

Celebrating 50 Years!



The highlight of 2021 at Historic Harrisville was our 50th Anniversary Celebration, which took place in August. The day began with an open house hosted by HHI Trustees, which provided an opportunity for people to see inside the village's historic buildings, and meet some of their tenants. A guided walk of the Zophar Willard Woods conservation land was provided mid-day. And a large gathering, featuring speakers Anna Schuleit Haber and Jack Davis and a champagne toast by founder Chick Colony, was held at the Bolle-rud Field in the evening. The day was well attended, and provided a heart-warming way to collectively recall the good work of Historic Harrisville over the past 50 years.

This significant milestone is also being commemorated with the preparation of a book documenting the founding and evolution of the organization in its first 50 years. With re-

search and writing by Elizabeth Durfree Hengen and Rusty Russell, and professional editing and design by members of the Harrisville community, this book will combine historical facts and stories with fun reminiscences in the form of published articles about Historic Harrisville and images and memorabilia from the HHI archive. The book is nearly finished, and will be ready for distribution late this summer.

Thank you to everyone who participated in this special occasion!

With a \$10,000 grant from the 1772 Foundation and New Hampshire Preservation Alliance, which was matched by a tremendous outpouring of financial support from the community, HHI was able to hire Sash + Solder to restore four of the stained glass windows in St. Denis in 2021. HHI is now working with an architect to plan for the reuse of this building.

Event Space For Rent

During the Covid-19 pandemic, gatherings were discouraged, so our event spaces were rarely used. But now, as life begins to return to "normal," please remember that HHI has event spaces for rent at affordable rates.

The "spinning room," which is where we hold our semi-annual gatherings, is available to rent weekends and

evenings and can hold up to one hundred fifty people (with parking for about 25-30 cars). Our new "gallery" space is not private, but provides an opportunity for small shows or exhibits.

Please contact Becca DeFusco at bdefusco@historicharrisville.org or (603) 827-3722 to discuss your event.

Board of Trustees 2021

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 Karena Karo, *Custodian*
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 Frederick O'Connor, *Project Manager*

Harrisville General Store

These employees worked at the store at 2021 year-end:

Renee Archibald
 Madison Brumaghim
 Ethan Corson
 Grace Magoon
 Teresa Morris
 Talon Petrosino
 Raymond Robaina
 Megan Roy
 Samantha Rule, *Store Manager*
 Sarah Scott
 Noah VonDette
 Molly Withers

2021 Statement of Operations** Historic Harrisville, Inc.

	2021	2020
Operating Income***		
Rental Income	\$540,311	\$511,048
Other Operating Income	\$ 27,955	\$ 16,345
Annual Appeal (Unrestricted)	\$ 86,847	\$ 78,638
Other Unrestricted Donations	\$ 34,885	\$ 20,823
Total Operating Income	\$689,998	\$626,854
Operating Expenses		
Office Expenses	\$ 41,478	\$ 53,101
Committee Expenses	\$ 13,848	\$ 9,407
Payroll Expenses	\$216,802	\$187,608
Property Expenses		
Property Tax	\$ 97,485	\$ 96,821
Heating Fuel	\$ 69,669	\$ 72,499
Property Insurance	\$ 46,796	\$ 43,981
Repairs (Contractors)	\$ 45,393	\$ 24,727
Interest Expense	\$ 31,915	\$ 29,015
Electricity	\$ 28,293	\$ 21,930
Plowing/Sanding	\$ 17,363	\$ 12,625
Materials (Repairs by Staff)	\$ 16,836	\$ 12,652
Other Property Expenses	\$ 27,578	\$ 24,876
Total Property Expense****	\$381,328	\$339,126
Total Expense	\$653,456	\$589,242
HHI Net Income	\$ 36,542	\$ 37,612

** Unaudited *** Excludes restricted fundraising **** Excludes depreciation expense

Harrisville General Store

	2021	2020
Operating Income		
Sales	\$598,156	\$399,836
Donations and Grants	\$ 88,802	\$ 69,341
Total Income	\$686,958	\$469,177
Operating Expenses		
Cost of Goods Sold	\$378,461	\$264,198
Payroll Expenses	\$254,349	\$176,847
Other Operating Expenses	\$ 23,414	\$ 14,555
Total Expense	\$656,224	\$455,600
HGS Net Income	\$ 30,734	\$ 13,577

2021 Financial Overview

In 2021, HHI's rental income increased by almost \$30,000, or just over 5% due to consistent annual increases of approximately 3%, paired with the leasing of additional space in our existing buildings. Payroll expenses increased almost the same amount as we added part-time staff to help with our property improvement projects, and in the archive. Property expenses increased due to rising utility costs and extra effort to catch up on maintenance and improve building systems. Fortunately, unrestricted fundraising was strong to help cover these additional operating expenses.

At the Harrisville General Store, sales increased tremendously as the pandemic subsided, and with the addition of Friday Nights at the Store. Merchandise and operating costs increased with sales. Payroll went up notably as we returned to being fully staffed, extended open hours from 4 to 6 pm, and reopened from 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays. Thanks to careful management of the business and pandemic-related government subsidies, the store had an unusually successful year financially.

In addition to the operating income shown above, HHI raised \$71,450 in funds for specific projects, including \$18,600 to build walk-in refrigerator for the store, \$21,850 to begin restoring the stained glass windows at St. Denis, and \$31,000 in support of HHI's 50th anniversary event and commemorative history book, which will be finished soon and distributed this summer. In challenging years like this one, these donations are especially important to keep our projects moving forward!

The Cheshire Mills Boarding House: Housing Hidden Talent

To preserve its historic properties, Historic Harrisville's business model is to own historic buildings, rehabilitate them for use, and then lease them to tenants whose use of the space is in line with our mission and values, and whose rent covers the costs associated with operating and maintaining the building. Because they are leased to private tenants, our buildings are not generally open to the public. So, we want to make you aware of the amazing talent that is hidden inside our historic brick walls.

One fascinating example is the Cheshire Mills Boarding House, often referred to as the Harrisville Children's Center, since it has housed this important tenant since 1985. The Children's Center provides exceptional early childhood education, which brings many families to Harrisville each day. The sights and sounds of children playing on the playgrounds and walking through the village in their colorful little coats add a tremendous vitality to our community.

The Cheshire Mills Boarding House was built in 1851 to provide housing for mill workers. During the mills' heyday, men and women resided in close quarters in the boarding house. In 1870, for instance, the boarding house was run by George Greenwood and his wife, Eliza, with the help of three house servants. They had 31 boarders, including 29 mill workers (seven of whom were identified as spinners), one farm laborer, and one child. The building's interior is characterized by a central corridor on each level, flanked by a series of small rooms.

This legacy of group housing is continued to some degree by Harrisville Designs, who rents the third story of the building to provide temporary housing for the students who attend their classes, coming to Harrisville to learn about textiles by taking multiday workshops on weaving, knitting, or other crafts.

On the second floor, the central hallway is flanked by a series of offices and studios. Seven new tenants—all working in creative professions—moved into these



spaces in 2021. These talented community members include Lily Featherston, a young artist who works mostly with linoleum and oil-based inks to capture moments and scenes in nature, hand printing beautiful pieces in her tiny studio in the boarding house. She is next door to storyteller and puppeteer Pat Spalding, who recently relocated to Harrisville from the New Hampshire Seacoast and shares stories verbally as a means of connecting with others. Another storyteller of sorts is author Rebecca Dinnerstein Knight, who wrote works including *The Sunlit Night* and *Hex*. She shares a studio in the boarding house with her husband, John Knight, who is a professional editor. The talented couple owns a historic house in Chesham and has a young son who attends the Harrisville Children's Center in the same building as their office/studio. The rental space next to the Knights is also shared by a family, the Pilipovic-Wengler family. John Wengler is most often in the space, using it as a professional office for his business. But in the summer season, his adult daughters also use the studio for their creative work. Navena Pilipovic-Wengler creates works of art by sewing through paper, while Sasha Pilipovic-Wengler is an abstract painter.

All types of people live and work in Harrisville, including *many* who are exceptional at what they do. This collection of new tenants is an illustration of the unusual density of talented, creative people who choose to be part of this community recently.

The Cheshire Mills Boarding House is not alone! There are talented people working in all of HHI's buildings.

To learn more about Historic Harrisville's tenants, please go to: www.historicharrisville.org/our-tenants

Harrisville General Store: Investing in Our Future

We are so proud of the resilience of our business, made possible by the hard work of our staff and the support of our community! With the aid of available government subsidies, and by developing new modes of operation—including pub nights and take-out dinners, which were heartily supported by our community of customers—the Harrisville General Store was able to not only survive the COVID-19 pandemic, but also improve—both in terms of financial performance for the year and increased engagement with its regular customers. With clear, recent proof that the store is truly an “essential business” in Harrisville, we have been working to leverage our current success by investing in the future sustainability and viability of the store.

There are essentially three components to the business: the products, the people, the place, and the products. Each of these components plays a significant role in making the store the special place that it is, and also has important financial implications. By strategically investing in each of these areas, we will ensure that the store remains a source of food, community, and employment in the town well into the future.

The People

The most valuable asset of the store is its people—the talented, committed employees who not only operate the store, but make it unique and truly special. Because we recognize the value of our people, HHI has been working hard to improve compensation. While the hourly pay rate of our core staff has increased significantly, we know that’s still not enough. With planning and budgeting taking place in 2021, we were able to begin providing ancillary benefits to all staff working more than 30 hours each week in 2022. At no cost to them, they are now receiving short and long-term disability insurance, life insurance, dental insurance, and vision insurance. HHI remains committed to improving compensation for the staff and will continue to make improvements and business allows, so that they can enjoy a high quality of life.

The Products

In order to have things to sell at the store, we have to buy things. The quality and cost of our products are key defining elements in the nature and success of the business. From the beginning, the store has made a commitment to using local food producers, featuring a seasonal menu, and holding ourselves to a high standard in food procurement. This has never been the cheapest way to run things, but creating delicious food out of high-quality ingredients is what we do, and the folks who have come to love us understand that. Because of significant escalations in food prices recently, we are making some minor changes to the products we buy and the way we buy them. We will continue to support our truly local farms and purchase high-quality products. We will work hard to continue offering the items that our customers want at a price that they will pay. Making the experience of eating at

the Harrisville General Store feel “worth it” is a constant consideration of our staff, and will continue to be our focus.



Catholic Church, Library and Wm. B. McClellan's Store, Harrisville, N. H.

The Place

While it might be the store’s physical presence—the gabled brick building with a full-width front porch, or cozy vintage interior—that people think of when they think of the store, the place is actually a relatively minor component of the store business in terms of its operating budget. But it does impact the business in an important way—by limiting the physical space available to the business, and how the business can function within that space.

Last year, we were able to overcome a major hurdle related to the store facility by adding additional refrigeration in an adjacent building to help the store operate efficiently. Thanks to generous donations made by several of our biggest fans, we were able to fund the construction of a new walk-in refrigerator for the store. The project was completed in March of 2022, and will revolutionize the way we are able to procure and produce food and drinks.

With the help of a grant from the Harrisville Community Fund, the store also replaced its convection oven in 2021.

While investing in equipment (both repairs and replacement) is far from glamorous, it is essential to the successful operation of the store.

Our sincere thanks to everyone who made these projects possible!



Molly gathering ingredients from the new walk-in refrigerator.