



Unison Preservation Society 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Working to Protect and Preserve our Historic Countryside

Dara Bailey Photo.

• REPORT TO OUR COMMUNITY •

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PRESERVATION
SOCIETY



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Message from President Steve Chase

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

Recently, I was awakened in the wee hours of an autumn night by the call of a barred owl. The temperature was cool, the wind calm, and as the rhythmic song of the owl abated, I was struck by the calm and the silence around me. There are few places nowadays where you can take a moment to listen and hear nothing but nature—not a single plane, train, or automobile to disrupt the calm of the countryside.

What a privilege it is to live in such a place, where nature still rules the night! It is this place that gives us our character, both as individuals and as the Unison community, allowing us to remember and protect times long past—an asset that we must continue to sustain for our future generations. This report will detail both our financial position and report on some of the work and activities that the Unison Preservation Society (UPS) has been involved with this year.

UPS has had a good year. Thanks to our active Board and volunteers, our Unison Store Community Center has had a series of community events: musical concerts, art classes, lectures, meetings, and our annual Heritage Day celebration; all of which have brought neighbors together to paint, learn, sing, listen, and celebrate the place that is Unison.

Along with these successes came some challenges to overcome. We found ourselves in a tight fiscal situation at the end of our

2014 fiscal year. However, thanks to support from our friends, and the most successful Heritage Day ever, our financial situation has bounced back. Details for UPS's finances can be found on pages two and three of this report.



Converting the old Unison store into a community center will be our top priority for the coming year. We will continue to work with the community to gain the support necessary to both maintain the store and embark on the planned renovation project. The renovation will be more than cosmetic. It will make the building more suitable for public events while providing accessibility for all who wish to attend our

INSIDE:

- Balance Sheet and Income Statement
- Preserving our Heritage
- Preserving a Sense of Community
- Preserving our Countryside
- Preserving our Village
- Neighborhood Activities

programs. Look for more information on the renovation project in the near future.

We feel strongly that we must protect the historic character of our countryside for our future generations, and will fight when necessary to keep that vision. As new issues come up on the preservation front, UPS is poised to work with our colleagues in the preservation community and with our neighbors to protect this remarkable place for our grandchildren, who deserve to hear the owls in the wee hours, as I have. I encourage you to continue to support UPS in this noble effort and thank you for the fine year we have had!

*Warm regards,
Steve Chase*



UPS Financial Highlights

The good news in the financial report (found on the next page) is that UPS had a 25% increase of income from our annual Heritage Day, plus important increases in individual contributions and growth in income from other community events. UPS, however, also experienced growing pains in the FY 2014, ending our fiscal year on June 30, 2015 with a net loss of \$12,940. To say the least, this situation was of great concern to the UPS Board of Directors. Three factors were at play here:

- The ground floor of the old store, which will serve as the community center, is no longer being rented out as business space, resulting in a loss of revenue in FY 2014. Going forward, fees generated by private events in the new community center should help make up for this lost rent.
- We had an unusually long vacancy in the store's second floor apartment, which resulted in a significant loss of income for the fiscal year. The apartment is now rented out and we anticipate that it will produce a stable and important source of income for years to come.

- UPS experienced increased expenses in areas ranging from printing costs to professional fees for architectural services necessary to turning the old store into a community center.

In addition to these highlights, it should be noted that UPS continues to make small grants to the Unison Methodist Church both to preserve the historic building and the Civil War "graffiti" that wounded soldiers carved on the walls when the church served as a hospital during the Battle of Unison. As part of our plan to develop a village green around the community center, the Board decided this past year to use the reserve "Tree Fund" to plant several large trees on the village green.

While the loss for FY 2014 was a concern, the good news is that UPS had cash reserves sufficient to cover these added expenses and, thanks to an extremely successful Heritage Day this past October, we're once again solidly in the black. However, strong community support through donations is still called for as UPS does not intend to charge for every community event. Free events for our friends and neighbors need support through community donations.

Our Mission

The Unison Preservation Society was incorporated in 2001 to help protect and preserve the historic village and surrounding countryside of Unison. Our village was placed on the Virginia Landmarks Register in 2002 and the National Register of Historic Places in 2003. The Corporation is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes, including but not limited to educating the public, promoting an appreciation of history, and otherwise benefitting the public by preserving, promoting and fostering the natural character and the historic architectural and cultural qualities and resources of the areas in and around Unison, Virginia.

Support

How to Support the Unison Preservation Society (UPS):

UPS depends upon contributions from people living in our community who want to preserve our historic village and the countryside surrounding it.

Since the UPS is a not-for-profit 501 (c) (3) corporation registered in Virginia, all contributions are tax deductible. Contributions should be made to the Unison Preservation Society and sent to our post office box.



Contact Us

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Balance Sheet and Income Statement

Fiscal year 2014 (July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015) Compared to FY 2013

Balance Sheet

<i>Assets</i>	FY 2013	FY 2014
Land and Buildings <i>(less depreciation)</i>	\$404,928	\$391,946
Cash <i>(non-interest bearing)</i>	32,251	13,403
Pledges	4,606	5,114
Total Assets	\$441,785	410,463
Net Assets/Fund Balance:	\$439,585	408,963

<i>Liabilities</i>	FY 2013	FY 2014
Security Deposits <i>(store renters)</i>	\$2,200	1,500
Total Liabilities	\$2,200	1,500

Income Statement

<i>Income</i>	FY 2013	FY 2014
Gifts and Contributions	\$6,792	\$7,725
Unison Heritage Day Net <i>(donated items + tickets less expenses)</i>	14,478	17,957
Other Community Events ¹		2,620
Interest	71	65
Net Income (Unison Store)	7,797	168
Miscellaneous Income ²		602
Total Revenues	\$29,138	29,117

<i>Expenses</i>	FY 2013	FY 2014
Special Projects ³	\$3,000	\$1,100
Awards and Grants	1,237	3,226
Landscaping and Trees	3,296	10,604
Operations ⁴	7,134	14,500
Professional Fees <i>(Architect)</i> ⁵		4,644
Insurance ⁶		4,878
Community Gatherings ⁷		3,105
Depreciation	17,230	17,682
Total Expenses	\$31,897	59,739
Net Income (Loss)	-2,759	-30,622
Cash (After adding back depreciation)	14,471	-12,940



Notes:

1. Other Community Events is a new line item of revenue indicating income from ticket sales and donations in support of community events at the Unison Store Community Center.

2. Miscellaneous Income includes other minor items like the sale of booklets.

3. Special Projects in 2014 included UPS participation in the Historic Rural Roads Conference.

4. Operations includes (from Form 990): Accounting, Advertising and Promotion (including printing), of-office expenses, information technology, occupancy, supplies, registration fees and other expenses.

5. Professional fees, new in 2014, are for architectural services in regard to designing proposed renovations to the Unison Store to make it more compatible for a wide range of community uses.

6. Insurance was previously part of our Operating Expenses but beginning in FY 2014/2015, and in alignment with our charter for the Community Center, it is now a separate line item to be tracked going forward.

7. Community Gatherings is another new category of expense as of 2014 to track costs in regard to community events. This expense is offset by income from these same events, as discussed in footnote #1. UPS does not charge for all community events and thus, expenses can modestly exceed income.



Preserving Our Heritage

Unison's rich heritage ranges from the Quakers who founded the village in the 1700's to the 1862 Battle of Unison during the Civil War to being the home of the oldest fox hunt in the country, The Piedmont Fox Hounds. With our annual Unison Heritage Day, we celebrate this history each October.

UPS's original mission was saving the old Unison store on the corner of Bloomfield and Unison Roads. As a first step, the UPS applied to have the village placed on the National Register of Historic Places, which it was in 2003. This helped a private buyer purchase the store and renovate it for use as a business office. In 2013, a local resident, Dr. Betsee Parker, bought the building and gifted it to UPS for use as a community center.



Dara Bailey Photo.

What Made Unison Famous: The old Osbourne Saddlery is now a home in Unison. One long-ago resident claimed that in the 1910s "the thing that really made Unison famous was the Osbourne Saddlery."

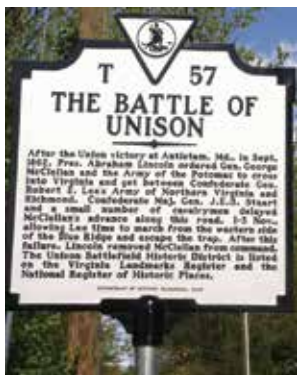


In 2015, UPS began detailed work on how to convert the store into community center—meeting with local residents to get their input, hiring an architect to develop plans to bring the building up to code and obtaining preliminary costs estimates for the project. As can be seen on the back page of this report, an increasing number of neighborhood activities are already taking place in the new Unison Community Center and more will come in the near future as we convert the old store to a full-fledged community center.



Preserving Our Sense of Community

In 2015, UPS held a variety of events that brought friends and neighbors together ranging from Unison Heritage Day in October, to lectures in the Community Center, to music on the Village Green, to yoga and art classes, along with the UPS Newsletter.



In June 2015, 40 friends and neighbors gathered to dedicate a new roadside sign honoring the 1862 Battle of Unison. The sign is located next to the Community Center's parking lot. UPS spent six years working to gain both state and federal recognition for the 8,000-acre Unison Battlefield Historic District.



Dara Bailey Photo.



Preserving Our Countryside

Two things largely explain why the Unison neighborhood remains so rural and open. First, approximately 50 percent of the land around Unison is in conservation easement, meaning it can never be developed. Second, our part of Loudoun County has 40-acre zoning. In the mid-2000s, UPS fought hard for 40-acre zoning after a court decision forced the county to revert to three-acre zoning in our area, which among other things allowed a developer to propose putting a 28-house subdivision on 97 acres right next to the village. We vigorously opposed this plan, but we also came up with a constructive alternative, which satisfied the developer and local residents, and allowed the land to go into conservation easement. Preserving our open countryside remains a top UPS priority in 2016 and beyond.



Dara Bailey Photo.

The countryside surrounding the village of Unison has been described as some of the most authentic 19th century rural landscapes in Virginia and perhaps the entire country. UPS wants to help preserve this.



Dara Bailey Photo.

Two UPS Board members serve on the six member Loudoun Rural Roads Committee that, with critical support from local officials, got state legislation passed in both 2014 and 2015 to improve maintenance on Loudoun's rural roads. The additional funds needed in VDOT's annual maintenance budget to properly care for all 280 miles of Loudoun's unpaved roads is less than the cost to pave just one half mile of those roads.

Preserving Our Village

The village of Unison, settled in 1730, is listed on both the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. UPS is working to continue to make village a great place to live in addition to serving as the center of our neighborhood and community activities. In 2015, UPS continued its tree planting program in the village, organized a community clean up day, picked up trash on several miles of road under VDOT's Adopt-a-Road program and sponsored many large and small neighborhood activities and events (see photos on back cover).



In 2015, UPS continued planting trees and shrubs around the village and on the Community Center's village green.



Dara Bailey Photo.

In 2002, UPS petitioned to have Unison placed on the National Register of Historic Places, which was done in 2003.



Neighborhood Activities Ramp Up at Unison Community Center



Courtesy of Michael Zuckerman.



Courtesy of Michael Zuckerman.

Unison Heritage Day.



Courtesy of Michael Zuckerman.



Courtesy of Michael Zuckerman.



Art class.



Mosby loves all this activity in his village.



Book Lecture with Marc Leepson.



Christmas "Jingle Jam" and Cookie Swap.



Music on the Village Green.

