luckily, we have a number of years to work on this!

Those of you who have walked through Hillside Woods recently have likely noticed the dire state that they are in, primarily due to the proliferation of deer and invasive species. In the spring of 2017, the Village Conservation Commission asked the Historical Society to participate as a co-sponsor in a two-part *State of Hillside Woods* symposium, which laid out the probable causes and possible solutions to the problem. While an easy remedy was not forthcoming, a group of concerned citizens have banded

together to work with the Commission on the problem going forward. The Society's contribution was to put together some background materials on Hillside Park and Woods, which were on display at the meetings and which are also the basis of the article on Hillside presented in this issue.

In May of 2017, we launched a direct marketing campaign to raise funds to update the technology we utilize at the Cottage, which is in desperate need of an upgrade. While the campaign is still underway, we are pricing out the most cost-effective way that we can use these funds to refresh our website, digitize and make our newsletters searchable, enhance our online shopping cart, and upgrade our membership lists. Look for some of these changes to be implemented beginning in 2018. We hope that they'll make interacting with the Historical Society much easier—for you and for us! (And we're still accepting donations...)

Our fiscal year came to a close in June of 2017, with the *Hastings Road Show & Annual Meeting* held at the Cottage. Around 50 people showed up with their well-loved antiques and collectibles, and our three assessors did a great job providing evaluations. It was a win-win, as far as we were concerned—everyone appeared to have a good time and it proved to be a nice fundraiser for us. The *Rivertowns Enterprise* even covered the event with a major article.

Our day-to-day activities remain unchanged. Those new to Hastings come in to gather info on their newly purchased house or immediate neighborhood; others—sometimes from far away—contact

us for data on relatives that lived here years ago. With Ms. Sobel's book getting so much publicity, we've had quite a few scholarly inquiries about Hastings' ties to the Drapers and their contributions to science.

As always, our volunteers have been busy toiling behind the scenes at the Cottage. Muriel Olsson manages our archives, Eileen Forbes-Watkins does accessions, Beth Smith handles photographs, Jan Clough deals with artifacts, and Annette Borowitz keeps our membership list in order. Ginny Kazura is our Corresponding Secretary.



NEW T-SHIRT: Area residents Lucy (right), Brennan (middle) and Maggie (left) are happily modeling the Historical Society's latest merchandise offering — our kids' squirrel tee shirt. On the front is trustee Lindsey Taylor's drawing of Raffaele Menconi's iconic bronze statue in Squirrel Alley. The tee is available in hot pink and gray in sizes 3T and 5/6 at \$15 each. Go to our Emporium on our website to order one for your favorite little guy or girl.

Claudia Gisolfi helps out with all of our research activities. Treasurer David Forbes-Watkins is in charge of financial matters. Sue Smith and Jan Clough make sure that the physical plant of our historic Cottage is in good order, and Spike Barkin is our oral historian. Janet Murphy and a cadre of young historians have been writing up bits of Hastings' history, to be used in our series of *Growing Hastings* exhibits. All work tirelessly on keeping Hastings' history alive.

Many thanks to our editorial staff, consisting of Judy Chamberlain, Barbara McManus and Muriel Olsson, for putting together our newsletter on a quarterly basis. We're hoping we get enough donations to purchase new publishing software as part of our technology upgrade, which will make Barbara's job a bit easier!

Debby Beece May and Lindsey Taylor continue to work on developing fresh merchandise for the Society, including the squirrel tee for toddlers plus a new women's tee and another mug, both coming this fall. To order the squirrel tee, visit the Emporium on our website at hastingshistorical.org.

Jenni Stern manages our website and Lindsey Taylor is our Facebook administrator. "Like" us on Facebook, if you haven't done so already, to get updates and frequent posts on Hastings' history.

If you live nearby or come back to Hastings to visit, we'd like to invite you to the Cottage to browse through our collections or check out our exhibit before it is disassembled; our summer hours are Mondays and Thursdays from 11 am to 2 pm. Starting in September and running through June, we'll again be open the first Saturday of every month

from 2 to 4 pm.

If you live further away, we'd love to hear from you. We're always looking for brief (or longer) reminiscences about something related to Hastings, as material for the *Historian*. So, if you have the time, drop us a line (or several)!

Thanks again for your support. We couldn't do this without you.

Respectfully,
Natalie Barry, President

**Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Activities
for the Year ended December 31, 2016**

Statement of Financial Position

Assets	
Cash and cash equivalents ..	\$32,237
Inventory.....	17,425
Long Term Investments	
- Merrill Lynch	167,732
Total property and equipment	
Net of accumulated	
depreciation.....	192,025
Total Assets	<u>\$409,439</u>
Net Assets	
Temporarily Restricted	\$10,000
Unrestricted	<u>\$399,419</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>\$409,419</u>

Respectfully submitted,
David E. Forbes-Watkins, Treasurer

Statement of Activities

Support and Revenue	
Donations, Bequests & Grants	\$20,661
Dues	19,097
Merchandise sold and misc.	3,757
Investment Income.....	3,822
Realized Gain	<u>7,934</u>
Total Support & Revenue	\$55,271
Expense	
Cottage Expenses & Maint.....	24,406
Cost of Merchandise Sold	853
Professional Fees	2,200
Historian newsletter & postage .	3,385
Insurance.....	3,277
Office and General	7,404
Investment Expense.....	<u>1,972</u>
Total Expense	\$43,497
Increase(Decrease) in Net Assets	11,774
Net Assets at Beg. of Year	<u>\$397,645</u>
Net Assets at Year End	<u>\$409,419</u>