

2021 – 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Cottrill's
OPERA HOUSE



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OPERA HOUSE



MISSION

Our mission is to restore Cottrill's Opera House to its historic role: a performing arts venue, a community center and cultural hub — driving sustainable economic development for Tucker County and the entire Potomac Highlands region.



Letter from the President of the Board of Directors

April 2023

Tucker County, West Virginia

Dear Friends of Cottrill's Opera House,

On behalf of Alpine Heritage Preservation (the nonprofit that owns the Opera House), thank you for your continuing support over these past several years. Our all-volunteer board has made dramatic progress recently.

For example, this past autumn, we received a federal grant of \$500,000! In order to take advantage of this appropriation, we need to raise "matching funds." Every dollar you donate counts as match — effectively doubling your gift! Please consider making a donation; any amount helps!

There are other signs of progress we would like to share. In the summer of 2021, we completed the first phase of our restoration: repointing the East Avenue building façade. This critical work was funded by generous donations, along with a grant from West Virginia's State Historic Preservation Office.

The front façade project jump-started our renovation project and set the stage for our current focus: a second phase of structural renovation. We hope to repoint the remainder of the exterior brickwork, complete long-needed repairs on the roof trusses, and tackle structural work on the theatre balcony. Achieving these milestones would allow us

to remove the interior scaffolding, which has obscured the theatre's interior for several decades!

I would like to extend sincere thanks to the AHP board, which currently consists of eleven volunteers. We do not yet have any paid staff; all of our progress we've made is because of their dedicated efforts!

Are you interested in advancing the performing arts here in the Potomac Highlands? I would invite you to contact me at the email address below. We do not need to wait for the Opera House's full restoration to start programming arts events! You could help us push this mission forward now — please reach out, and let's have a conversation!

Again, thank you for your support! Please consider donating to the effort by [visiting our website](#).

David W. Esch

President

Alpine Heritage Preservation, Inc.

dave.esch@cottrillsoperahouse.org

HISTORY

1902 Hiram Cottrill, a former mine superintendent and saloon owner, built Cottrill's Opera House as a venue for vaudeville acts.

1914 Prohibition arrived in West Virginia. Cottrill was forced to close his saloon, eliminating the Opera House's primary source of revenue.

1915 Cottrill sold his building to the Sutton family; programming quickly shifted from live entertainment to motion pictures.



Children lining up to see a show at the Opera House in 1910



Moviegoers pose on Front Street in 1948

1960s After many successful years, local industry began to slow. Tucker County's population declined and television competed for the audience's attention.

1963 The Suttons sold the theater to Ralph and Betty Stuart.

1972 Faced with dwindling audience numbers, the new owners were ultimately forced to close the theater. The local Catholic church, St. Thomas Aquinas, continued to operate it as a community service.

1977 The building finally closed for good. The Opera House began to deteriorate—water infiltrated the building, damaging bricks, mortar, and beams and filling the basement. At one point, massive icicles even formed inside the building!

1978 Concerned local citizens took action to save the building. Betty Stuart, the building's last commercial owner, donated the building to Alpine Festival, a local nonprofit organization. This group succeeded in their effort to have Cottrill's Opera House added to the National Register of Historic Places.

1981 Alpine Heritage Preservation, a new organization, was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) with a mission of restoring Cottrill's Opera House. The stabilization work continued in stops and starts over the preceding decades.



A closed Sutton Theatre in the late 1970s

- 1982** AHP resurfaced the main roof and rebuilt rotten truss ends.
- 1984** AHP stabilized ceiling joists and windows and continued repairing trusses.
- 1989** AHP stabilized first floor
- 2001** AHP installed a new roof and stabilized mortar and basement walls



Scaffolding supports the balcony and roof.



Ongoing stabilization work in 2008

- 2003** AHP erected fire egress tower on the north side of building.
- 2008** AHP renovated the north end of the ground floor.
- 2013** AHP renovated middle storefront on ground floor and commissioned study of trusses, confirming their structural integrity.
- 2014** AHP secured tenants for the street-level storefronts.
- 2019** A reconstituted and reenergized Opera House board has kickstarted the renovation back into active development.



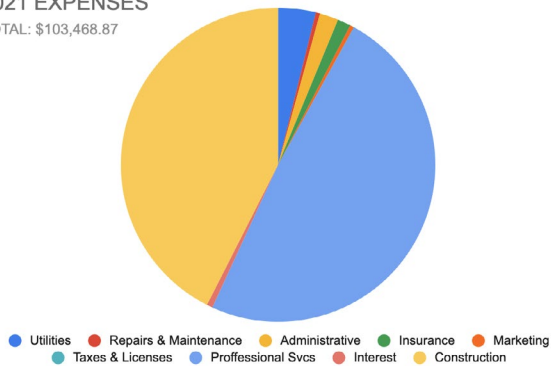
2021 FINANCIALS

Financial data from the end of our fiscal year (December 31, 2021)

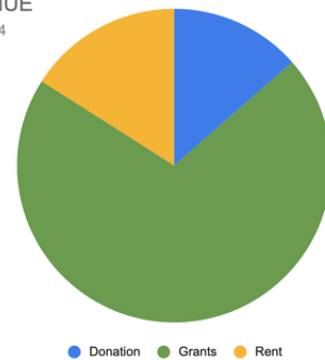
ASSETS	
Current Assets:	
Cash	\$37,760
Total Current Assets	
Property net (building & land assessed value)	\$461,940
TOTAL ASSETS	\$499,700

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	
Current Liabilities:	
Accounts Payable	\$22,984
Total Current Liabilities	\$22,984
Net Assets:	
Unrestricted	\$476,716
Temporarily Restricted	\$0
Total Net Assets	\$476,716
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$499,700

2021 EXPENSES
TOTAL: \$103,468.87



2021 REVENUE
TOTAL: \$68,261.04



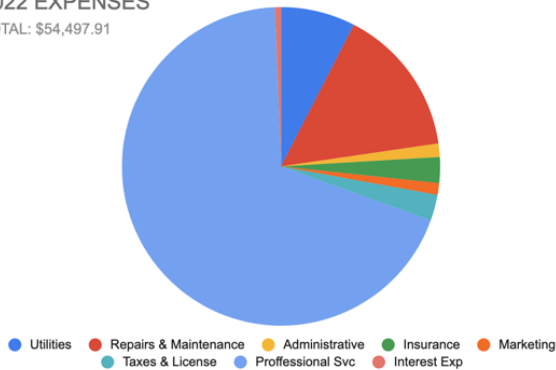
2022 FINANCIALS

Financial data from the end of our fiscal year (December 31, 2022)

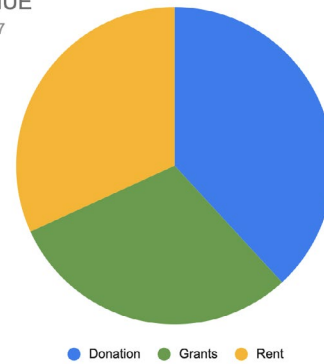
ASSETS	
Current Assets:	
Cash	\$19,335
Total Current Assets	
Property net (building & land assessed value)	\$461,940
TOTAL ASSETS	\$481,275

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	
Current Liabilities:	
Accounts Payable	\$22,315
Total Current Liabilities	\$22,315
Net Assets:	
Unrestricted	\$458,960
Temporarily Restricted	\$0
Total Net Assets	\$458,960
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$481,275

2022 EXPENSES
TOTAL: \$54,497.91



2022 REVENUE
TOTAL: \$43,516.87



THANK YOU TO OUR 2021–22 DONORS!

We're grateful for the generosity of our 2021/2022 donors. Thanks to their support, we continue to make progress on our restoration.

Considering a donation? You can donate online at our website: cottrillsoperahouse.org/donate

Or by check:
Cottrill's Opera House
PO Box 156
Thomas, WV 26292



The Mills Group surveying the Opera House in fall of 2020

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dave Esch, President
Ross Hoppe, Vice President
Martin Williams, Treasurer
Susan Smith, Secretary
Elaine George
Matt Hauger
Marilyn Shoenfeld
Bobby Snyder
Jennifer Taylor

Our volunteer board of directors works hard to keep momentum going towards the restoration of the opera house. We appreciate the dedication of our current and former board members and acknowledge that we wouldn't be where we are without the help of many.

Interested in learning more about our board? Email us at info@cottrillsoperahouse.org.

FOLLOW US ONLINE!

www.cottrillsoperahouse.org



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[Cottrill's Opera House](https://www.youtube.com/Cottrill's%20Opera%20House)

COTTRILL'S OPERA HOUSE

Cottrill's Opera House is owned by Alpine Heritage Preservation Inc.,
a 501(c)(3) tax exempt nonprofit organization.

Alpine Heritage Preservation is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors.

PO Box 156, Thomas, WV 26292
cottrillsoperahouse.org | info@cottrillsoperahouse.org