

HISTORY CENTER

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Ashbaugh, *Board President*
Chair, Development Committee

Sandy Baer, *Vice-President*
Chair, Dallidet Committee and Marketing Committee

Benjamin Peterson, *Secretary*

Camille Slayter, *Treasurer*
Chair, Finance Committee

Jim Andre, *Director*

Sharon Gottesfeld, *Director*

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Allison Groves,* *Director*

Pete Kelley,* *Director*

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Michael Miller, *Director*

Julie Moore, *Director*

John Schutz,* *Director, Acting Chair,*
Exhibits Committee and Collections Committee

Roberta Soules, *Director*

Phil Tillman,* *Director*

Lynette Tornatzky, *Director*

John Villa, *Director*

*Termed off or resigned 2019 - 2020

STAFF

Thomas Kessler, *Executive Director*

Kaylee Scoggins-Herring, *Collections Manager*

WEEKEND MANAGERS

Randy Harris

Stacey Avelar

Phil Panos

The by-laws of the History Center of San Luis Obispo County provide that one of the duties of the President of the Board of Directors is as follows:

“The President shall submit a written Annual Report, including a financial statement, ... to the membership in a ‘State of the History Center’ address at the Annual Meeting.”

For 2019-20, this requirement will be fulfilled by this written report as well as by remarks summarizing this report by those members of the Board who have contributed to it. These members, primarily but not exclusively Committee Chairs, include the following:

- **John Ashbaugh**, Board President and Chair, Development Committee
- **Sandy Baer**, Vice-President and Chair, Dallidet Committee (and Marketing Committee)
- **John Schutz**, Acting Chair, Exhibits Committee and Chair, Collections Committee
- **Pete Kelley**, Board member
- **Camille Slayter**, Treasurer and Chair, Finance Committee

We also wish to acknowledge the assistance of our staff, Thomas Kessler, Executive Director, and Kaylee Scoggins-Herring, Collections Manager.

The report addresses the following elements of our activities at the History Center over the period of July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020:

1. Administration and Finances
2. Exhibits
3. Collections
4. Dallidet Adobe and Gardens
5. Development and Outreach

OVERVIEW

The Mission of the History Center of San Luis Obispo County, according to our by-laws, is as follows:

“The History Center promotes the understanding and appreciation of San Luis Obispo County’s historical and cultural heritage. The History Center collects, preserves and exhibits historic artifacts, records, images, and documents and provides access to its collections in both traditional and digital forms, for research, study, and educational purposes. The History Center cooperates with other regional organizations and promotes their goals and programs.”

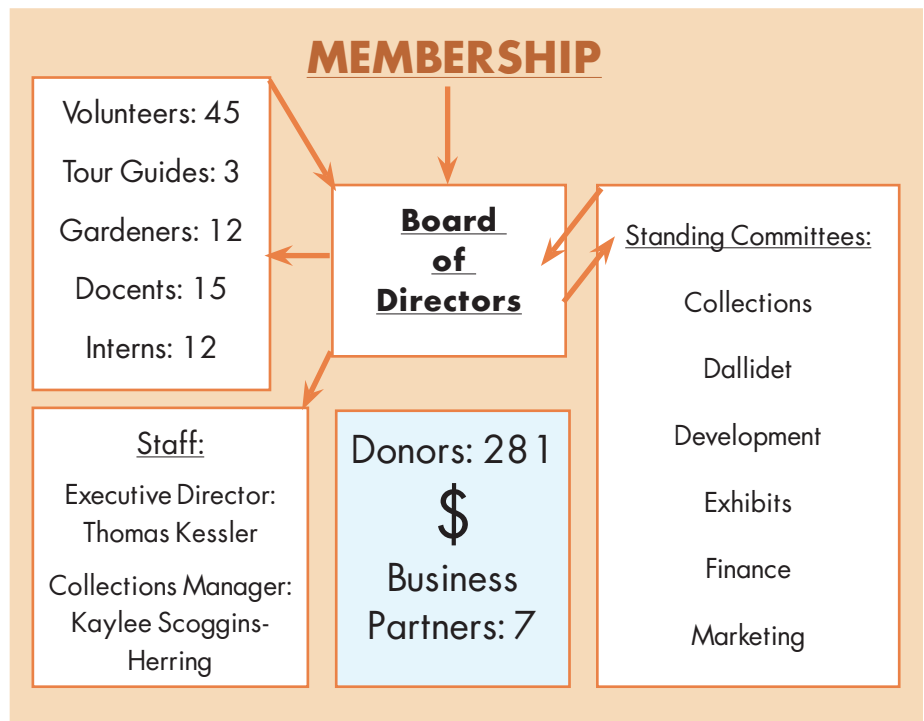
In pursuit of this mission, we have achieved a number of important milestones over the past year. In brief, these include:

- ◆ Opening of the **Pecho Coast Exhibit** in the History Center Museum in October of 2019;
- ◆ A well-publicized and highly successful season of events at the **Dallidet Adobe and Gardens**;
- ◆ Expanded staff- and volunteer-led inventory of our vast **Collections**;
- ◆ Launch of a weekly series of seasonal downtown **Walking Tours** in Mission Plaza;
- ◆ Inauguration of a quarterly “**Carnegie Lecture Series**” at the Museum featuring scholars and authors on subjects of local and regional interest;
- ◆ A successful **Annual Gala** at the Masonic Lodge in October with more than 80 in attendance;
- ◆ Expansion of the History Center’s **membership base**, including the addition of **Business Partnerships**;
- ◆ A strategic planning retreat in January, 2020 that was led by a professional facilitator to engage the Board members, key volunteers, and staff – a key first step toward developing a **Strategic Plan** for the organization.



All these achievements occurred in the period from July 2019 through early March 2020. Unfortunately, in early March, the History Center was forced to close the History Center and the Dallidet grounds and cease virtually all committee activities in order to comply with the nationwide lockdown to limit the spread of the coronavirus. We hope to re-open these visitor attractions, revive the regular committee meetings, and re-open our Research Room over the course of the next 6 months, as permitted by our County Public Health Department, and as our volunteer resources permit.

In January, an organization chart was developed in order to “set the stage” for that Strategic Planning retreat. The following graphic shows the key components of our organizational structure:

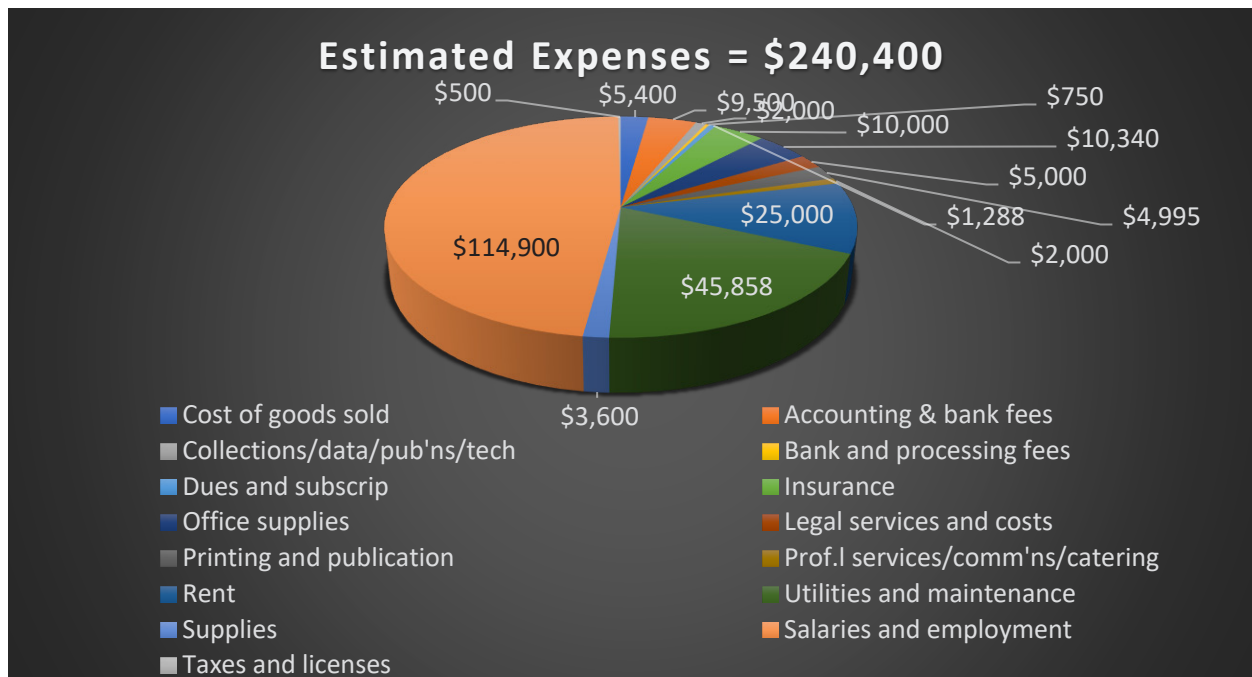
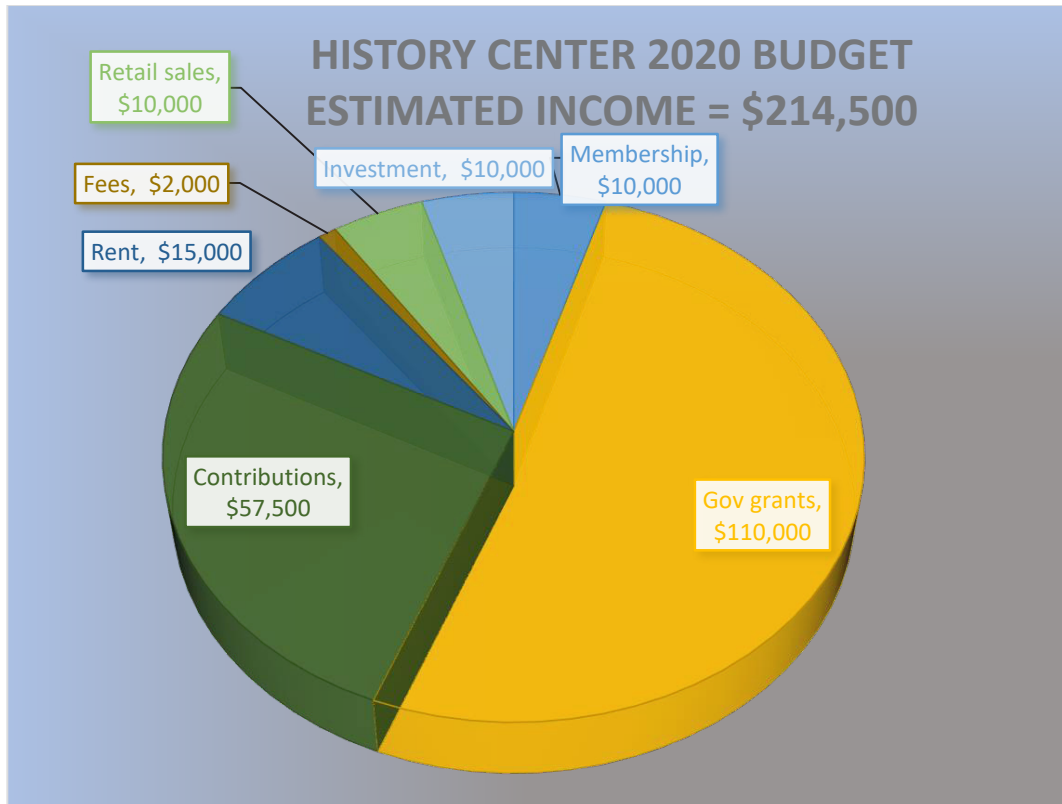


ADMINISTRATION & FINANCES

In the past 12 months, the History Center has adopted a very constrained budget to put us on a track to reduce and, hopefully, eliminate the budget deficits that were incurred in 2017 through mid-2018. Excessive legal expenses were one of the major reasons for those deficits in those years. When the national economic downturn occurred in spring of 2020, an even more aggressive response was called for.

Our staff was successful in obtaining two forgivable loans from the resources set aside for that purpose by Congress in response to the COVID 19 economic crisis. At the same time, we have ramped up our Development Committee and its focus on applying for additional grant funds and expanding our support among individual members and Business Partners.

Our adopted budget for 2020 is reflected in the following charts:



As noted on the prior page, the Center envisions a continued deficit of about \$26,000 for this calendar year.

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2019 OUR BALANCE SHEET SHOWED THE FOLLOWING ASSETS AND LIABILITIES:

ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Checking/Savings	\$	84,191.95
	Total 1000 · Cash Accounts	\$ 450.00
	Total 1100 · Bank Accounts	\$ 83,741.95
Other Current Assets		
Investments	\$	571,371.47
	Total 1300 · Investments	\$571,371.47
Total Current Assets	\$	655,563.42
Fixed Assets		
Fixed Assets	\$	280,724.29
	Total 1800 · Fixed Assets	\$291,512.29
	1850 · Accumulated Depreciation	\$ (10,788.00)
	Total Fixed Assets	\$280,724.29
TOTAL ASSETS		\$936,287.71

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Current Liabilities		\$ 1,773.91
Accounts Payable		
Accounts Payable	630.91	
Total Accounts Payable	630.91	
Other Current Liabilities		
	143.00	
	1,000.00	
Total Other Current Liabilities	1,143.00	
Total Current Liabilities		1,773.91
Total Liabilities		1,773.91

Equity

Unrestricted Fund Balance	\$ 753,792.54	
Restricted Funds	\$ 192,983.44	
Net Income	\$ (12,262.18)	
Total Equity		\$ 934,513.80
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY		\$ 936,287.71

As seen in this balance sheet, the History Center has substantial assets and investments; it should be noted that this accounting does not include any assumed market value of the Dallidet Adobe.

EXHIBITS



Our exhibits in the History Center, and at the Dallidet, are truly the public face of the institution. The museum is often the first thing people associate with us, and the exhibits are what people see. Without regular rotation, repeat visitors could see us as stale and unchanging.

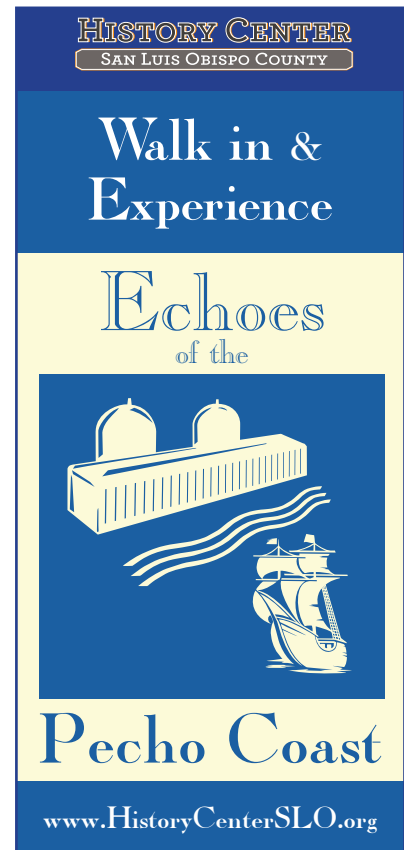
In 2019-20, our Exhibits Committee achieved the conversion of two formerly rotating exhibits to semi-permanent displays. One of these features the history of the City and County library system; another displays artifacts and narrative information about the County's rural school system in the early 20th century.

A major rotating exhibit was opened in October, 2019 to display the rich history and pre-history of the Pecho Coast, an area that contains some of the oldest known archaeological sites in the County. The history of the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant was a major feature of this exhibit.



An intern also contributed significantly to the History Center's summer program of Walking Tours in the Mission Plaza neighborhood. Each Saturday morning at 10 a.m., a small group of five to fifteen visitors were led on a route from the steps of the History Center to the downtown, the Mission, and some of the major sites of historical interest in San Luis Obispo.

Two recent exhibits in the downstairs hallway area were created by interns.



The next planned exhibit will deal with our Jewish Community and its unique history on the Central Coast. Exhibit sponsorship is actively being pursued.

COLLECTIONS

The History Center “collects, preserves, and exhibits historic artifacts, records, images, and documents and provides access to its collections in both traditional and digital forms for research, study, and education purposes.” The History Center collections are stored in four storage locations, with over 4,500 square feet of collection items.

History Center 2020 Collections Inventory

Archives Items

Ephemera	1,481
Family Papers	3,562
Government papers state, federal & local	9,788
Ledgers and Journals, private	2,787
Maps	575
Scrapbooks	5,903
Oral History	618

24,714 Archives estimate total

Library

Books	4,333
Dallidet Family Library	1,660
Newspapers	14,271
Periodicals	2,340

22,604 Library estimate total

Objects

Agriculture	1,667
Apparel	2,132
Artwork	718
Buildings and architecture	100
Cultural and Native American items	692
Dallidet house collection	643
Equipment	827
Furniture	443
Houseware	3,210
Medical	245
Military/weaponry	1,148
Musical instruments, records etc	256
Textiles	94
Tools	306
Toys	581

13,062 Object estimate total

Photographs

Negative	3,465
Glass plate	10,038
Movies	183
Slides	6,509
Prints	31,755

51,970 Photo estimate total

Collections Inventory Total 112,350

Based on a basic inventory estimate we have over 112,000 items in our collection, with only 66,293 of our collected items entered in the PastPerfect database. We are working steadily on cataloging and updating our database – however, this is a long-term project of the History Center.

We have also become compliant with the Native Americans Grave Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), which will enable us to apply for grants. Letters have been sent out to hundreds of federally recognized tribes alerting them that we may have items in our collections that may belong to them. We have a plan and process in place to catalog the items held at the Carnegie in the medium term. For those items that are stored in the off-site storage facilities, we are attempting to acquire a new web-based version of PastPerfect that would facilitate field identification and metadata manipulation of our collections.



Capitolio Warehouse

DALLIDET ADOBE AND GARDENS

Constructed in 1856, the Dallidet Adobe was the home of Pierre Hypolite Dallidet, the first commercial winemaker in SLO county, and his family. In the early 1950s, a group of local citizens granted Pierre's last surviving son, Paul, an income. In exchange, he willed the house and grounds to this group, which was to eventually become the History Center, at his passing in 1958.

For more than 60 years, the Dallidet Gardens have hosted History Center events, and it has been the site of countless weddings, private parties, and community events. In normal times, the Dallidet is also open on weekends for guided tours – however, since March these tours have been suspended. The gardens will be opened to the public again in July, 2020, and we will work to resume tours of the Adobe interior in late summer, consistent with public health standards.

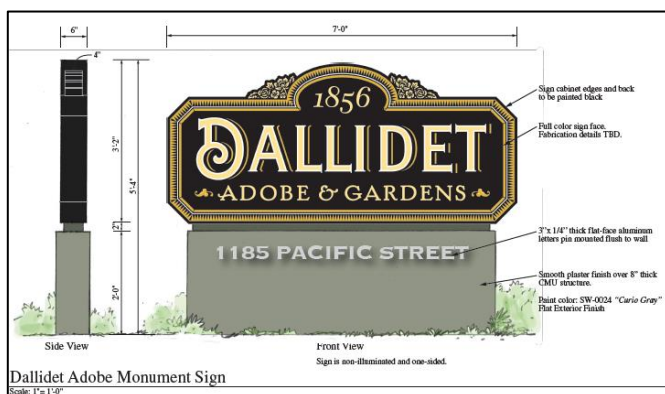


Extensive repairs to historic portions of the house, and remodeling of ahistorical portions, are badly needed. Following the success of a season of new events in 2019, there was initially some cause for optimism that the 2020 events would be bigger and more successful – however, COVID 19 has put these plans and hopes on hold for the duration of the pandemic.



Extensive grounds and plantings, which provide an attraction to tourists and event rentals, require enormous water and labor resources to maintain. We are extremely proud to have the volunteer services of a world-renowned horticulturalist growing flowers, fruits, vegetables, and many other plants. The History Center, as the owner and curator for the Adobe, is committed to the task of maintaining this unique site in its current state of arrested development. We are exploring ways to create an endowment fund that would generate annual investment returns that would be set aside for this purpose.

In May, 2020 we applied for grant funding to remodel a non-historical portion of the Adobe, a section that had served as an on-site caretaker residence until 2018. One of our goals is to broaden the possible uses of the property by performing much-needed repairs to the former caretaker's quarters (including foundation repairs), and transforming it into a multipurpose cultural resource facility that would be available for local businesses, non-profits, and private event sponsors. The improved space could be used as a conference room, a classroom, a bridal dressing suite, a staging area for outdoor events, and other compatible support functions. Grant funding may be awarded in 2020 for this purpose.



Additionally, the History Center has applied for private funding for a new monument sign for the Adobe, as shown in the illustration here. We hope to have this sign funded, installed, and dedicated in time for the Adobe and grounds to be fully re-opened to the public in late 2020 or early 2021.

DEVELOPMENT AND OUTREACH

In 2017, the History Center Board established a new Development Committee with a mission to raise the additional private funds needed to sustain the operations of the organization. Since then, the Committee has organized two successful Annual Gala events, the first on April 30, 2018 and the most recent in October 2019.

Additionally, History Center membership has been expanded; through the end of April, we have had about 110 membership renewals for 2020, grossing about \$7,000. We have also organized our members and donors into two components: Individual/Family memberships and Business Partnerships. Letters were sent or hand-delivered to over 120 local business owners seeking donations for the Annual Gala in October, 2019; most of these business donated either cash or in-kind items.

We have recently received a pledge of \$50,000 for the History Center to be reserved for the Dallidet, and a \$2,000 gift for the exhibit on the Jewish Community. We will continue in 2020 to plan for expanded outreach to donors to seek major gifts as well as smaller donations. Additionally, a new Annual Gala is being planned for October of 2020, although the venue and format are going to be very different in response to the public health standards that we expect to be in effect at that time.

HISTORY CENTER

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

YOUR business is part
of the history of
San Luis Obispo.

Help us preserve it!

Property of Museum

Maybe your business first hung out your sign 50 years ago, 100 years ago... or maybe it started yesterday. Regardless of where your business fits in the timeline of our community, you want it to become part of the story of San Luis Obispo.

THE BENEFITS OF BECOMING A BUSINESS PARTNER

MEMBERSHIP	in the Carnegie Club, with priority invitations to History Center events at the Dallidet Adobe or the quarterly Carnegie Club lectures initiated in 2019.
INCLUSION	of your business on the Donor Recognition wall in the History Center Museum and/or the Dallidet.
ADVERTISING	in History Center newsletters and La Vista, our periodic anthology of local history.
TICKETS	to our annual Gala.

We operate a museum, a research room, the historic Dallidet Adobe and Gardens, and the countywide SLO History Network. Every year we must raise more than sixty-five percent of our operating budget. Partnering with your business will build sustainability for the History Center's irreplaceable collections and expand our ability to save and share the stories of our Central Coast communities.

Curator	\$10,000 annual donation
Visionary	\$5,000 annual donation
Founder	\$2,000 annual donation
Benefactor	\$1,000 annual donation
Supporter	\$500 annual donation

Cash, or in-kind donation for the Gala auction.

Your input and support—
and the encouragement they provide—
will be invaluable!

695 Monterey Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 • Phone (805) 543-0638 • www.historycenterslo.org

SUMMARY

Even before the coronavirus pandemic hit in March 2020 our History Center 2020 budget foresaw a \$25,000 deficit, which is not sustainable in the long term. After a slow start in 2019, active outreach to business partners continues, with ambitions for significant growth.

The History Center will be holding its Annual Meeting this summer, and several new Board members will be elected by the membership. With the new members, and after a couple of retirements, we will have a total Board membership of eleven individuals drawn from all parts of the community.

We have been fortunate to retain an excellent professional staff throughout the past two years and even for the duration of the pandemic (to date).

We will carefully plan the re-opening of the Museum and the Dallidet Adobe and Gardens, and re-initiate the walking tours. We also hope to publish another edition of La Vista in 2021, depending on the availability of funding and the willingness of authors to provide the content.

Another major project that is confronting the Board at this time is a need to overhaul the by-laws of the organization. The by-laws have not been overhauled in at least eight years, and they need to be revisited.

We are proud of the work we have done in the last year, indeed since 1953. We look forward to continuing this work, with your participation and support, into the future.

