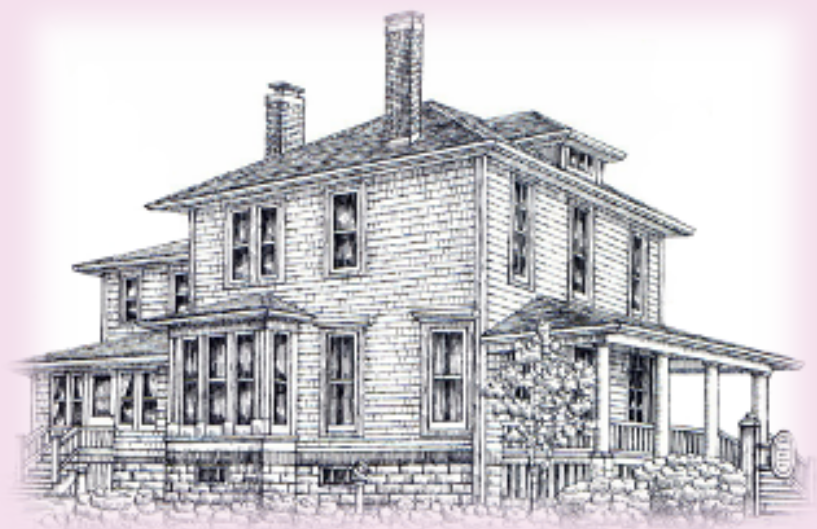


LA GRANGE AREA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ANNUAL
REPORT 2024



LAGRANGEHISTORY.ORG



PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

When I reflect on 2024, I can't help but think that in some years centuries happen! How true that was for 2024, the year the Historical Samuel Vial House turned a century and a half old. It received much needed restoration and improvements to its exterior and interior thanks to the generous donors, volunteers, staff, and the fundraising that took place. We are proud of the amazing results! The museum is a real showstopper at the south gateway to the Historical District. In keeping with our mission and vision, our newly remodeled program room holds seating for 40 people! We're ready for the additional educational and entertaining programs that are on the horizon.

Engaging with residents, the local communities, and the businesses in La Grange and La Grange Park allowed us to weave in our rich history by being their very special resource for information and historic photos. I love when people just pop in because they have always wanted to come inside. We saw more visitors in 2024 than ever before. This is due to being open four days per week, but also because our events, parties, and concerts are designed to bring more people inside to familiarize them with the LGAHS. It is wonderful that we can continue to expand and serve our members and the public.

However, the overarching success story really shines due to the passion and many hours our volunteers gave in 2024 as well as our LGAHS Board who thoughtfully made decisions to support our mission and vision. Whether reflecting on 2024 accomplishments or looking forward to the 2025 initiatives, I remain confident that we are on a path of growth and success and will continue the LGAHS commitment of preserving local history, bringing people together, and maintaining a facility that the communities can be proud of. I promise you the future at the LGAHS will be very exciting too! I hope to see you at the exquisite Samuel Vial House either at our events, as a volunteer, or as a visitor. The Vial House is the only historic home open to the public in the communities we serve. It is a local treasure indeed!

The LGAHS is ready for its next adventure with YOU! You don't have to go far to have fun!

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
KATHERINE PADGETT

Executive Board Members -2024

President	Katherine Padgett
Vice President	Dan Malloy
Treasurer	Tina Vinicky
Secretary	Mara Devitt

Emeritus Board Members

Ellie Carroll
Jeannine McLaughlin
Mary Ann Sward
Ed Thoele
Cynthia Urbain

Staff

Sarah Parkes	Executive Director
Laurie Gibbons	Museum Concierge

Board of Directors - 2024

Christina Andino
Beth Augustine
Cathy Bier
Stephanie Boggess
Judy Burns
Amy Current
Abbey Helmetag
Mike Henderson
Dave Knecht
Jim Peterson
Lynne Schaefer
Tom Veaser
Julie Workman - General Counsel

EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS



Summer

Families enjoyed stepping back in time experiencing a glimpse into what life was like 100 years ago ~ recreation, fashion, schools, and more!



Christmas

It was a magical Christmas display showcasing five decorated trees representing different decades. Visitors enjoyed viewing authentic Christmas decor from the Victorian era, as well as the 1920's through the 1960's. Beautiful china and elegant touches were abundant, and whimsical toys, charming miniature villages, Rudolph's heritage, and a peek at Santa's desk were also delightful. Photo ops and a touch of magic were in every room!



OUR COLLECTION GROWS!

Highlights of the Artifacts That Were Donated and Accessioned in 2024



Unique 38 -star American flag in use from 1876-1889. Donated by Jim and Pam Peterson.



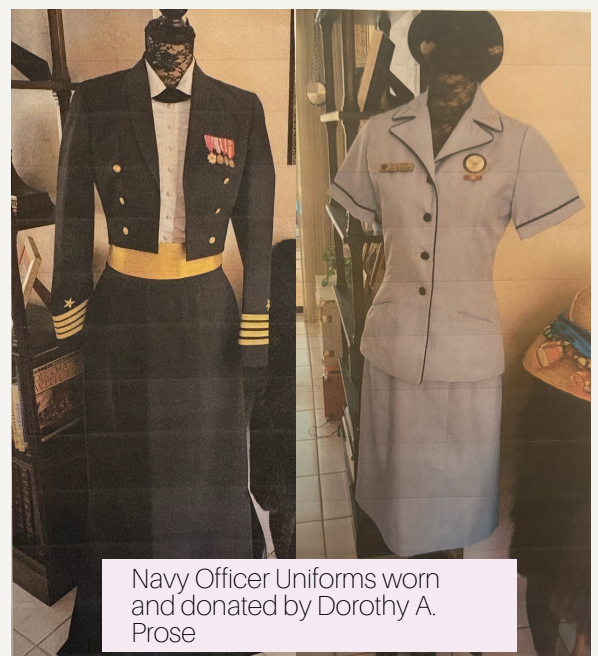
Beer bottle from Pete Swanson's illicit brewing production in La Grange Park donated by Ryan Prokowski.



Viet Nam war uniform worn by veteran Thomas C. Polk, donated by his father.



Turn of the century drop leaf tea cart donated by Nancy and Art Hirsch.



Navy Officer Uniforms worn and donated by Dorothy A. Prose

VIAL HOUSE PROJECTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

With rigorous fundraising efforts and the support of our members and community, we were able to accomplish significant and necessary improvements to the Vial House! A special treat for its 150th birthday!



New Program Room:
Combined two rooms to
create more space, new
lighting and hardwood floors.
Seats 40 people!



New Side Steps: The side
entrance had become
unsafe and unusable. New
steps with a wider landing
create a welcoming entrance
from the Museum Park.



New Exterior Paint: The Vial
House was in need of a new
coat of paint. Ed Mattingly's
team scraped the peeling
paint, restored damaged
woodwork and gave the
house a beautiful fresh look!



PROGRAMS AND EVENTS



The 2024 children's tea was a Valentine's Day celebration! Guests learned how children celebrated Valentine's Day in the 1920's, enjoyed the pink antique valentine tree and plenty of fun and games. There was a special Valentine craft, photo booth fun, and festive food and drink!



During this presentation, Connie Martin shared eighteen different quilt patterns in replica quilts, referring to a book her mother, Dr. Clarice Boswell, wrote about their family called Lizzie's Story: A Slave Family's Journey to Freedom.



We hopped on the School Bus and traveled to local museums, visiting Flagg Creek, Lemont, Willow Springs and more, and then returning to our very special Samuel Vial House. This unique adult Field Trip experience provided us with our very own docent at each stop. Guests learned interesting local historical facts as they rode, sipping adult beverages, and having snacks along the way



The community joined us on the lawn at the Vial House for our annual Ice Cream Social! This year it was a special celebration of the 150th birthday of the Vial House! There were fun and games for the whole family, the exhibit was open to enjoy, and of course there was free Tate's ice cream for all!



One killer ~ three victims. Can the speakeasy guests uncover the murderer? It was a night of mystery and suspense including craft cocktails, dinner style hors d'oeuvres, and raffle opportunities. Everyone was dying to attend! After all, a little party never killed nobody....



Board Member Tom Veaser offered free genealogy consultations as well as a community seminar on strategies and tools for conducting family research. This is an amazing service that we offer to the community!



Guests brought their own picnic baskets and chairs or blankets to enjoy live music by different bands throughout the summer. These popular free concerts are fun for the whole family! All of the bands generously donate their time, talent, and tips.

Guests came to sip, shop and support the LGAHS at the La Grange Park Antique Mall! Lots of food and refreshments were served, and costume jewelry repairs were available, up to 3 items per guest! What a fun way to support your local museum and archive..



Guests enjoyed touring through some of the La Grange area's finest private homes hosted by the homeowners themselves! Our thanks go out to our event sponsor, the Heraty Christensen Group, and our wonderful homeowners that opened up their homes to hundreds of visitors!



A fa-boo-lous return for the Witches Ride event in 2024!! The witches dusted off their hats and broomcycles for our annual fundraiser. The coven enjoyed a witchy bike ride through the historic district of La Grange, passing by haunted porches, and wrapping it up with a magical afterparty at The Elm with live music, photo ops, auction items, and delicious food, & drinks



Santa returned to the La Grange Historical Society for several weekends in December, He was once again taking gift orders and families enjoyed time for chatting and taking photos with Santa!



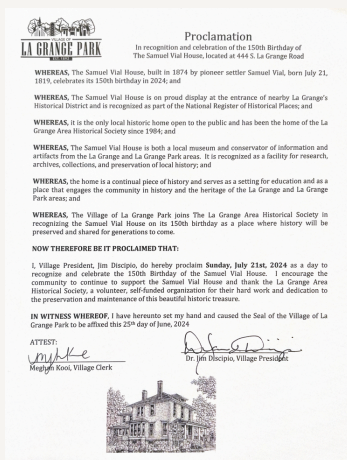
A festive evening of hors d'oeuvres, drinks and scrumptious desserts in four historic homes in La Grange. Guests traveled to each home on the tour beginning with hors d'oeuvres and following with delicious desserts paired with festive holiday cocktails. This was a lovely glimpse into how families share their traditions and festive holiday decorations.



The community joined us for some old-fashioned cheer at the Holiday Open House. The Vial House was beautifully decorated for a Christmas through the decades, music was playing, refreshments were served, and everyone enjoyed the delicious bake sale and a magical holiday afternoon.



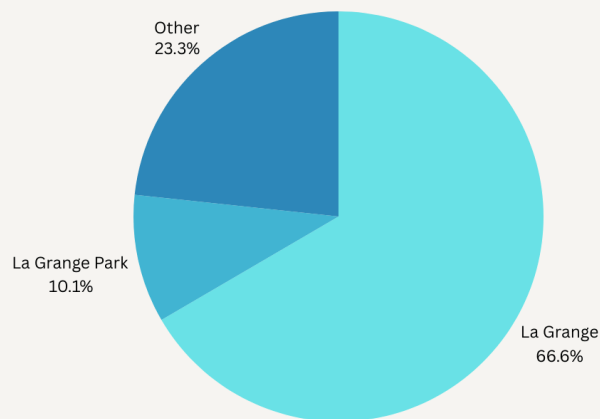
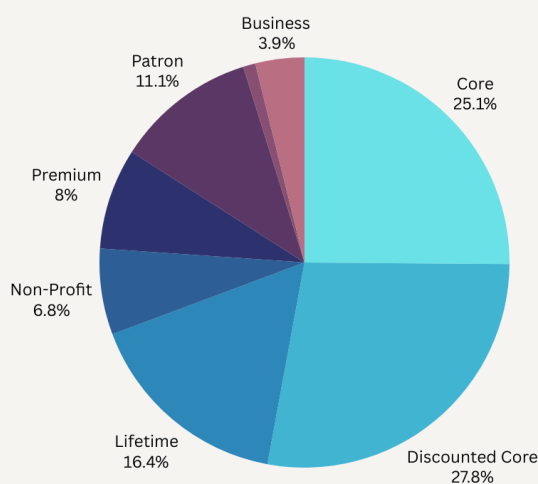
150TH BIRTHDAY SAMUEL VIAL HOUSE



In honor of the 150th birthday of the Samuel Vial House, built in 1874, we were recognized with a proclamation from the Village of La Grange and the Village of La Grange Park. It is the only historic home in these communities that is open to the public, and we are very proud to be the stewards of this beautiful building that we call home!

OUR MEMBERS

Our members are vital to our success and growth! Thank you for supporting us through your membership! We hope you continue to enjoy the benefits your membership offers, and if you're local, we hope to see you at our events and programs in 2025.



This year we are proud that our membership remained strong at more than 400 members. Many members chose renew their membership at an upgraded level, which is truly appreciated! We do rely membership renewals as one means of supporting our operating expenses, so please consider renewing when the letters are sent out in June.

Thank you!

THE NUMBERS

Attendance and Visitors

Our programs and events were attended by more than 2000 people last year! And hundreds more visited the museum and research center.

Social Media

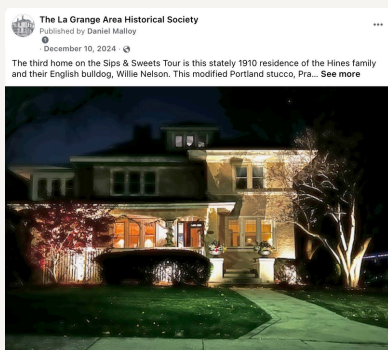
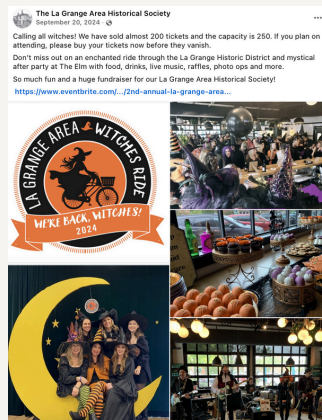
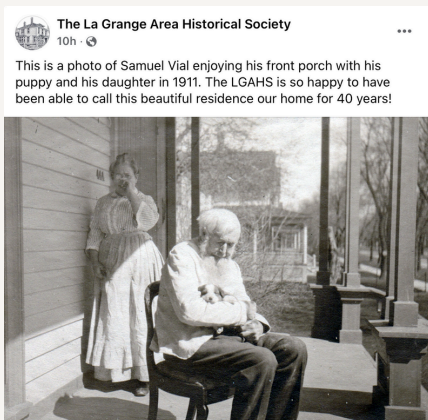


We have 3381 followers on Facebook and our posts reached more than 17,000 people.



We have 1376 followers on Instagram - we continue to grow our exposure on this platform!

Some of our posts with the highest engagement:



Research Center

Our volunteers work hard to continually update the archives with information new and old. In addition, the files continue to be digitized:

Address files scanned - 85%

Community files scanned - 65%

Original photos scanned - 95%

Financials

La Grange Historical Society	
Balance Sheet	
As of December 31, 2024	
	TOTAL
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
13 Month CD 4.9% (1805)	37,446.92
13 month CD 4.9% (7095)	47,606.73
Capital Campaign Account	48,358.64
CD 1 (4691) (see acct 1805)	0.00
Checking (7044)	12,225.15
Commercial Savings (1062)	20,365.51
Total Bank Accounts	\$166,002.95
Total Current Assets	\$166,002.95
TOTAL ASSETS	\$166,002.95
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Total Liabilities	
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	111,032.00
Retained Earnings	41,475.49
Net Income	13,495.46
Total Equity	\$166,002.95
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$166,002.95

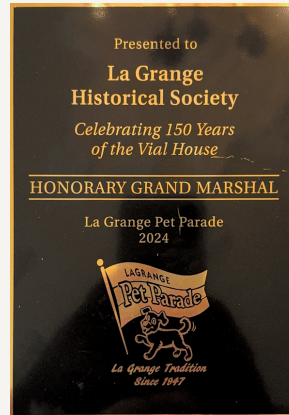
Overall, we are in a very healthy financial position due to the generosity of members and donors and successful events and programs.

For additional detail of the P&L for 2024
use the QR code:



IN THE COMMUNITY

We are here to serve the community and we're committed to being involved! We partner with the LGBA and the LGP Chamber, and we are always looking for networking and community outreach opportunities.



Pet Parade



Farmer's Market



LGP Chamber Chili Cook-Off



Free Summer Concert Series

A special thank you to everyone that supports
us at an advanced membership level.

Premium Members \$75

Kristen Allen
Darryl & Julie Anderson
Jessica Atkinson
John & Dawn Collins
Catherine Dee
Steve and Julie Elrod
Paul Fousek and Kristen Commito
Barbara Fisher
Carole Frobes
Chip Gibbons
Sarah Gottermeyer
Justak Family
Brian & Terri King
Walter and Susan Kovalick
Stephen and Pat Kozlowski
Mark and Deann Kuchler
Joseph and Kristin La Rocco, Jr.
Linda Lauterbach
James and Marianne Matthews
James and Jessica McLean
Janet and John Moellman
Barbara Mossner
Paul and Shirley Mumford
Jim and Wendy O'Connor and Family
Nancy Phillipp
Franklin and Angela Pierson
Gina Prendergast
Christine Roti
Michelle Ryan
Zachary Schultz
Susan Sedler
Charles Shifley
Sharon Sims
Dr. and Mrs. Norman Solliday
Dr. and Mrs. E. Spratford
Leigh Strauss
Mary Tavegia
Patrick Thielen
Lee and Laura Tussing
Mary Vann
John and Elisabeth Vlahos
Michelle Webster
Lynn Wesolek

Fifth Avenue Friends \$250

Tim Hansen
Katherine and Marcus Padgett
Lauren & James Younce

Patron Members \$125

Elizabeth Augustine
Matthew Bernstein and Jennifer Comparoni
Nicole Blanco Gallen
Stephanie Boggess
John Brannen
Bryan Blue Cuevas
John Ferguson
Nancy Flanagan
Louis Gale
Timothy Hansen
Kim Hare
Erin Helander
Kathryn Hoekstra
Maegan Karasinski
Michael & Lindsay Kozik
John and Ellen Kunkle
Glenn and Jess Landis
Mark and Eileen Langan
Philip and Susan Fox Larson
Caroline Leban
Sean Lightner
Katie Martin
Jean Masterson
Margaret McGarry
Thomas and Jacquelyn Morsch
Brian and Karen Murray
John and Nancy Pappas
Mary and Tom Piette
Jenna Plonka
Michael Pochron
Margaret Pokorny
Noreen Ryan
Mary Savoie
Chris and Katherine Skerrett
Arthur and Janis Smith
Christopher and Mary Jo Studwell
Lauren Whitney Swindle
Joe and Kathryn Thielmann
Mark Truax and Sandra Strauss
Thomas Veaser
Dan Veaser
Steven Vial
Philip and Anna Wagler
Joy Walke
David Whitcomb
David and Marilyn Wilkinson