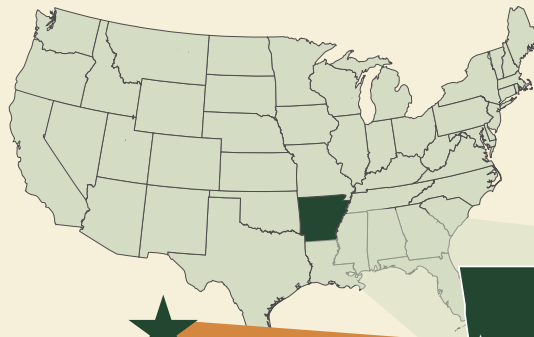




HISTORIC
CANE HILL
2024 ANNUAL REPORT

CANEHILL ARKANSAS

2020 CENSUS
POPULATION: **74**



2013: HISTORIC
CANE HILL FORMS
AS A NONPROFIT

1827: FIRST PERMANENT
EUROPEAN AMERICAN SETTLEMENT
ESTABLISHED IN WASHINGTON COUNTY



2024 BY THE NUMBERS:

THE NUMBER OF
PROGRAMS
INCREASED
by **73%**
from 2023 to 2024

833
GUESTS
VISITED
the museum
last year

• **72717** •

FAMILIES FROM
92 ZIP
CODES
ATTENDED THE
CANE HILL
HARVEST
FESTIVAL

88 VOLUNTEERS
HELPED ADVANCE
OUR MISSION

OUR CO-CHAMPION
BUR OAK TREE
IS **83'** TALL
WITH A **254"**
CIRCUMFERENCE

210 DONORS
AND BUSINESSES
SUPPORTED HCH

VISITORS to Events and
PROGRAMS
INCREASED
by **45%**
from 2023 to 2024

FROM THE DIRECTOR

DEAR FRIENDS OF HISTORIC CANE HILL,

AS I REFLECT ON THE PAST YEAR, I am proud to share that it was one of tremendous momentum and growth for the organization. Together with our supporters, staff, volunteers, and community partners, we advanced Historic Cane Hill's mission to preserve, connect, and inspire in meaningful and lasting ways.

In 2024, we undertook significant preservation work on historic buildings. We expanded our programs to serve more people and offer deeper engagement with the history and cultural landscape of Cane Hill. The Gallery exhibitions highlighted both Ozark history and contemporary creative expression from the region. We hosted a wide array of programs—gallery talks, tours, performances, demonstrations, and hands-on learning—that brought new audiences into our fold and encouraged return visits from longtime supporters.

Thanks to these efforts, we welcomed more visitors than ever before to the museum and gallery, trails, and programs. This growth in attendance over 2023 reflects not only the increased visibility of Historic Cane Hill's work, but also the value people place on authentic, place-based experiences.

We're also proud to report that our fundraising efforts continued to grow in 2024 through the expanded HCH Membership and Apple Blossom Society programs. Increased donor support allowed us to invest more directly in preservation, education, and programming—all essential to our continued impact.

This progress wouldn't have been possible without the dedication of our staff, the generosity of our supporters, and the time and energy of our volunteers. We are honored to be the stewards of this special place and are energized by what lies ahead.

Thank you for being part of this important work.

With Gratitude,



Vanessa McKuin
Executive Director

ON THE COVER:

The John and Alice Edmiston House; front cover, back cover, and above photo by Russell A. Cothren.



The mission of Historic Cane Hill is to **preserve, connect, and inspire** through meaningful experiences with history, education, architecture, nature, and the arts.



Before



After

photo by Russell A. Cochran

GIVING LIFE BACK TO STRUCTURES

IN 2024, WE UNDERTOOK SIGNIFICANT WORK on two of Cane Hill's most prominent landmarks: the Kirby-Colburn House (above) and the John and Alice Edmiston House (below). Using historic photographs as reference, WER Architects created exterior restoration plans to help revive the two houses for future use.

Renovation to the Edmiston House included a new wood shingle roof; reconstructed chimneys; siding, window, and trim repair; and repainting. Several historic wood windows found in the attic were repaired and reinstalled, replacing non-historic aluminum windows on the 3rd floor. HCH was awarded a second Historic Preservation Restoration Grant from the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program in 2024 for important foundation repairs.

The 1896 John and Alice Edmiston House is one of the grandest buildings in Cane Hill, but time had taken its toll on the Queen Anne house.



Before



photo by Stephanie Dunn King

When Historic Cane Hill acquired the long-vacant c. 1890 Kirby-Colburn House in 2023, vines were growing through the siding and the roof. We retained existing historic windows and the fishscale shingles on the front gable end, but most siding was too brittle to be reused. The collapsed porch had to be completely rebuilt and the historic stone foundation had to be tuckpointed. New wood doors and windows were fabricated to replace missing elements. Thanks to solid construction and care taken to mothball the house many years ago, the interior, including

several decorative floorcloths, is in relatively good condition. We were thrilled that the Kirby-Colburn House project garnered statewide recognition from Preserve Arkansas with an award for Excellence in Preservation Through Restoration.

Thanks to the project team, including WER Architects, Wagner General Contractors, Schneider Painting, and Custom Masonry by Clancy McMahon.



photo by Russell A. Cothren

After

Above: Historic Cane Hill and WER Architects received a 2024 Arkansas Preservation Award for Excellence in Preservation Through Restoration for the Kirby-Colburn House. Pictured are Preserve Arkansas' Executive Director Rachel Patton, HCH board president and WER Principal/COO John Greer, HCH team members Jared Biggs, Amanda Cothren, Holly Brain Johnson, HCH board member Tareneh Manning, HCH ED Vanessa McKuin, and Preserve Arkansas president Matthew Rooney.

At left: A new roof, paint job, and reconstructed chimneys give the exterior of the John and Alice Edmiston a new lease on life.

GALLERY EXHIBITIONS

MARCH 16 - APRIL 27 ARKANSAS STATE QUAIL AND TURKEY STAMP ARTWORK COMPETITION AND EXHIBITION

Held in partnership with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and the Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation, the exhibition featured selections from the juried competition. Winners for each category appeared on the 2024 Quail and Turkey stamps issued by the AGFC.

MAY 9 - JULY 26 JOHN LASATER ART EXHIBITION

John Lasater is an award-winning representational artist known as a mainstay on the national plein air painting scene. He has won many awards including Best of Show twice in the Plein Air Southwest Salon. Lasater's work, once known for his impressionistic style and bravado brushwork, now has a quieter, more thoughtful approach. He lives, paints, and teaches in Siloam Springs.

AUGUST 17 - OCTOBER 26 OZARK FOLK ART PAINTINGS OF ESSIE WARD

Often called, "the Grandma Moses of the Ozarks," Ward's paintings depict fictional characters Miranda and Hezzakiah in a variety of predicaments. Ward was featured at the Smithsonian's Festival of American Folklife in Washington, D.C. in 1970. The selection was on loan from Shiloh Museum of Ozark History's Jeanne Hoffer-Tucker Collection.

NOVEMBER 9 - JANUARY 18 6TH ANNUAL HIGH SCHOOL ART COMPETITION AND EXHIBITION

In partnership with the University of Arkansas School of Art, this exhibition showcased art produced by Arkansas high school students. The most promising senior received a \$10,000 scholarship to attend the University of Arkansas School of Art.

Above left: Ray Easton's painting "Daybreak" was a contender for the 2024 Turkey Stamp. Winning artwork featured on the stamps was by Chris Goins (turkey) and Dan Andrews (quail). Left: John Lasater captured the Cane Hill Presbyterian Church in his plein air painting "Joy." Above right: Essie Ward's 1972 painting "Hezzakiah and Miranda Makin' Sorghum." (Courtesy of Shiloh Museum of Ozark History's Jeanne Hoffer-Tucker Collection.) Right, center: Aly Hubbard's painting "All Done Please" was one of three artworks which helped her earn the 2024 Historic Cane Hill Young Artist Scholarship. She is pictured below with Lawrence McElroy, HCH Director of Arts and Culture, at the awards ceremony.



MUSEUM ACQUISITION



THE EARLIEST KNOWN

written records of the Cane Hill Congregation (1828–1840s) of the Presbyterian Church were recently discovered in a safe at First Presbyterian Church in Fayetteville and donated to the Cane Hill Museum. These records have been carefully digitized by the Presbyterian Historical Society.

Among its pages are the names of many Cane Hill families, including a significant 1847 entry documenting 14 enslaved Black people received into the church. Their first names, along with those of their enslavers, were recorded. An excerpt of the transcript reads:

“And received by experience into the communion of the church the following Black persons “to wit”: Jacob, Nelson, Green, Vacey, Mary, and Causbey (servants belonging to Mark Bean), Bruce and Adam, servants of James Buchanan, Hagar and Mariah, servants of Mary Harris, Rufus and Jane, servants of Robert Parks, and Alfred, servant [of] Samuel Carnahan.”

We were thrilled to award the 2024 Historic Cane Hill Young Artist Scholarship to Aly Hubbard. The scholarship recognizes one exceptionally accomplished senior in their pursuit of higher arts education at the University of Arkansas School of Art. Additionally, five outstanding students were recognized with monetary awards to help foster their continued artistic development.



EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

We held 22 programs and special events in 2024, not including the Cane Hill Harvest Festival, and welcomed almost 1,200 guests to those events.

We kicked off the year with a sweet celebration of our volunteers themed “You’re the Bee’s Knees.”

March held a trifecta of quail-themed events we dubbed the “Wild Bird Bonanza.” It included a tour of wildlife habitat restoration work on neighboring Boonsboro Farm with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, the opening for the 2024 Arkansas Quail and Turkey Stamp Art Competition Exhibition, and the Inaugural Four-Course Quail Dinner with Chef Case Dighero.

**MARCH 16:
WILDLIFE
HABITAT TOUR;
FOUR-COURSE QUAIL
DINNER WITH CHEF
CASE DIGHERO**



**FEBRUARY 3:
“YOU’RE THE BEE’S KNEES”
VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENT**



photo by Russell A. Cothren



photo by Russell A. Cothren



APRIL 20: EARTH DAY CELEBRATION: FOREST BATHING

We celebrated Earth Day by connecting to our natural surroundings through guided yoga and a guided “forest bathing” meditative walk on the Jordan Creek Trails. Attendees drove in from as far away as Dallas to take part in the forest bathing.

Also in April, we hosted our traditional Community Picnic. We invited all people with ties to Cane Hill, whether old or new, to come together and enjoy food, music, and fellowship. Due to rain, the picnic was moved indoors to the Cane Hill College building, but more than 50 people attended. One young guest, Silas McKuin, drew this illustration of the picnic.



APRIL 28: COMMUNITY PICNIC



JUNE 1: PLEIN AIR WORKSHOP WITH JOHN LASATER

In conjunction with his solo exhibition in the Historic Cane Hill Gallery, celebrated plein air painter John Lasater led a day-long painting workshop at two locations in Cane Hill on June 1.

Historic Cane Hill is proud to be home to acres of wooded areas and natural spaces. To celebrate Pollinator Month, our friends at the Diana Project led a session on the state butterfly, the Diana Fritillary (*Argynnis diana*) and how to use iNaturalist to be citizen scientists.



JUNE 29: POLLINATOR PALS



The tradition continues! The 2024 Cane Hill Harvest Festival drew a large crowd despite the warm weather. An estimated 2,400 visitors from 93 zip codes, 85 cities, and 7 states enjoyed music, demonstrations, crafts, and an Ozark country breakfast. 2024's festival also broke records for participation with 55 vendors and 30 community partners. We were thrilled and honored that the Cane Hill Harvest Festival was recognized as one of the top five best festivals in Northwest Arkansas by CitiScapes Magazine. We can't wait for guests to see what's to come at the 2025 Cane Hill Harvest Festival, September 20!

Among the longest-serving volunteers with the Cane Hill Harvest Festival, life-long Cane Hill resident Archie Leonard Reed stands out. In addition to his many years of cooking sorghum, Archie helped train the next generation of sorghum cookers. In 2024, Historic Cane Hill dedicated the sorghum shed in appreciation of Archie's knowledge and devotion to Ozark traditions.





photos by Russell A. Cotner

ME OH MY, WE LOVE PIE!

We added a new tradition for the 2024 Cane Hill Harvest Festival with a live pie auction, featuring sweet delights from some of NWA's favorite bakeries and local home bakers. Cane Hill resident Bonnie Haegle's famous "apple slice pie" (not pictured) fetched the highest price: more than \$200! Proceeds support the festival and Historic Cane Hill's programs, projects, and exhibitions.



AUGUST 24: OZARK BUG CRAWL

For the third year, we partnered with the University of Arkansas Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology, the Scott Family Amazeum, and the Northwest Arkansas Community College's Living Laboratory for a scavenger hunt-style exploration of Cane Hill's insect population. More than 230 people attended this family-friendly quest.



photos by Amanda Cotner



University of Arkansas Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology professor Austin Jones and student Karsen Brink show off two of the display cases Karsen created for the HCH Museum. These are available for visitors to see year-round.



AUGUST 24 AND OCTOBER 1: ESSIE WARD GALLERY TALKS WITH SUSAN YOUNG AND RACHEL WHITAKER

As part of the Essie Ward exhibition, we hosted gallery talks exploring the Searcy County folk artist's art and life. Speakers examined hillbilly stereotypes and Ward's personal history through her paintings, as well as photos and ephemera. We were excited to welcome several of Essie's family members and friends to the events.

OCTOBER 6: SONA BEYOND

In October, Historic Cane Hill hosted the The Symphony of Northwest Arkansas' Sequoyah String Quartet in the 1891 Presbyterian Church for a SoNA Beyond Series concert that celebrated classical folk music with works from Arkansas composers Florence Price, William Grant Still, Scott Joplin, and more. More than 100 area residents were in attendance.



OCTOBER 12: APPLE HISTORY TALK AND CIDER PRESSING



Local historian Susan Young presented a talk on Cane Hill's rich apple history followed by an apple pressing and cider making demonstration with friends from Springdale's Black Apple Cidery.

NOVEMBER 16: CANE HILL AFTER DARK

Abby Burnett was the encore speaker for the third annual Cane Hill After Dark—a peek into the spooky side of the Ozarks. Abby's talk focused on an assortment of tales tombstones tell, both true and embellished, proving that you can't trust something just because it is carved in stone. Sixty people gathered for the talk and refreshments at the Pyeatte stage.



NOVEMBER 16: TRAILBLAZERS HISTORY HIKE

More than 35 hikers gathered for the 2nd Annual Historic Cane Hill Members Trailblazers History Hike! Local Historian and HCH Board Member Susan Young led a walk along the History Trail to explore the stories surrounding several Cane Hill landmarks.



DECEMBER 14: CANE HILL CHRISTMAS

Starr Mitchell and George West of Little Rock delighted Cane Hill Christmas concert attendees with their dulcimer and fiddle music and stories of Christmases past and holiday customs. Afterward, Historic Cane Hill members mingled and got in the holiday spirit at a festive reception in the Cane Hill College.



APPLE BLOSSOM SOCIETY

AND HISTORIC CANE HILL MEMBERSHIP

THE APPLE BLOSSOM has come to symbolize Historic Cane Hill's vision of growth and cultivation of a vibrant community. In 2023, we launched our Apple Blossom Society, a donor giving society focused on preservation efforts. On April 18, we hosted the first annual Apple Blossom Society Social. More than 50 guests enjoyed tours of four historic properties, including the Colburn Barn and the Kirby-Colburn House, before enjoying a reception on the Zeb and Eunice Edmiston House grounds. We welcomed eight new members to the society and raised \$83,370.

Historic Cane Hill also offers a Membership Program, starting at \$35 for an individual member, for anyone who wishes to financially support our mission. The Program saw tremendous growth in 2024, ending the year with more than 200 members. Members at the Cornerstone Level and above receive a listing in the annual report.



APPLE BLOSSOM SOCIETY

Founders Circle (\$10,000+)

Dian Graves Owen Foundation
Tim and Amy Leach

Shannon Pippin (\$5,000+)

John and Tricia Greer
Neil and Jean Helm
Pam and David Parks

Wilson June (\$2,500+)

Tareneh and Lance Manning
Phyllis McKuin and Barry McKuin*

Howard Sweet (\$1,000+)

Ted Belden
Teresa and Alex Cornett
Amber and Courtney Crouch III
Brenda and Courtney Crouch II
Dr. John and Linda Fahey
Stephanie Haught Wade
Steve Wolverton and Linda Houston
Paula Irwin
Holly and David Johnson
Sally Kirby Hartman and Ronald Hartman
Mary Madden and Gary Thompson
Vanessa and Tim McKuin
Carl H. Miller Jr. Foundation
John and Joan Miller
Genevieve M. Pennington Trust
Endowment
Tim Hudson and Charlotte Taylor
Carol Sue and Alan Wooten
Stanley Yates

HISTORIC CANE HILL MEMBERS

Foundation (\$500+)

Frances and Grant Billingsley
Col. John and Jan Campbell
Donna Crawley
Tom and Cala Pence
Waitsman Family Charitable Fund

Cornerstone (\$100+)

Carolyn and James W. Anderson
Karen Barnwell
The James Burton Blair Family
Foundation
Paul and JoAnn Biggs
Ken and Linda Coffey
Gretchen and Daniel Crane
Chuck and Lori Debes
Dinah Dickerson and Caroline Cox
Carin D'Innocente
Candace Dixon-Horne
Hugh Dunnahoe
Suzie and Jim Dunn
Clyde Wood and Patti Gay
Gary Holland Family
Sandy Jenkins
Marsha Jones
Carolyn Yancey Kent
Jim and Diana Lewis
Melissa Maddox
Kevin Maestri
Dwain and Rita Manske
William Martin
Myrna McCormack
Lawrence and Terry McElroy

Cornerstone, cont.

Hayden McIlroy
Michael McLellan
Martha McNair
Jane Moore
Carolyn and David Newbern
Cheri and Mark Nichols
Wes and Louise Norton
Luke and Janet Parsch
Rachel and Drue Patton
Gene Pharr
Len Pitcock
Andrew Proctor
Alan and Shareen Pruitt
Mary and Robert Richardson
Shantel Strain
Tim and Patty Sullivan
Loyd and Carole Swope
Devin Tabor and Sky Tabor
Katrina and Larry Thomas
Misty and Michael Vaughn
Constance Waddell
Chris and Carmen Weaver
Darren and Stephanie Williamson
Mike and Mary Woods
Susan Young

* in memoriam

To sign up for Membership or join the Apple Blossom Society, visit historiccanehill.org/join-support



REMEMBERING THE REMOVAL AND CELEBRATING THE WITNESS TREE

THE REMEMBER THE REMOVAL BIKE RIDE is an annual event in which Cherokee youth retrace the Trail of Tears by bicycle to honor their ancestors and learn about their history. The ride spans approximately 950 miles, from New Echota, Georgia, to Tahlequah, Oklahoma, the capital of the Cherokee Nation. Participants cycle through significant sites and reflect on the hardships faced by their ancestors during the forced removal in the 1830s. On June 20, 17 cyclists and their support crew stopped in Cane Hill for refreshments and to visit the “witness tree,” a beloved, massive bur oak which was likely standing during the Trail of Tears.

In 2024, the giant beauty was designated as a co-champion bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) tree by the Arkansas Department of Agriculture’s Forestry Division. With a Bigness Index of 359 (Bigness Index = trunk circumference + height + 25% crown width), it tied with a tree in Madison County as largest in the state.

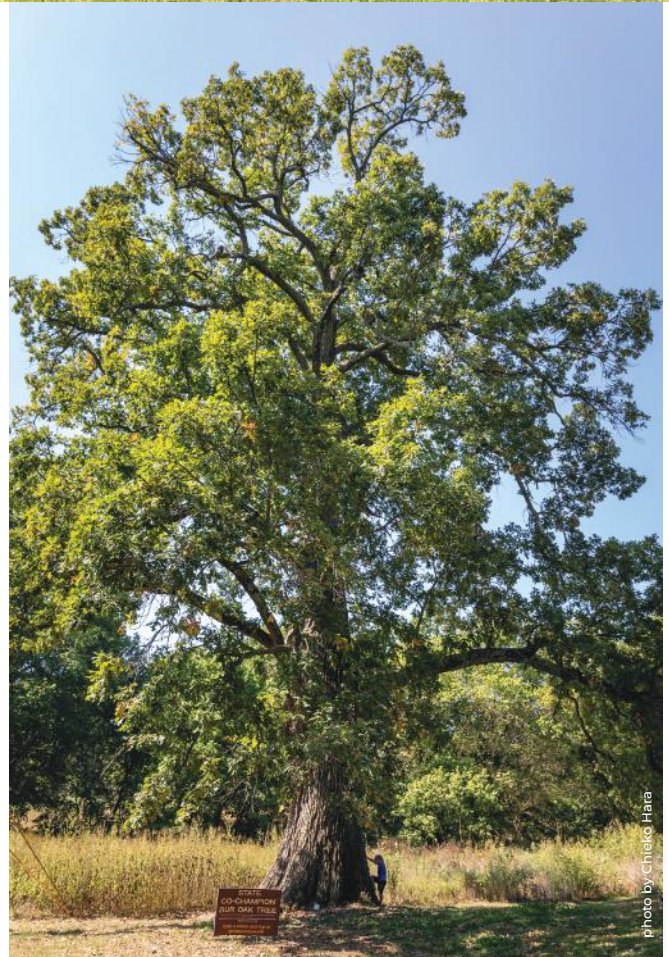


photo by: Chieko Hara

HISTORIC
CANE HILL

Historic Cane Hill's 2024 programs, events, and exhibitions were supported by the generosity of the following sponsors and grantors:

More than \$10,000

Permian Basin Area Foundation

\$10,000

Fayetteville Restoration Endowment



\$5,000



Willard & Pat Walker
Charitable Foundation, Inc

\$2,500-4,999



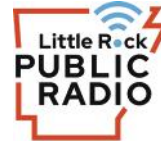
ARKANSAS
HERITAGE



Tareneh and Lance Manning



WER
ARCHITECTS



\$1,000-2,499



Curtis More
Washington County



Advisors

Wallace Group
of Wells Fargo Advisors

\$500-999



Quail Forever
in Arkansas



\$100-499

Advance Pest Control • American Drive In • Auto Glass and Mirror Inc. • The Bank of Fayetteville • Benchmark Equipment Rentals • BHA • Cane Hill Cemetery • Fourkiller Lawn Solutions • Kids Unlimited Learning Academy Landmark CPAs • Luginbuel Funeral Home • Prairie Grove Telephone Company • Spears and Son Tree Service

FINANCIAL REPORT

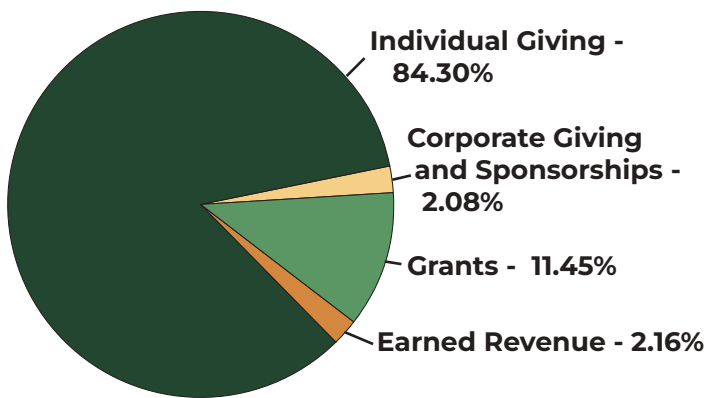
HISTORIC CANE HILL'S WORK IN 2024 to carry out our mission to preserve, connect, and inspire through meaningful experiences with history, education, architecture, nature, and the arts was made possible because of generous contributions from individuals, businesses, and foundations.

Additionally, 88 volunteers contributed their time and talents to projects including the Cane Hill Harvest Festival, special events, museum

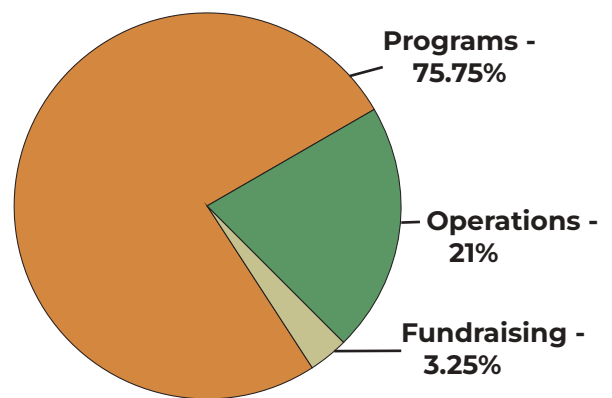
operations, trail and grounds maintenance, research, administrative support, and more.

We remain committed to directing the majority of our funding toward historic preservation, educational programming, and community initiatives. Thanks to continued expanding fundraising efforts in 2024, we were able to invest more donor contributions into our mission than ever before. Below is an overview of our revenue and expenses.

2024 Income - \$2,202,689



2024 Expenses - \$2,007,481



2024 BOARD AND STAFF



Vanessa McKuin
Executive Director



Jared Biggs
Historic Sites Manager



Holly Brain Johnson
Director of Development



Amanda Cothren
Programs and Events Coordinator

Board of Directors
John Greer, President
Neil Helm, Treasurer
Susan Young, Secretary
Tim Leach
Tareneh Manning
Pam Parks



Daniel Crane
Grounds Assistant



Lawrence McElroy
Director of Arts and Culture



Carly Squyres
Administrative and Operations Manager

Advisory Board
Betty Colburn
Scott Davis
Bonnie Haegele
Jim Lewis
Daylene Reed
Leonard "Archie" Reed



Save the Date!



Cane Hill Harvest Festival
September 20, 2025

historiccanehillar.org/festival

