



# SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## 3-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN 2013 TO 2015

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### OVERVIEW

Solebury Township Historical Society's (STHS) 3-year strategic plan is updated annually: it should be presented to the board by October 15 for approval and further presentation to the membership before the annual meeting in mid-November. It is expected the plan will contain goals, organization updates, a 12-month projected calendar, specific projects, and the budget in detail that will support these activities.

### I. VISION STATEMENT

The Solebury Township Historical Society seeks to be the most respected, well-known, and valuable historical resource in the community.

### II. MISSION

Our resources, the schoolhouse, archives and people will work to educate and promote an appreciation of Solebury's history. The board and member volunteers will reach out to our township, county, state, and others by bringing together citizens in regular social and educational events as well by individually assisting those seeking family and local history information.

### III. OBJECTIVES

- Continue to accumulate historical data, papers, verbal histories, and photos in an organized, accessible archiving system that is open to all users.
- Provide personal help for those seeking information about the township, its founders and families through the years.
- Reach out via an active calendar of educational, social, and development events to local students and teachers, members, and interested parties.
- Maintain and improve our center, the schoolhouse, as a destination to study our archives,



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for historical interest, and as a location for teaching and community events.

## IV. GOALS

### A. 2013

1. Refurbish the schoolhouse roof, paint, and window treatment.
2. Qualify the schoolhouse for county historic registration status.
3. Develop a landscaping plan for the property and begin to execute.
4. Develop and begin fund raising programs including soliciting for building remodeling and obtaining grants for non-profits.
5. Expand our social events program(s) to target fund raising objectives.
6. Relaunch web site with more technically friendly platform including setting up PayPal to enable selling items and paying for events via the web.
7. Investigate the Historical Society of Pennsylvania's "Hidden Collections Initiatives for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories" and prepare to join.
8. Work with each board chair to document individual plans supporting the Society's goals and each committee's needs.
9. Begin a project to increase membership benefits by developing a plan and seeking a leader.
10. Expand effort to attract volunteers for project work.

### B. 2014

1. Invigorate our membership efforts; focus on business memberships
2. Develop an architectural plans and interior remodeling objectives for the schoolhouse; begin discussions with the township Planning Dept. on how to get this permitted.
3. Hold fundraisers to acquire funds for the remodel.
4. Continue to execute the landscape plan.
5. Put into place and act on a plan to acquire from the school board the property between the schoolhouse and the current elementary school drive way.
6. Implement increased social events program.
7. Respond to suggestions received during "Hidden Collections" audit.
8. Expand our collaborations with sister organizations like the New Hope Historical Society and the Phillips' Mill Community Association in joint programs for our membership to archive historic items like oral histories, to have social interactions for the purpose of increasing our membership, and to develop other ideas as each board member finds counterparts with whom to engage.
9. Address and act on how to open the schoolhouse to the public at least one other day for 2-3 hours each week.

### C. 2015

1. Funding and permitting assumed, proceed with building remodel.
2. Continue to pursue, if not yet accomplished, land from school board. Develop plan for use



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of the land: landscape, parking, community facility.

3. Assuming the schoolhouse remodel, inside and out, is complete, put in place a plan to advertise it for the use of school teachers and students, our membership, and other community organizations needing a central, friendly meeting place.
4. Bring the focus of the society to further developing the individual committee's activities once the major projects are on the way or completed.
5. Increase the amount of scholarships and the amount given for each one.
6. Achieve a level of fundraising to be able to hire a paid, part-time administrator to serve our community better.

## V. ORGANIZATION: BOARD AND OFFICERS

The board appoints the officers: president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer (see by-laws). In 2013 the board is composed of the officers and following committee chairs: archives, development/fund raising, education, events, membership, and oral history.

Each officer and leader is urged to build a plan and committee to help them achieve their objectives. Individual plans should become part of this overall vision plan.

## VI. PLANS AND PROJECTS BY COMMITTEE CHAIR

### ARCHIVES

1. Responsible for opening the schoolhouse each week (2 hours, Wednesdays) to serve visitors in their quest for information. Including answering email and phone-in requests.
2. Respond to the recommendations of the Hidden Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories conducted by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
3. Organize research materials in a more guest-friendly manner. This is tied to reorganization of the schoolhouse space objectives and recommendations of the Hidden Collections Initiative.

### DEVELOPMENT AND FUND RAISING

1. In coordination with the Events chair, establish and hold one or two annually repeating events dedicated to raising funds on a sustaining basis. Sponsorship by area businesses and local branches of national corporations are key to success.
2. Use township-wide appeals for large specific STHS projects, for example, building improvements.
3. Solicit local branches of national corporations to promote STHS events.
4. Continue to investigate each of STHS's events to assure agreed events raise funds and others are revenue neutral, if possible.
5. Research and solicit grants from national, state and private organizations
6. Continue to raise funds through township-wide appeals to support identified programs; for example, adding to archives and collections.

### EDUCATION

1. Organize community walks and talks



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2. Plan and interact with the school board regarding teacher education programs and the scholarships we award;
3. Ensure web-based distribution of educational material (in coordination with archives.). Special projects during 2013 include web site remodel and building renovation.

## EVENTS

1. Plan and organize four (4) annual sociable events: New Year's Day Brunch, Open House, Picnic, and Annual Meeting.
2. Think up and organize other events in keeping with the historical mission of the STHS: Lecture and tour of places involved in the Underground Railroad is in the planning stage for 2014.
3. In coordination with the Events chair, establish and hold one or two additional annually repeating events dedicated to raising funds on a sustaining basis. Sponsorship by area businesses and local branches of national corporations are key to success.

## MEMBERSHIP

1. Plan campaign to recruit new members
2. Encourage membership at all STHS events
3. Responsible for maintaining membership list, sending renewal notices, sending thank you acknowledgements.
4. Renewal notices are sent twice a year, spring and fall.
5. Plans to add benefits: will ask local businesses to offer discounts to members.
6. Produce and distribute membership cards.
7. In years 2 or 3, do a township-wide membership solicitation
8. Maintain Business membership list; solicit renewals once a year.
9. Directly solicit Business membership from those who have supported STHS in other ways
10. Ensure that benefits of Business membership are carried out.

## NEWSLETTER

1. Produce and newsletter, *The Chronicle*, at least 3 times a year.
2. Mail to members, business members and local historical societies, with extras set out at the New Hope-Solebury Library and perhaps other locations.
3. Solicit articles from committee chairs.
4. Will reconsider using the STHS non-profit postal permit if economically beneficial.
5. Solicit ads for the *Chronicle* to offset printing costs.

## ORAL HISTORY

1. Develop and document formal process to collect, summarize, and archive new oral history interviews as well as the current ones now on CD and in the STHS computer.
2. Assure process aids researchers in identifying content and time periods covered in each interview.
3. Assure process supports putting same data on the web with same characteristics, aid in identifying content and time period.



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4. Develop training course for interviewing in the collection process for teaching volunteers to collect histories.
5. Based on the interview process development, purchase recorder hardware that supports easily recording interviews.
6. Encourage suggestions for oral history candidates.

## VII. BUDGET

See attachment.

## VIII. ANNUAL SCHEDULE OF MAJOR EVENTS

- January 1: New Year's Day Brunch
- Mid April: Open House at the schoolhouse for the community.
- April/May: Teacher's Education Day
- May/June: Spring Walk/Talk
- June: Scholarship Awards days at NH-SHS and the Solebury School
- Late August: Membership Picnic
- September/October: Fall Walk/Talk
- October 15: Three year strategic plan update presented to the Board
- November: Annual Meeting of membership.
  - Board presents strategic plan for approval
  - Election/reelection of board members
- Early December: Board Dinner for new and retired board members and spouses.

## IX. BY LAWS

See attachment.