

HISTORIC LOCUST GROVE ANNUAL REPORT 2023



We preserve and interpret the historic landscape and buildings of Locust Grove, the final home of Louisville's founder George Rogers Clark, and tell the stories of all the individuals who lived and worked here, both free and enslaved, cultivating a deeper understanding of the present through a richer understanding of the past.

*Historic Locust Grove
Mission Statement 2023*

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LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIRMAN

Throughout the last year, the new pavilion has been successful in providing an inviting community space for many activities including concerts, theatre, sunset yoga, and has served as a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) pick up location. We continue to plan events and programs to delight and engage our members and the community. Keep an eye on our calendar and I encourage you to bring a friend to share in the fun.

The renewed focus on our natural space has been productive and rewarding this year. The quad gardens and the landscaping around the modern buildings have shown beautifully throughout the spring and summer. The trails through the 30+ acres of woods have been cleared and made more accessible, and the paths through our pollinator habitat have been maintained. New native trees dot the landscape (with more to come). We invite you to come take a stroll on a path or explore a trail. An unexpected discovery or peaceful reflection is likely nearby.

Your gifts to our Annual Appeal and Capital Campaign allow us to plan and achieve short- and long-term goals. We invite you to come share your time, passion and skill (or find a new passion or skill). Your generosity continues to make a difference.

The Locust Grove Board thanks you for making Locust Grove a place for entertainment, learning, and community. We appreciate all the volunteers, staff, corporate and private donors, members, and friends whose contributions make Historic Locust Grove successful. Your continued involvement and support allow us to strengthen our community and educational programs, expand our historic knowledge, and create a space of beauty and purpose.

Sincerely,

Chris Chappell
Board Chairman
Historic Locust Grove, Inc.

HISTORIC LOCUST GROVE STAFF

Carol Ely, *President and CEO*
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Jennifer Jansen, *Guest Services Director and Rental Coordinator*
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Geoffrey McMahon, *Buildings and Grounds Supervisor*
Raina Melvin, *Program Director*
Dave Rothermel, *Development Associate and
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Sarah Sutherland, *Gardener*
Kaitlyn Tisdale, *Director of Interpretation*
Kate Widdowson, *Development and Membership Director*

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO

For the past few years we've focused on two main missions at Locust Grove: finish the construction on the Pavilion and other capital campaign projects; and broaden and deepen our research and interpretive efforts to fully include the stories of the enslaved community here.

The Pavilion was opened officially at the very start of our fiscal year, last July, and the landscaping around it has since healed over the physical wounds of the construction. It is as magnificent and as useful as we had hoped over the nearly ten years of planning and building.

We had envisioned a place for our own site programs (mission), for rental events (revenue), and for community events (building our local partnerships). The pavilion has fulfilled our dreams, hosting concerts ranging from chamber music to brass band to an elementary school students' holiday concert; theatre performances from *Frankenstein* to *Hamlet* to children's theatre productions; and rentals from charitable galas to weddings to corporate dinner meetings.

We originally hoped that our campaign would fund all the site projects we dreamed of, but we are not quite there yet. We're talking with a few donors about specific projects now, but we will be reopening our campaign in the near future, hoping to fund the lobby renovation, auditorium upgrades, and pathways and parking, that were outlined in our Master Plan.

Still so much to do, and we're so glad that you are part all that's happening at Locust Grove!

Carol Ely, Ph.D.

President and CEO,

Historic Locust Grove, Inc.



DONOR SPOTLIGHT: BOOK DONORS

Hundreds of thousands of books currently being enjoyed by Louisville residents and beyond have come through our doors as donations, sold in our semi-annual book sale fundraisers, and have gone home with new readers. None of this is possible without generous **book donors** who give freely of the books they've loved.

Each March and August, and often in December, the Audubon Room in the Visitors' Center transforms into a sea of colorful books, all organized according to interest area or genre. Guests have a great time not only finding the book they came for but making new reading discoveries as well! This sale continues to be a popular resource for bibliophiles and all readers in our community, and with most books priced at \$1 or \$2, this is a great opportunity for children and students to expand their libraries and spark a joy of reading.

The idea to sell used books to raise funds for our non-profit museum originated in a conversation between longtime supporter and Board member Shirley Dumesnil and the (then new) Executive Director Carol Ely. It was simple to form a group of enthusiastic volunteers led by Lynn Boone and get the word out to potential book donors. The original plan to use the funds (expected to be modest) to pay for buses for our field trip programs quickly expanded into support for more of



our educational and interpretive initiatives.

The sale really grew in impact a few years later when we got help from generous professional bookmen, Richard Young and Charles Bartman, who still donate their time and expertise today, and from Harvey Venier, who works with us year-round to take in, sort, and price the donations, and organize the overall sale.

Our volunteers continue to assist with the

setup and sale days with energy and great tips on books, led in recent years by Board member Brenda Tuckson.

Since the first book sale in March 2005, a total of **\$717,631** has been raised for the museum, with this past year being a record-breaking year with about 70,000 books sold and \$91,574 raised before expenses. Generous sponsors have also donated funds to help offset the sale costs.

So, this year, we highlight the contributions of our many anonymous **book donors** who are kind enough to think of us when they are ready to part with their books. We welcome new donors, and if you have questions about what kinds of book donations are appropriate, we're glad to talk with you.

All of you, collectively, are what makes this sale such a great success year after year!



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: *Strengthening Community Partnerships with Engaging Programming*



At Locust Grove, we believe in the power of community collaboration to enrich the experiences of our visitors, both young and old. With a renewed focus on fostering meaningful connections, we have expanded our community partnerships to bring a diverse range of engaging programming for all ages.

Thanks to our newly opened Pavilion, we now have the opportunity to offer a wide variety of programs, rain or shine. This versatile space allowed us to host workshops, lectures, and performances in a comfortable and weather-resistant environment, ensuring that our events continue uninterrupted, regardless of the elements.

From exciting workshops and captivating lectures to interactive events and performances, these partnerships have enabled us to offer a more comprehensive array of experiences catering to our diverse community's interests and curiosities. Here are just a few of the amazing collaborations that we have made this last year:



MAJOR PROGRAMS 2022 - 2023

Free Independence Day/Summer on the Farm

In 2022 we celebrated Independence Day on a sunny July 2nd. Throughout the day, over 500 guests gathered around the porch of Locust Grove for readings of the Declaration of Independence by Brandon Vigliarolo, and "What to the Slave is the 4th of July" read by Tajleed Hardy. We thank Independence Bank for their continued support of Locust Grove's Independence Day celebration.

Looking for Lilith Camp

In the last week of June, Locust Grove partnered with Looking for Lilith Theatre Company to host a week-long camp for students ages 9-12. Using the history of Locust Grove as a backdrop, the students created their own theatrical production with great enthusiasm. Campers engaged with Locust Grove through demonstrations like hearth cooking, period etiquette, and more.

- Our collaboration with the **Louisville Coalition on the History of Enslavement** included a book discussion series. The first of four book discussions was held in the Locust Grove auditorium, featuring *All That She Carried* written by Tiya Miles.
- Young musicians from the **Lincoln Elementary Performing Arts School** presented a concert of seasonal songs to guests in the pavilion during our annual Christmas on the Farm event.
- **Whet Your Palette's** painting workshop at Gardeners' Fair allowed budding artists to unleash their creativity and capture the beauty of the springtime surroundings on canvas.
- **Kentucky Shakespeare** mesmerized audiences with captivating performances of *Hamlet* for their Shakespeare in the Park series and continued their special collaboration with Locust Grove with a dramatic reading of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*.



MAJOR PROGRAMS 2022 - 2023

Cultural Pass

As the last days of summer came to an end, we continued to have great attendance for our Cultural Pass programming in July of 2022. Every Tuesday, students enjoyed free admission and special activities including an artifact touch table, mapping activities, letter writing and performance vignettes by the Museum Theatre Actors. A special thanks to Fund for the Arts, Metro Louisville, and our many dedicated volunteers for making this possible.

Book Sales

The Used Book Sales remain a beloved staple in our annual programming, drawing book lovers from far and wide. Through generous donations, the books are thoughtfully organized, offering literary gems for all ages and interests. This year we offered three book sales, contributing significantly to funding other significant programs. This was a record-breaking year with at least 60,000 books sold. We thank our volunteers for their dedication and to our sponsors, book donors, and book buyers for their continued support.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: *Strengthening Community Partnerships with Engaging Programming*



- Through another new partnership, we brought the stories of Locust Grove from land to water with the **Belle of Louisville**, looking at the relationship between the people that lived at Locust Grove and the River. A special Juneteenth celebration was hosted on the Mary M. Miller steamboat, exploring the stories of the enslaved and their connection to the Ohio River.

- This summer, we diversified our musical offerings by partnering with **Commonwealth Brass Band** for a rousing night of crowd favorites and memorable melodies.
- We also expanded our Chamber Music Series by offering an additional concert in the Pavilion in June. This allowed us to welcome more concertgoers without the limitations of the small scale of the grand parlor and provided a more accessible experience for all.
- **Studio Hustle** in St. Matthews offered a peaceful outdoor experience through hour-long yoga sessions for participants of all skill levels.



MAJOR PROGRAMS 2022 - 2023

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Fall on the Farm

On a bright October day, about 200 guests gathered to experience the sights, sounds, and smells of the harvest season on a 19th century farm. We plan to expand this event in the coming years.

Through these valuable alliances, we are reaching new audiences, ensuring that Locust Grove remains an inclusive space where everyone can discover the wonders of history and culture. As we continue to build these connections, we eagerly look forward to more innovative and engaging programs that will leave a lasting impact on our community. Join us on this journey of exploration and learning as we come together to create a vibrant and enriching experience for all.



MAJOR PROGRAMS 2022 - 2023

Chamber Music

The Emilie Strong Smith Chamber Music Concert Series enjoyed another successful season of music from the period of the Croghans. Two performances were held in the Grand Parlor of the House during the colder months. In June 2023, musicians performed a concert called *Completely Mozart* in the brand-new Pavilion to great success. We look forward to welcoming listeners of all ages to the 2023-2024 season. A special thank you to Bill Bauer and the musicians, whose performances make this concert series a timeless event.

Christmas on the Farm

Our First-Person Interpreters played the roles of the Croghan and Clark families on a busy winter day and evening at Locust Grove. Period music and caroling could be heard in the main house. In the kitchen, visitors could meet actors portraying members of the enslaved community as they demonstrated seasonal tasks. Visitors also enjoyed a lively concert in the Pavilion by students from the Lincoln Elementary Performing Arts School and a special December Book Sale.

COLLECTION OF KNOWLEDGE: *Acquiring our Whole Story*



A page from Dr. John Croghan's ledger book, courtesy of The National Cave Museum at Mammoth Cave

You can support ongoing research at Locust Grove

A donation to Locust Grove earmarked for the "Gwynne Tuell Potts Research Fund" will support the work of finding and sharing new information about the world of Locust Grove. You can send a check, or make a secure online gift at Network for Good www.nfggive.org/donation/61-1390403; or call us to learn how to make a gift in another way.

The birth of Locust Grove's research efforts began in earnest with the arrival of Sam and Jim Thomas in 1962. This research was a thorough and well-done first capture of Locust Grove's "founding documents". Deeds, indentures, wills & probates, and of course, family letters that helped shed light on the people and property of Locust Grove.

From the 1960s through early 2000s research and publications continued on the Croghan family and their off-branches of the Jesups, Hancocks, Livingstons, and O'Haras. More specific studies were done on portraiture, silver, and family heirlooms, as well as archaeological, architectural, and other topics.

The **Gwynne Tuell Potts Research Fund**, created in 2013, has long supported Locust Grove's efforts in finding more information about our history.

Within the last year Kaitlyn Tisdale, Locust Grove's Director of Interpretation, has been focusing these funds on a new acquisitions project: the acquisition of knowledge. *"It is imperative for us to zoom out. To take our lens from being solely focused on our site's local history, and to study from a regional and national perspective. The Croghan and Clark families were large and deeply entrenched in not only Kentucky's early history, but our regional and national history, as well"* Tisdale states.



MAJOR PROGRAMS 2022 - 2023

Unfolding the Story Tours

Attendance for this unique and immersive educational experience continued to rise this past spring season. Actors portraying two people who were enslaved at Locust Grove guide visitors around the site, sharing stories about their lives. Two tours were offered every other Saturday from April – October. Our 2023 opening day was on April 1st with both tour times sold out!

Gardeners' Fair

Gardeners' Fair weekend was a resounding success, welcoming nearly 2,500 visitors across both Saturday and Sunday – a number that rivals pre-pandemic times. We were fortunate with a beautiful, sunny weekend that allowed everyone to enjoy the event to the fullest. A wide variety of plants, herbs, garden gear, and art were on display, alongside historic demonstrations in the house and kitchen. We are looking forward to building the Gardeners' Fair to new heights, engaging with returning vendors and new potential partnerships. Thank you to St. Matthews Feed and Seed, Delta Dental, and the many sponsors who helped make this event a success year after year.

Tisdale then took a comprehensive assessment of Locust Grove's current body of knowledge. What collections had already been researched and need to be re-examined in light of new questions. What new collections have come to light, and what repositories have yet to be combed through?

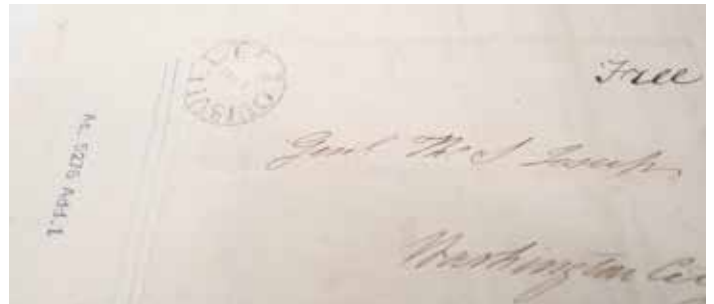
Locally, the Filson Historical Society has been a wealth of knowledge, and we are still finding informational gemstones with each visit. Tisdale began to comb through the Fitzhugh and Rose account books, the local mercantile establishment that Croghan frequented. There will be much more information to come from the collections located in our own backyard.

Regionally, in February of this year Kaitlyn met with the assistant curator and board members for the National Cave Museum. With these visits Tisdale obtained scans of the NCM's most recent acquisition of John Croghan's ledger book during his ownership of Mammoth Cave. These insights have given new information on the daily lives of Stephen Bishop and the other enslaved cave guides Mat & Nicholas Bransford, a gentleman named Ben, and the guides' assistance in the construction of the Cave Hotel.

Nationally, research efforts focused on Brig. General Thomas Sidney Jesup, Major Croghan's son-in-law, who became an administrative powerhouse for the Croghan family after Major Croghan's death. This collection houses 25 containers and over

6,000 items but has given Locust Grove its largest source of Croghan family correspondence to date.

Stepping back and taking a broader view at Locust Grove from a wide lens has gifted us a new perspective on how to research our site, and where to go from here. More exciting updates are to come, and with continued donations to the Gwynne Tuell Potts Research Fund that sustains this effort, more discoveries await us.



Croghan family letters from the collection of the Library of Congress



MAJOR PROGRAMS 2022 - 2023

Afternoon Lectures

With a full schedule of lectures returning in the fall of 2022, we explored a variety of people who contributed to local and state history in various time periods. The 2023 Afternoon Lecture Series explored the history and landscape of Locust Grove itself from the Indigenous history of Kentucky to Locust Grove's path forward into the future.

August 2022 – Michael Higgs: *Cave Hill Cemetery: A History of Louisville's City of the Dead*

September 2022 – Bailey Vandiver: *Resurrecting Alice Allison Dunnigan*

October 2022 – Dennis Medley: *The Thomas Bullitt Survey Expedition, Kentucky 1773*

November 2022 – Maureen Lane: *Women and the First American West*

March 2023 – Dr. George Crothers: *The Indigenous History of Kentucky*

April 2023 – Anne Bader: *Archaeological Excavations at Native American Sites in the Falls of Ohio River Area*

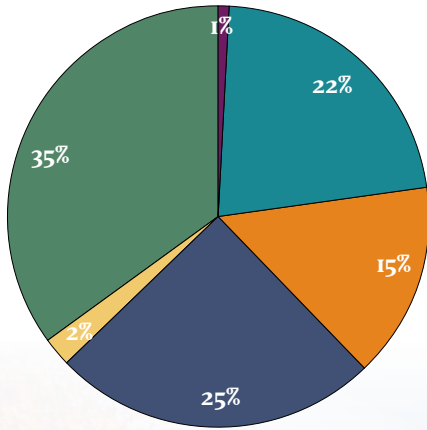
May 2023 – Dr. Lee Dugatkin: *The Enlightenment of Gotham*

June 2023 – Gwynne Tuell Potts: *The Creation of William Croghan's Locust Grove*

THE YEAR IN REVIEW 2022 - 2023

INCOME

This year's budget received a boost from the last of the Covid relief funds, making up for the slowly recovering earned income from general attendance and events.

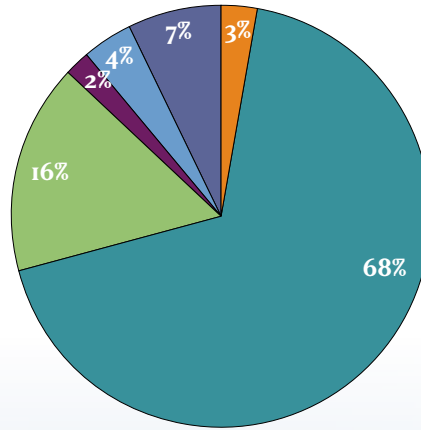


- Earned/Programs: \$234,524
- Gifts/Grants: \$172,111
- Endowment: \$151,455
- Store: \$8,250
- Metro: \$13,000
- Team KY Non-Profit Assistance Fund: \$100,000

Total: \$679,340

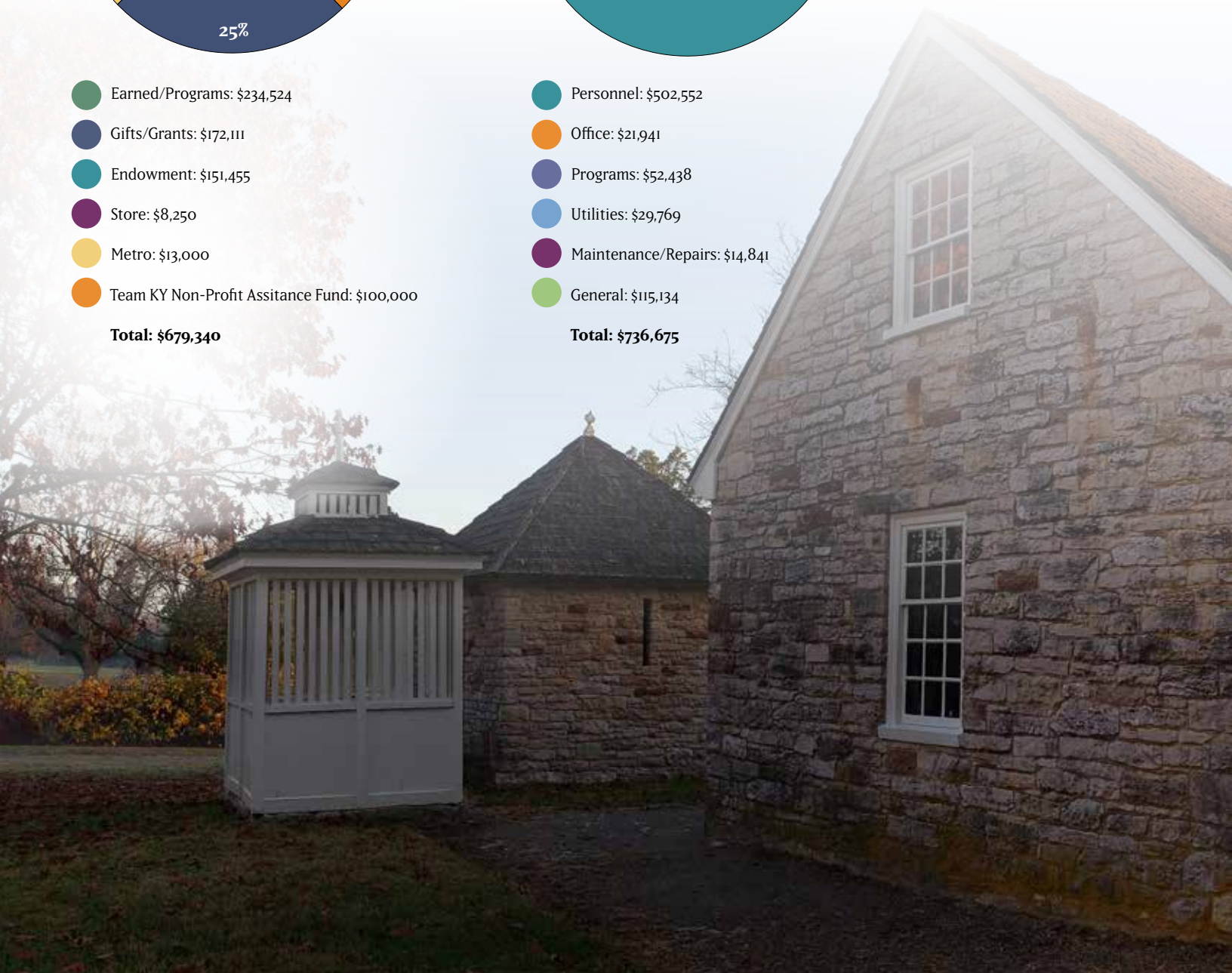
EXPENSE

While the budget shows a deficit, this represents an investment of surpluses from the previous years in personnel, increasing the size of the staff and upgrading the pay scale; and in expanded marketing for the new facilities and programs.



- Personnel: \$502,552
- Office: \$21,941
- Programs: \$52,438
- Utilities: \$29,769
- Maintenance/Repairs: \$14,841
- General: \$115,134

Total: \$736,675



LOCUST GROVE BY THE NUMBERS 2022 - 2023

Attendance: 15,417

Cultural Pass Attendees: 684

Festival Events: 6

Lectures: 8

Book Sales: 3

Students: 1,239

Concerts: 4

Volunteer Hours: 4,612

Unfolding the Story Tours: 24

Theatre Performances: 3

Book Discussions & Author Visits: 4

Snakes in the house: 1

Skunks in the smokehouse: none this year!

Birds in the auditorium: 1

Swifts in the washhouse: a chimney full!

Deer in the meadow: countless



ANNUAL FUND AND FRIENDS SOCIETIES 2022 - 2023

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George Rogers Clark Society \$5,000+

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City of Riverwood
The General Society of Colonial Wars
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July 2022 – June 2023

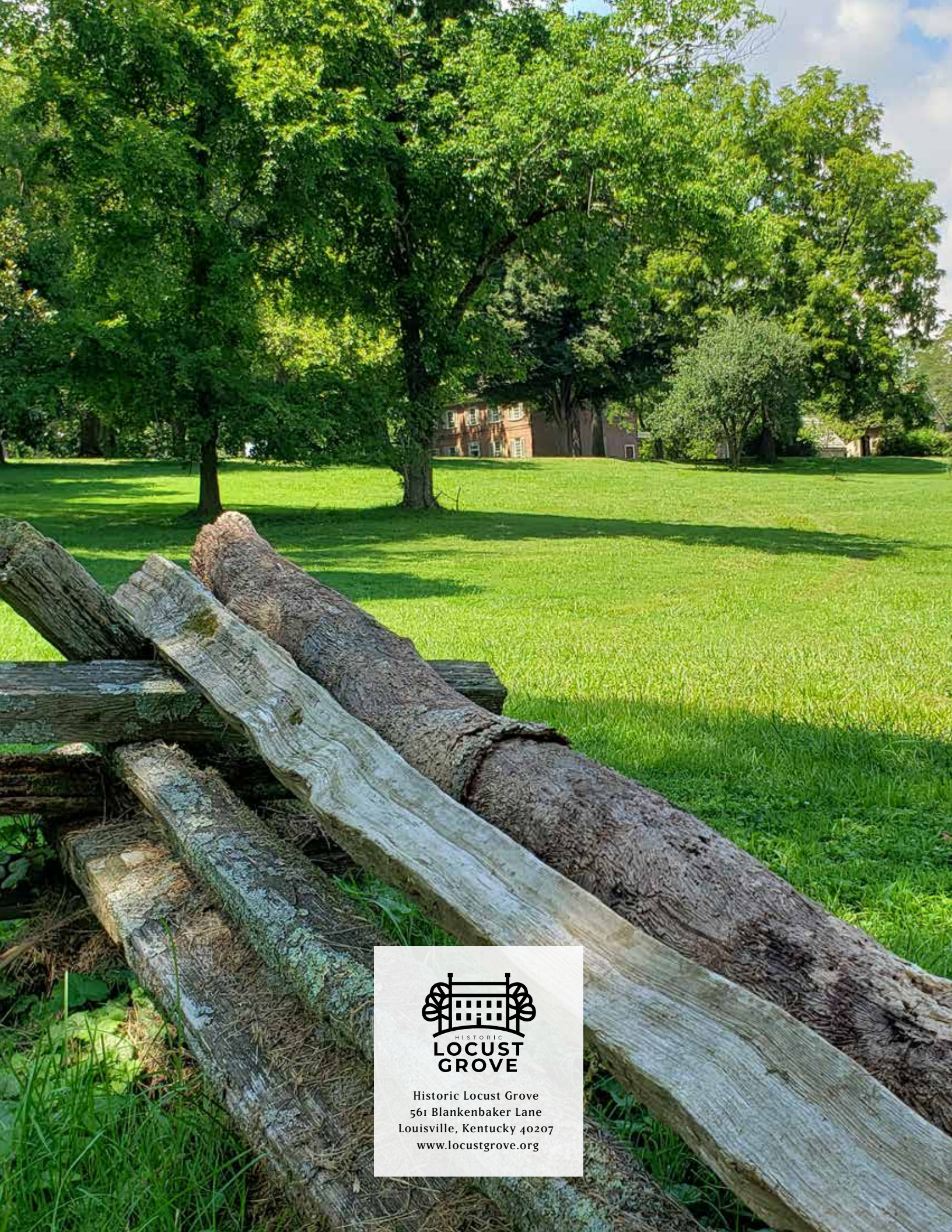
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2022 - 2023

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