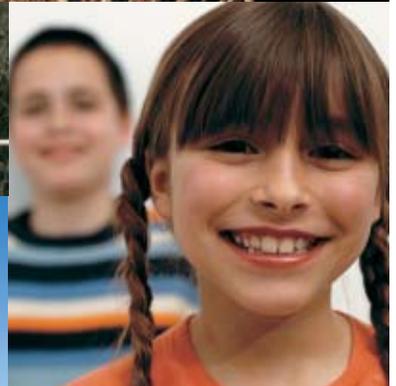
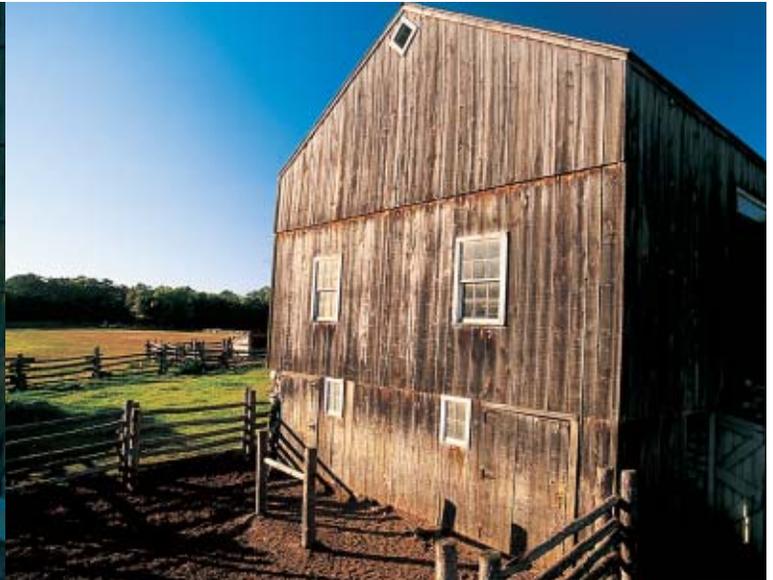
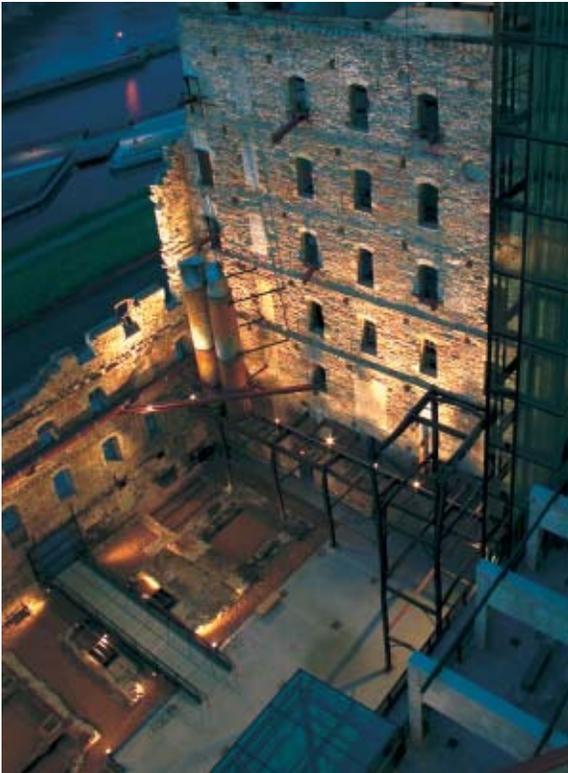


COME VISIT YOUR PLACE IN HISTORY
MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2003 ANNUAL REPORT



“The creation of the new Mill City Museum in the shell of the old mill offers testimony to the imagination and tenacity of the Minnesota Historical Society and the many individuals who made it happen. It testifies to something else as well: Old buildings—even those that appear too far gone to be worth saving—can have a lot of life left in them. Cities all over the nation need to learn that lesson, and Minneapolis offers them a good example.”

Richard Moe, President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation



A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

History is most simply described as a story, a narrative of human activity that connects us to the stretch of time and experience that we cannot know firsthand. Through its publications, exhibitions and historic sites, the Minnesota Historical Society enables people to make a personal connection with the past. Our books, which won five Minnesota Book Awards this year; our museums, including our new Mill City Museum; and our historic sites, from the Kelley Farm to Historic Fort Snelling, all tell a great story.

This year, the Society's capacity to tell Minnesota's story was deeply challenged. A cut of \$4.3 million in state funding caused us to make difficult decisions. Every part of our program was affected. Public hours were reduced, 134 staff members lost positions or work hours, and grants to county and local historical organizations were cut. Fewer educational programs were offered, our ability to collect historical materials was diminished, and we concluded that we could no longer afford to operate seven historic sites.

The decision to close sites elicited a dramatic response across the state. Local citizens made an incredible effort and raised the funds needed to keep the sites open through the season, once again demonstrating how much Minnesotans care about their history. However, securing funds to support these sites into the future remains uncertain. Several sites and 106 jobs hang in the balance.

Despite the inevitable feelings of loss that surrounded us this year, the Society's creativity and commitment to service remain undiminished. Mill City Museum opened its doors, bringing the past to life in the state's largest city. Nearly one million people found their place in history by visiting our historic sites, museums and libraries. Another three million connected with history through our web site, an increase of 58 percent. More than 290,000 schoolchildren discovered history where it happened on field trips and through educational programs, including History Day, for which Minnesota is heralded as a national leader. Even in a challenging year, there is much to celebrate.

The Society is forever grateful to you—our members, donors, volunteers, staff and governing board members—to our elected leaders, Governor Tim Pawlenty, the Minnesota Legislature and local officials around the state, and to Minnesota's people for an extraordinary commitment to bringing the wisdom of the past to future generations. Such deep caring for Minnesota history challenges us to deliver an inspired telling of the state's story.



Nina Archabal



“There is no question that the values that built our past are essential to our future. But we cannot assume they will be automatically adopted by future generations. The Minnesota Historical Society is a vital factor in preserving the best of the past and projecting it into the future.”

Elmer L. Andersen, former Governor of Minnesota

MINNESOTA HISTORY CENTER
ST. PAUL



“I have observed the wonder in a group of first-graders’ eyes when they make the connection that the eggs they gathered from the chicken coop made the dough for the bread the house servant is letting them sample. I have seen the mist come over senior citizens’ eyes as they relive how they used to light a wood-burning cook stove...”

Visitor at Historic Forestville commenting on the site’s programs

HISTORIC FORESTVILLE
NEAR PRESTON





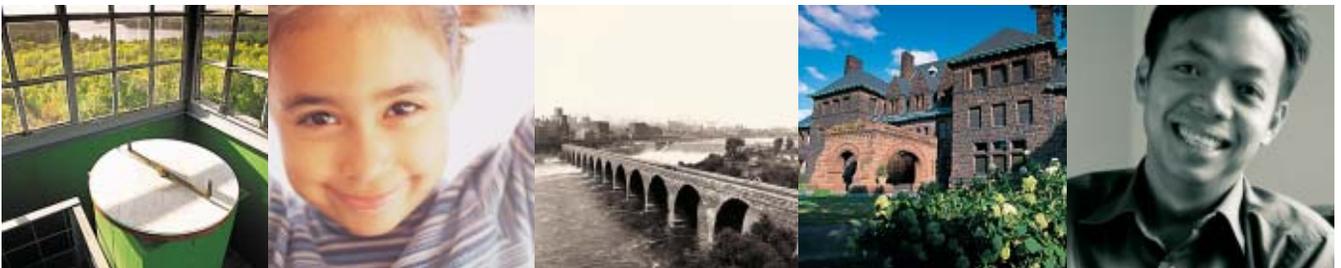
THE POWER OF PLACE—THE POWER OF PEOPLE

Minnesota's historic places resonate in all of us. They take us out of ourselves, bring us back to a special moment in time, evoke memories of a shared past. From the ancient carvings at Jeffers Petroglyphs to Split Rock Lighthouse soaring over Lake Superior's North Shore to the History Center in St. Paul, these special places teach us about our past and illuminate our way to the future.

This year, the Minnesota Historical Society faced some of the most challenging—and inspiring—times in its 154-year history. From the reality of a significant reduction in state funding to the resounding response from communities stepping in to keep threatened historic sites open to the excitement surrounding the completion of Mill City Museum, the year was filled with a series of dramatic highs and lows.

The year was highlighted by an astounding display of the importance Minnesota's historic places have for its citizens. When seven historic sites were faced with closure, concerned citizens and groups across the state rallied together to help keep these sites open through the summer of 2003. The Society is extraordinarily grateful to Richard DeLeo, John Clemetson and Monte Kjos, the Friends of the Forest History Center, the Friends of Forestville, the Friends of Fort Ridgely, SOS Save Our Sites, the City of St. Paul Cultural STAR Board, Burlington Northern Santa Fe, St. Thomas University, the Katherine B. Andersen Fund of The Saint Paul Foundation, Andersen Corporation, the Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association Garden, Richard and Nancy Nicholson, the Friends of the Kelley Farm, the National Grange and The Lower Sioux Indian Community.

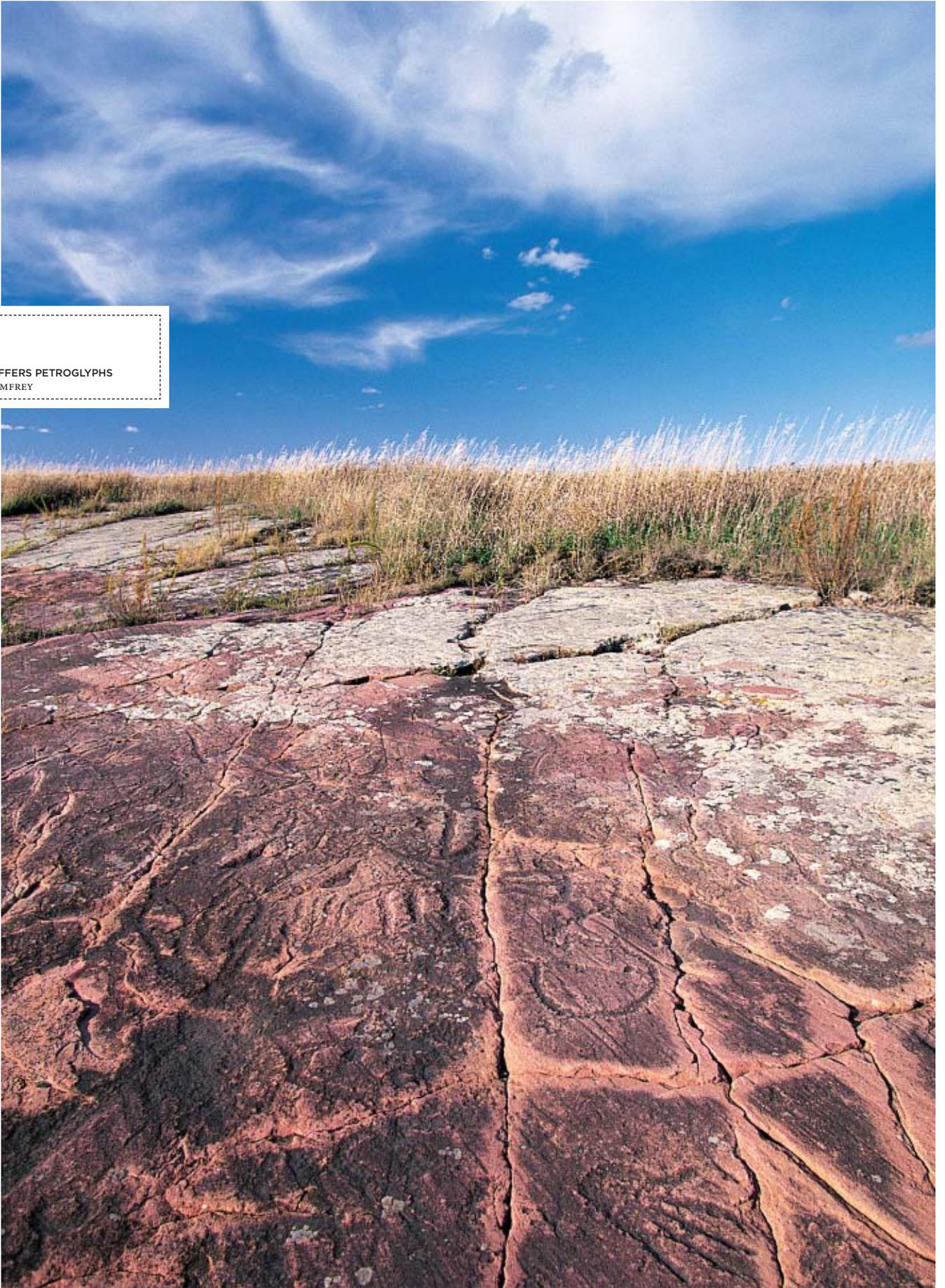
Mayor of St. Paul Randy Kelly's comments regarding the James J. Hill House echoed the sentiments of communities throughout the state as they worked to keep historic sites open to the public this year: "The Hill House is such an important asset to St. Paul and our state's history that I believed we could not afford to let it close."



MILLE LACS INDIAN MUSEUM
NEAR ONAMIA



JEFFERS PETROGLYPHS
COMFREY



PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS ENGAGE THE PUBLIC AND OFFER NEW PERSPECTIVES

Nearly one million visitors and 261,000 schoolchildren found their place in history this year by visiting one or more of the Society's 26 locations throughout the state. Around 350,000 people visited the History Center, including 266,500 in the exhibit galleries and 35,200 library patrons. Historic sites welcomed 609,000 people eager to make a personal connection with history.

The History Center came alive with 159 public programs and the launch of new, smaller exhibits in the galleries and public spaces. Visitors gained new perspectives on the state and its many facets through exhibits including a memorial tribute to Senator Paul Wellstone, a replica "mammoth hailstone" hoax, and a display on the history of the Chinese American community in Minnesota presented in conjunction with the debut of Bill Moyers' documentary film "Becoming American: The Chinese Experience." A one-night presentation of an original copy of the Declaration of Independence and a public program on freedom shared the perspectives of recent immigrants to the state. "Play Ball!" — a new exhibit celebrating Minnesota baseball — opened for a six-month run, inaugurating a new changing gallery that will host a series of short-term exhibitions.

The second edition of the "Northern Lights" curriculum, which includes a student textbook, an annotated teacher's edition and a student workbook, was completed and more than 7,000 copies of the student edition were sold by June 30.

More than 30,000 students participated in History Day competition. Twenty-eight winners at the state level went on to National History Day competition and 10 came home with top awards, including Kristina Bjorkman of Elk River, who took first place in the senior individual performance category.

MHS Press published 23 books, including the critically acclaimed Gulf War memoir "Baghdad Express" under its new imprint, Borealis Books, and "Bamboo Among the Oaks," the first collection of writing by Hmong Americans ever published.

The Society's award-winning web site continued to expand and meet the growing needs of an electronic public. Thirteen new sites were launched and three existing sites were enhanced. Internet users can learn about historic sites and exhibits, research the Minnesota Death Certificate Index, learn how to conserve family treasures, and shop online at MHS Press and the Museum Stores. History Center visitors with laptop capability can log onto the Internet in Café Minnesota, the 3M Auditorium and the Library.

A total of \$311,327 in state and federal grants were awarded to 61 projects by the State Historic Preservation Office, and 16 properties were listed on the National Register of Historic Places, representing an especially diverse selection of properties, including Dodd Road in LeSueur and Rice Counties and Maka Yusota (or Boiling Springs) in Scott County.

The Society continued its preeminent role as steward in the protection and management of historical collections — recording and integrating into the collections more than 1,100 American Indian-associated objects, art, books and photographs from the Sibley House Historic Site, and acquiring a variety of other items which tell Minnesota's stories, including "Tiger" Jack Rosenbloom's St. Paul landmark store.

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

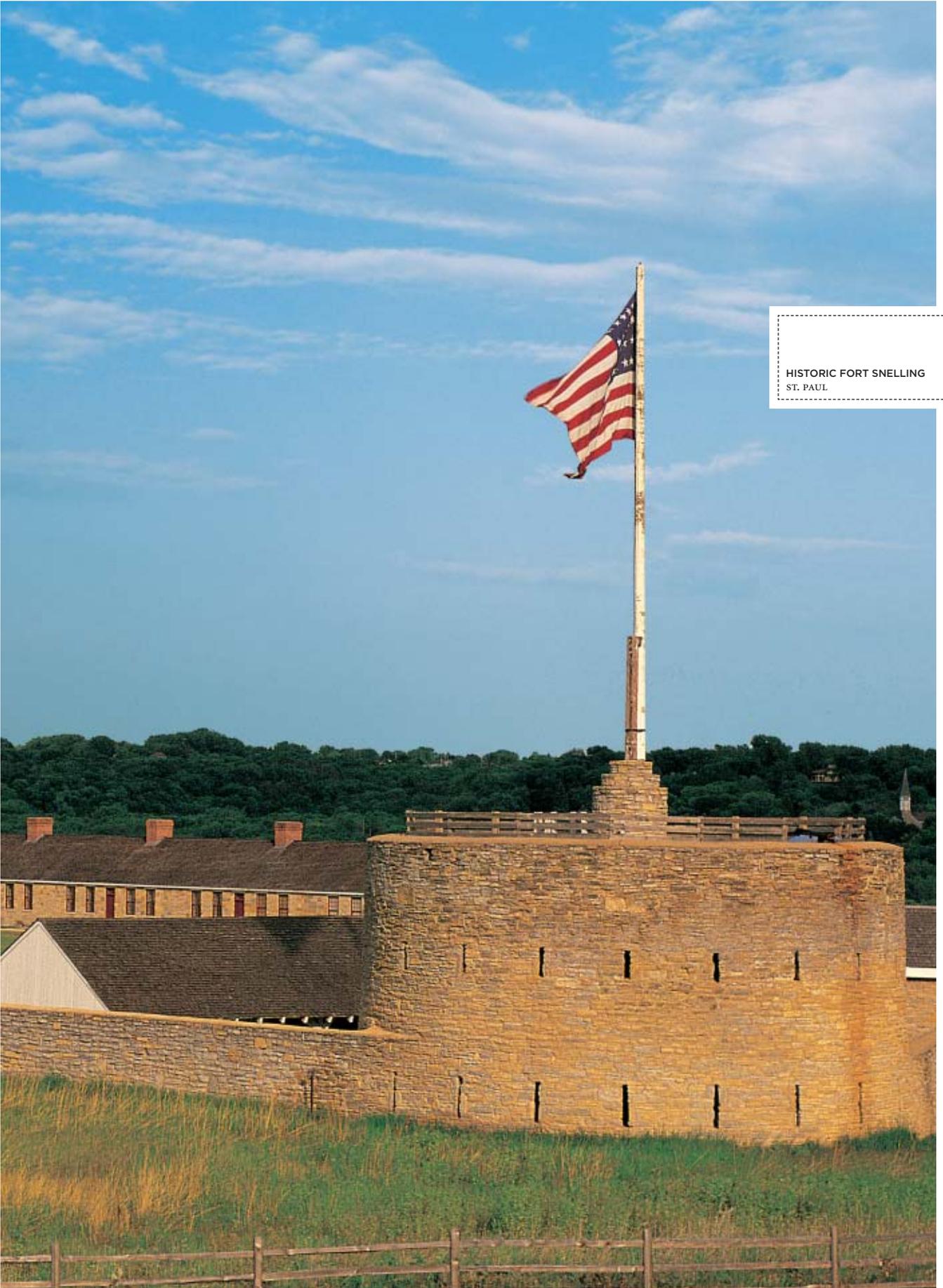
Donations to the Society's collections added important items, thanks to 528 generous contributors. Notable additions include a Civil War-era drum with original sticks from descendants of the Meighen family of Forestville, a Chinese baby carrier used in Minneapolis in the early 20th century, and a number of significant works of art, including a drawing by Alexis Fournier and a Dewey Albinson landscape painting. Also acquired were musical instruments, tour itineraries, handbills and other items from three critically acclaimed Minnesota bands: The Replacements, Husker DÜ and Prince. The Society was also pleased to receive a rare album of Civil War-era photographs by John Nicolay, Abraham Lincoln's secretary, vintage photographs of several Minnesota towns and a key collection of Minnesota Natural History Society records kept by Dr. Clayton Rudd.

Society archaeologists led a class of students in mapping and excavation on a project to document the retaining walls and garden areas of the James J. Hill House prior to restoration of the walls. The group unearthed heretofore undocumented structural remains of the Hills' mushroom cave, cisterns and greenhouses, and discovered a wide range of artifacts. An interesting sidelight of the project was documentation of the use of the area by St. Paul's homeless population over many decades.

Important chapters of Minnesota's history were documented in several oral history projects, including "Pioneers of the Medical Device Industry in Minnesota," which includes interviews with Earl Bakken, C. Walton Lillehei, Win Wallin, Manuel Villafana and others who pioneered the heart pacemaker industry. A wide array of materials from the colorful administration of Governor Jesse Ventura, with a focus on communication efforts, including web sites, speeches and tapes of radio shows, also became part of the collections.

Final preparations for the unveiling of Mill City Museum led to a jubilant celebration in September 2003 with 10,000 people visiting the Society's newest museum. The \$33 million project reintroduces this National Historic Landmark to the state as a vital community gathering point.





HISTORIC FORT SNELLING
ST. PAUL

2003

HIGHLIGHTS

07.02-08.02 **VISITORS FLOCK TO NINE NIGHTS OF MUSIC**

Partnering with Tapestry Folkdance Center, the Society presented a live music-and-dance program, featuring Polish polka, Mariachi and bluegrass. Attendance at the annual outdoor summer concerts increased 29 percent to more than 5,000 people. Sponsored by 3M.

08.15.02 **LINDBERGH HISTORIC SITE RE-OPENS**

The renovated Charles A. Lindbergh Historic Site features conservation work on the historic house, trail improvements and an enlarged Visitor Center. New exhibits present a comprehensive look at a complicated public and private man and the central themes of his life—a love of flying and concern for the natural environment.

10.15.02 **MINNESOTA HISTORY CENTER TURNS 10**

The History Center—a state landmark and community gathering point—celebrated its 10-year anniversary. Nearly four million people have visited this vital cultural and educational center since 1992.

11.01.02 **ONLINE INDEX SERVES GENEALOGISTS**

The online index to Minnesota's official death certificates was completed from 1908 through 1996, providing genealogists convenient access to documents on microfilm in the History Center Library. The index received more than 500,000 visits in 2003, making it the Society's most popular web destination.

11.06.02 **SOMALI IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE DOCUMENTED**

The Institute of Museum and Library Services presented the Society with a \$125,000 National Leadership Grant for Museums in the Community, for the Somali Skyline Tower History Project. The two-year project will document the experiences of young Somali women in Minnesota.

01.01.03 **WEB SITES WIN AWARDS**

"The Duluth Lynching Online Resource" which focuses on the 1920 lynching of three young black men, received a Silver Muse Award from the American Association of Museums. The "Forests, Fields and the Falls" site, featuring comic book-style illustrations, received a Certificate of Commendation from the American Association for State and Local History, and an award from Print magazine.



03.18.03
SOCIETY AND MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA JOIN FORCES

People of all ages enjoyed Civil War seminars, educational programs for youth and the debut of a commissioned piece entitled, "We Are Met at Gettysburg."

03.22.03
'PLAY BALL!' EXHIBIT HITS A HOME RUN

Minnesota baseball came to life with everything from gloves and jerseys to a batting cage, the sounds of Ray Scott and Halsey Hall calling a 1960s Twins game, and numerous items on loan from collector Fred Budde. Sponsored by the Minnesota Twins Community Fund.

05.16.03
MHS PRESS APPLAUDED

MHS Press books took a record five prizes at the Minnesota Book Awards, and Press Director Gregory M. Britton was named Publisher of the Year.

06.07.03
NORTH WEST COMPANY FUR POST CELEBRATES NEW VISITOR CENTER

The North West Company Fur Post opened a new building, allowing visitors to experience life during the fur trade in 1805. A 25-foot-long birchbark canoe, 3,000 square feet of exhibit space, multi-media presentations and new trails are part of the renovations. The site's opening festivities attracted 2,300 visitors.

06.27.03
HISTORY CENTER HOSTS 31ST ANNUAL MINNESOTA CRAFTS FESTIVAL

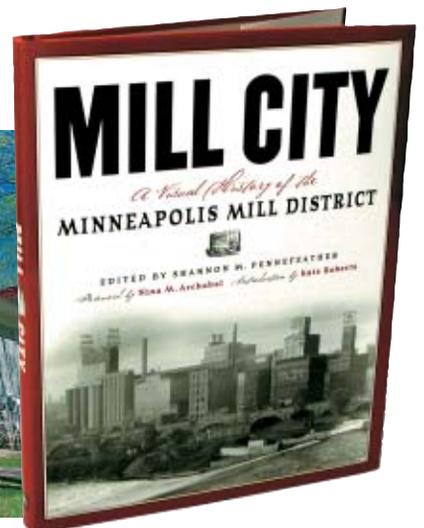
Nearly 8,000 people gathered at the History Center to enjoy a weekend of artist demonstrations, live music, children's activities and more than 100 artists' booths.

6.28.03
SPLIT ROCK EXPANDS VISITOR CENTER

The thousands of visitors who come to Split Rock Lighthouse every year now benefit from a revamped, enlarged Visitor Center.

06.30.03
'TIGER' JACK'S STORE PRESERVED AT HISTORY CENTER

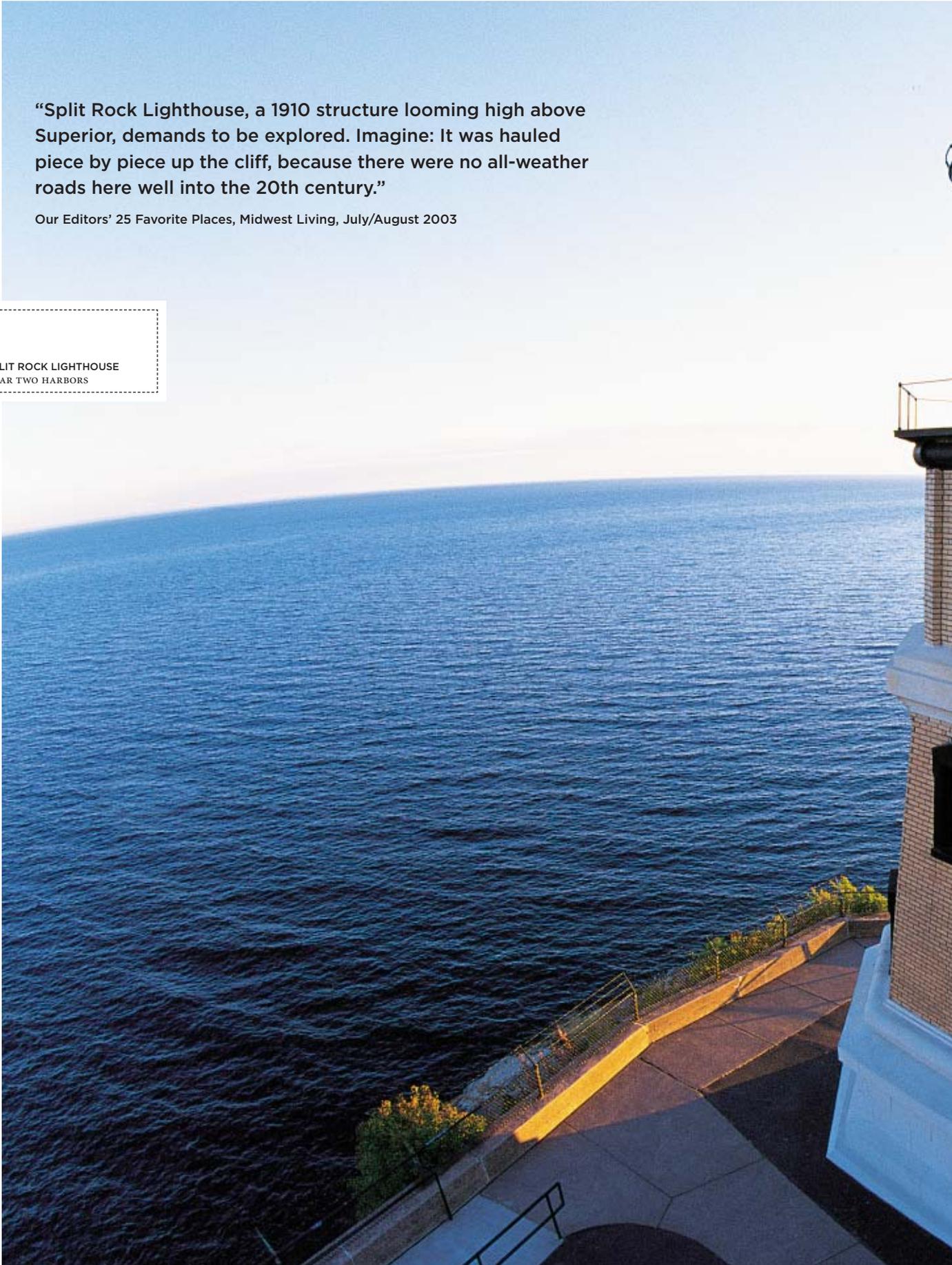
Once located in the historic St. Paul Rondo neighborhood, the store owned by "Tiger" Jack Rosenbloom became a part of the History Center's popular exhibit, "Minnesota A to Z."

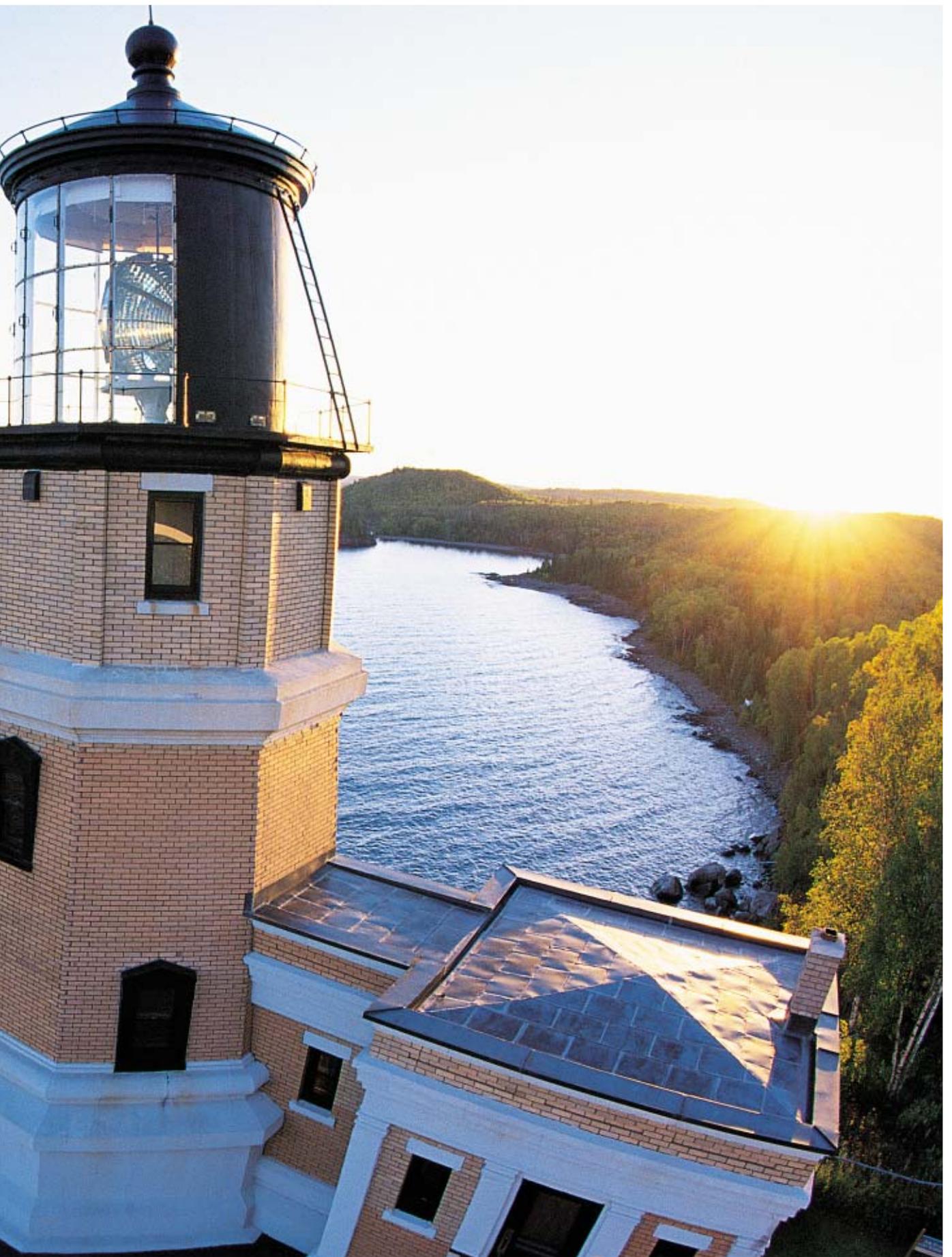


“Split Rock Lighthouse, a 1910 structure looming high above Superior, demands to be explored. Imagine: It was hauled piece by piece up the cliff, because there were no all-weather roads here well into the 20th century.”

Our Editors' 25 Favorite Places, Midwest Living, July/August 2003

SPLIT ROCK LIGHTHOUSE
NEAR TWO HARBORS





Fiscal Year 2003 Highlights

The State of Minnesota continued to demonstrate its long-term support of the Society with a fiscal year 2003 operating appropriation of \$25.6 million and a capital appropriation of \$6.2 million.

The Society's members, friends, corporations and foundations provided \$5.2 million in funding for the Society's capital campaign, memberships, and for ongoing programs.

Non-investment revenues were up 6.2% from fiscal year 2002.

Nearly 1,700 volunteers and interns contributed 37,300 hours of service to the Society.

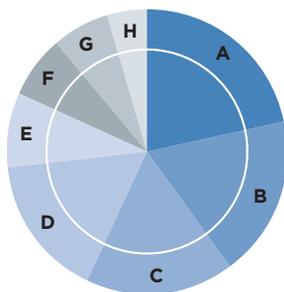
54% of the Society's fiscal year 2003 budget was for salaries and benefits.

The market value of permanent and board-designated endowment increased by 5.5% to \$20.8 million reflecting the recent market upturn.

A 10% increase in the Plant Fund reflects the addition of the North West Company Fur Post Visitor Center and part of Mill City Museum.

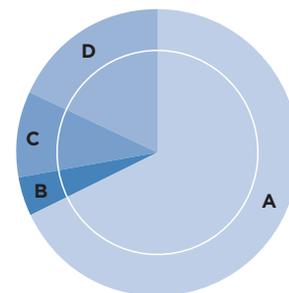
The Legacy Fund Campaign ended on June 30, 2003, and raised over \$44 million. With these funds, the Society has been able to support the newly opened Mill City Museum in Minneapolis, five new exhibitions at the History Center in St. Paul, a new Minnesota History curriculum in the schools and the Society's endowment.

Thanks to the tremendous response to last year's Annual Fund appeal, the Society raised more than \$1.1 million to help support the programs our members and others around the state value and use. The amount marks a 38% increase over the previous year, thanks to two challenge gifts and the generous response of more than 900 members who made new or increased gifts to the Annual Fund.



Percentage of Expenses by Program Area

A Historic Sites	21.6%
B Library Collections and Archival Services	18.3%
C Museum Operations, Exhibits and Education	17.1%
D Management and General, Development and Membership	16.2%
E History Center	8.5%
F Outreach and Preservation	7.1%
G Mill City Museum	6.6%
H Publications	4.6%



Sources of Support and Revenue

A State Appropriations	67.8%
B Federal, State and County Grants and Contracts	4.4%
C Support from Individuals, Corporations and Foundations	9.7%
D Earned Income	18.1%

Condensed Balance Sheet Year ended June 30, 2003

(000's omitted) With summarized information as of June 30, 2002

	Unrestricted			Temporarily restricted		Permanently restricted	Total	
	Undesignated	Plant fund	Board designated endowment	State appropriations	Other		2003	2002
Cash and investments	\$2,923		\$9,327	\$1,635	\$4,302	\$11,392	\$29,579	\$34,611
Receivables	2,440			8,618	3,117	543	14,718	14,433
Museum shop inventories	809						809	666
Property and equipment net		\$90,758					90,758	82,717
Total assets	\$6,172	\$90,758	\$9,327	\$10,253	\$7,419	\$11,935	\$135,864	\$132,427
Payables and accrued liabilities	\$766		\$50	\$1,799	\$604	\$425	\$3,644	\$5,112
Net assets:								
Unrestricted	5,406	\$90,758	9,277				105,441	96,137
Temporarily restricted				8,454	6,815		15,269	20,788
Permanently restricted						11,510	11,510	10,390
Total net assets	5,406	90,758	9,277	8,454	6,815	11,510	132,220	127,315
Total liabilities and net assets	\$6,172	\$90,758	\$9,327	\$10,253	\$7,419	\$11,935	\$135,864	\$132,427

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

Statement of Activities Year ended June 30, 2003

(000's omitted) With summarized information as of June 30, 2002

	Unrestricted			Temporarily restricted		Permanently restricted	Total	
	Undesignated	Plant fund	Board designated endowment	State appropriations	Other		2003	2002
Support and revenue:								
Support:								
Private contributions	\$825				\$2,920	\$782	\$4,527	\$5,106
Federal grants					1,971		1,971	4,766
State agency grants								(393)
County and other grants					104		104	4,773
State operating appropriations				\$25,622			25,622	25,890
State capital appropriation				6,173			6,173	
Total support	825	0	0	31,795	4,995	782	38,397	40,142
Revenue:								
History Center auxiliary services	1,188						1,188	1,151
Historic sites admissions	1,311						1,311	1,309
Historic sites stores sales	979						979	965
Membership	702						702	713
Publication sales	1,130						1,130	912
Management fees	91						91	89
Museum program fees	224						224	228
Other sales and fees	1,206						1,206	1,063
Investment returns	78		\$1,204		97	288	1,667	(3,780)
Total revenue	6,909	0	1,204	0	97	288	8,498	2,650
Total support and revenue	7,734	0	1,204	31,795	5,092	1,070	46,895	42,792
Net assets released from program restrictions	32,862	\$9,498		(30,653)	(11,707)			
Total support, revenue and net assets released from program restrictions	40,596	9,498	1,204	1,142	(6,615)	1,070	46,895	42,792
Expenses:								
Program services:								
Library collections and archival services	7,439	253					7,692	7,589
Publications	1,926	10					1,936	2,005
Museum operations, exhibits and education	6,919	263					7,182	7,459
Historic sites	8,828	248					9,076	8,870
Outreach and preservation	2,972	7					2,979	2,371
Mill City Museum	2,422	352					2,774	2,314
History Center	3,250	309					3,559	3,661
Total program services	33,756	1,442	0	0	0	0	35,198	34,269
Supporting services:								
Management and general	6,100	13					6,113	6,147
Development and membership	677	2					679	715
Total supporting services	6,777	15	0	0	0	0	6,792	6,862
Total expenses	40,533	1,457	0	0	0	0	41,990	41,131
Increase (decrease) in net assets before transfer	63	8,041	1,204	1,142	(6,615)	1,070	4,905	1,661
Reclassification of net assets	1,245		(1,249)		(46)	50		
Changes in net assets								
Unrestricted	1,308	8,041	(45)				9,304	12,886
Temporarily Restricted				1,142	(6,661)		(5,519)	(11,331)
Permanently Restricted						1,120	1,120	106
Net change in net assets	1,308	8,041	(45)	1,142	(6,661)	1,120	4,905	1,661
Net assets at beginning of year	4,098	82,717	9,322	7,312	13,476	10,390	127,315	125,654
Net assets at end of year	\$5,406	\$90,758	\$9,277	\$8,454	\$6,815	\$11,510	\$132,220	\$127,315

LOOKING AHEAD

As the Society moves forward, there is no denying that the significant reduction in state funding is having its impact. Still, with over 17,000 members, the Society remains the nation's largest historical organization, retaining its essential energy and creativity.

Work is underway on a number of exciting projects. Most notable is the effort to bring new life to Historic Fort Snelling. Open to the public as a historic site since 1970, the Fort is ready for restoration, program changes and new features that will give visitors a more comprehensive experience of this state icon. Our goal is to complete work by 2008, making Fort Snelling the centerpiece of the state's 150th anniversary!

Significant improvements are also planned for the Forest History Center in Grand Rapids. Using funds provided by a state capital appropriation and a Blandin Foundation grant, the Society is developing new exhibits and expanding trails to encompass more of the beautiful woodland that surrounds the logging camp.

The Society's commitment to serving diverse audiences is reflected in the changing exhibits at the History Center. Opening in November, "Small Wonders, Little Giants" will feature action figures from GI Joe to Batman. The exhibit will present the work of Minneapolis designer Steve Kiwus, a world-leader in action figure design, along with figures from the Society's extensive doll collections.

In early 2004, a major new exhibition, "Going Places: The Mystique of Mobility," will open at the History Center. Acknowledging Minnesotans' fascination with travel, this exhibition will move visitors through the ages—from early train travel to a multimedia show within a 22-foot rocket ship.

Mill City Museum is hitting its stride with exciting programs that are drawing visitors to this magical place. The combination of architect Tom Meyer's brilliant vision for the reuse of the charred remains of the Washburn A Mill with the Society's vision for the museum, with its Baking Lab, Water Lab and Flour Tower, presents a powerful telling of Minneapolis' signature story. Just as Minneapolis was the milling capital of the world for 50 years, so Mill City Museum will draw visitors for many years to come.

This year, students across the state will open copies of the newly revised "Northern Lights" curriculum. By learning from such fine materials and participating in such programs as History Day, the next generation of Minnesotans will know our state's story and ensure the continuity of its accomplishments into the future.

Looking to the year ahead and to those beyond, we can be sure that history will be alive and well in Minnesota.



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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 send an e-mail to keith.bartz@mnhs.org.

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Bequests Received

The following individuals have generously and thoughtfully benefited the Society's endowment in the past year through a bequest. Their gifts will be lasting legacies, supporting in perpetuity what they most valued during their lifetimes.

Curtis B. Akenson
Theodore J. and Mildred E. Bulinski
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J. Harold Kittleson

Endowment Funds

Endowment gifts create a meaningful, lasting legacy and provide valuable program support now and for generations to come. The Society is most grateful to the donors who have created the following 56 separate named endowment funds. With a current and/or deferred gift of \$50,000 or more, donors can benefit a specific program or area of history through an endowed fund agreement. Each year, named fund donors receive an annual report on the work of their fund. We also recognize individuals who with a minimum gift of \$10,000 have established a pooled named endowment fund that collectively supports a general program area or historic site. For information about endowment funds, please contact Keith Bartz, Director of Planned/Major Gifts, at 651-205-4575 or 1-888-293-4440 or keith.bartz@mnhs.org.

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