



PRESERVATION
PARTNERS of the
FOX VALLEY

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

The mission of Preservation Partners is to offer heritage education and to promote the appreciation and preservation of the Fox Valley's rich architectural and historical resources.

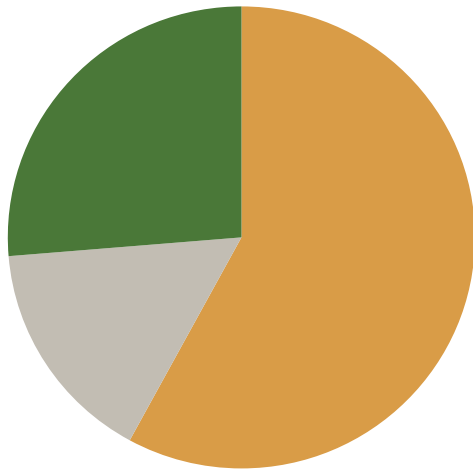


Compiled by the Board of Directors and presented at the
Annual Meeting of Membership
on January 21, 2021



2020 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

ASSETS

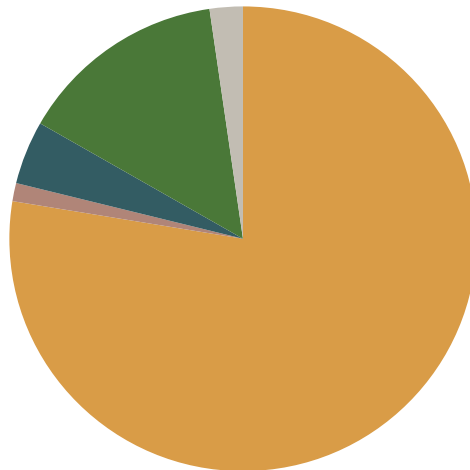


- Artifacts
- Cash on Hand*
- Buildings

Total: **\$380,340**

*Cash on hand includes investment accounts and rainy-day funds

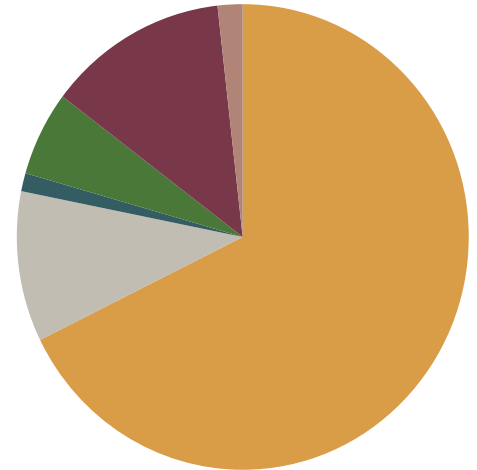
EXPENSES



- Overhead
- Events and Programming
- Members
- Wages
- Museums

Total: **\$110,025**

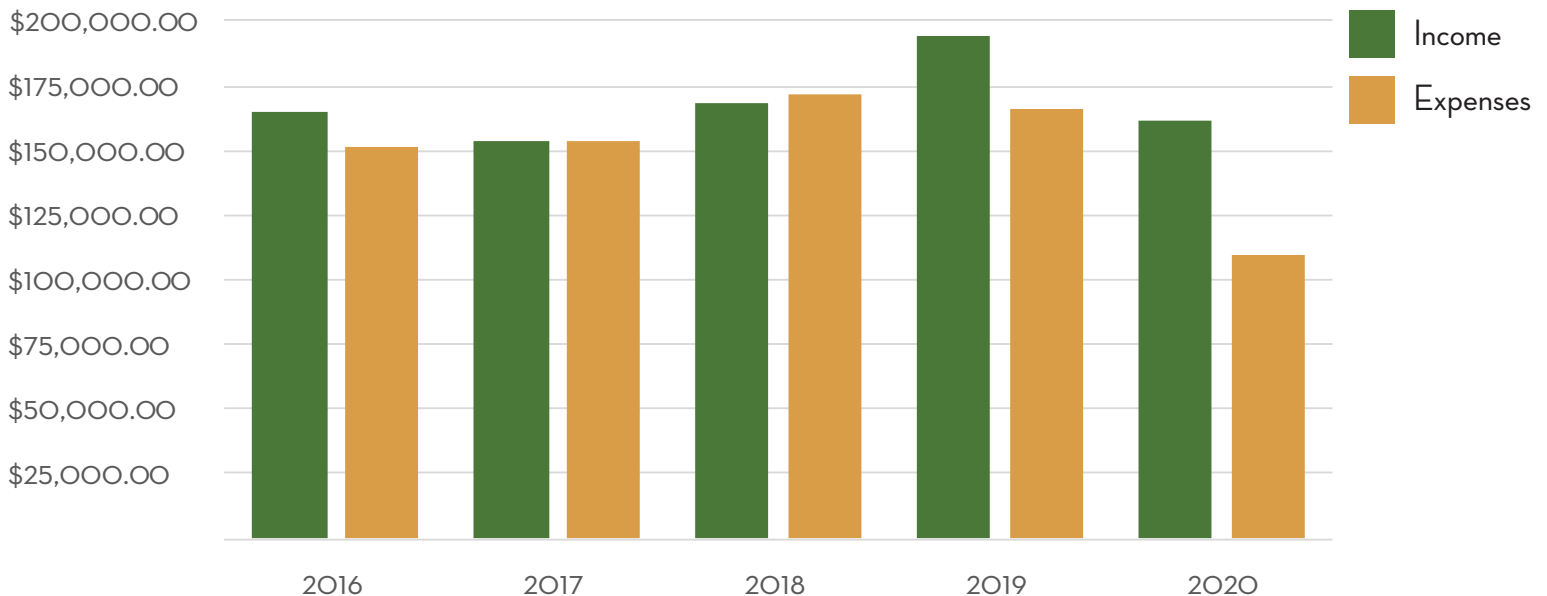
INCOME



- Donations
- Museum Income
- Memberships
- Events and Programs
- Contractual Agreements and Grants
- PPP Funds from the SBA**

Total: **\$161,944**

INCOME AND EXPENSES: A BRIEF HISTORY



**Paycheck Protection Plan (PPP) funds were applied for and awarded by the Small Business Administration (SBA) in April 2020. This loan was used to pay staff wages and utilities during the spring months when PPFV was closed. The loan was forgiven by the SBA on November 24, 2020.



2020 SUCCESSES

When the first stay-at-home order was issued in March of 2020, Preservation Partners made the difficult decision at the time to hunker down and batten the hatches. The uncertain nature of the following weeks and months made planning and implementation of our programming difficult, and operation of our museums nearly impossible. We are very fortunate that our income does not rely heavily on museum income and that the bulk of our annual expenses revolve around event planning. With this in mind, we decided to focus our efforts on much-needed behind-the-scenes projects that have helped us adapt and will build the foundation for even greater successes in future years. We refocused our energies from event planning and visitation management and made considerable progress on some of the less-glamorous aspects of caring for our sites and collections.

1. Emergency Preparedness

As part of the strategic planning process that we kicked off in 2020, staff assembled and refined an exhaustive Emergency Plan. This plan, a necessity for all historic sites and museums, outlines the steps that must be taken in the event of an emergency at one of our sites. The plan accounts for natural disasters, fires, floods, and vandalism and has established who to contact, what artifacts to focus on rescuing, and clean-up procedures. Considering the complicated ownership structure of our sites and collection, this was a significant and time-consuming undertaking that will help us successfully weather future storms.

2. Beith House Library Documentation

The Beith House collection includes a surprisingly large collection of books and reference materials. This library is used frequently by staff and volunteers, but has not been used as much by the public since the advent of the internet. Throughout the fall and winter one of our volunteers has worked hard to carefully catalog each item in a searchable database, successfully recording almost 400 volumes. The project is nearing completion and we hope to upload the database to our website for the public to reference.

3. Google Street View Walkthroughs

In November we welcomed a photographer from Google to the Durant House, Sholes School, and Fabyan Villa to record digital walkthroughs of the museums. The photographer recorded our sites and at the end of the year our digital walkthroughs were made public! Now, from anywhere in the world, visitors can “walk” our halls and see Nelle Fabyan’s bedroom (pictured), the fall harvest at the Durant house, or the Sholes classroom when the students are out on recess. Visit our home page, ppfv.org, to start your visit!



4. Preliminary Capital Improvement Planning

When the Beith House was rescued from demolition in the early 1980s, a group of dedicated volunteers worked very hard to stabilize and restore the house for use as a museum. Over the next 35 years, efforts toward the house included reroofing, masonry repairs, window restoration, and more. The upstairs offices became home to 4 or more staff people, decades of PPFV’s records, and our library. But through that time, the decades-old heating and electrical systems have remained antiquated. Indeed, one of the office spaces has no heat source. During the fall of 2020, PPFV engaged two architects to provide assessment proposals for the start of a capital improvement project. We have applied for grants to provide funding for these assessments and are excited to start work!



INITIATIVES FOR 2021

BUILDING ON SUCCESS

The following initiatives were begun in 2020 and are the source of momentum for future growth.

Project Momentum

Projects started in 2019 and 2020, as well as a growing national interest in the Fabyan sites, will help us expand our reach and engage new visitors!

- The popularity of the book, *The Woman Who Smashed Codes* by Jason Fagone, has grown significantly over the past year. On January 13, 2021, PBS released a documentary based on the book that followed the remarkable life of Elizebeth Smith Friedman, a trailblazing cryptanalyst. We will be presenting Friedman's relationship to the Fabyan Estate at the Batavia Public Library on February 17, 2021 as part of the library's *One Book, One Batavia* program.
- Our inventory of the Fabyan Villa's collection has continued in 2020 and is near completion! After the inventory is complete, we will begin the next steps of appraising and performing condition assessments of the artifacts.
- A group of volunteers met twice a week throughout the summer at the Durant House Garden, restoring the garden to a functioning site. The garden's proximity to black walnut trees and aggressive prairie grasses had caused it to become overrun with unwanted plants. The hard work of our volunteers erased years of overgrowth and filled the garden with the literal fruits of their labor. Plans for 2021's gardens include historically-accurate heirloom corn, vegetables, and herbs.



Transition to a Digital World

2020 also provided an excellent opportunity to continue our efforts to transition into a new, digital era. Some efforts we'll carry forward are:

- Continuing to engage and grow our social media audience
- Create and publish educational videos about our sites
- Create interactive museum walkthroughs for digital visitors
- Leveraging our CRM technology to streamline our efforts
- Online private tour scheduling
- Online artifact donation processes

Future Flexibility

2020 brought home to us, perhaps more than any other year, that **the world is changing and PPFV needs to change with it.** For decades we have thrived on tradition and have maintained programming that has proven successful time and time again. However, the way the world functions and people interact with historic sites has changed. We plan to embrace those changes and develop new ways to engage with the public. We are excited for the advancements of the future and look forward to new adventures!

WHO WE ARE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jim Kautz, *President*

Lori Koontz, *Secretary*

John McNeely, *Treasurer*

Bill Cook, *Director*

Lisa Krzeczowski, *Director*

STAFF

Kelsey Shipton, *Executive Director*

shipton@ppfv.org

Vivien Lasken, *Director of the Fabyan Sites*

fabyanvilla@ppfv.org

Debra Corwin, *Director of Durant and Sholes*

durantandsholes@ppfv.org

VOLUNTEERS

Nothing PPFV does would be possible without our dedicated team of volunteers!

They bring our sites to life and make our events and programs what they are. We cannot express our thanks enough for their time, dedication, expertise, and passion for our sites and our mission!