

# Historical Commission/ Lombard Historical Society Budget

A Presentation to the Community Promotion and Tourism  
Committee August 2013

# Distinction between Commission & Society

- Lombard Historical Commission

- A branch of the Village government
- 11 Lombard residents appointed by Village Board
- Develop and manage the Village budget allocation to the museums
- Oversees Village of Lombard local Landmarks
- Supports joint projects with LHS for personnel, budget, and local history efforts

- Lombard Historical Society

- A private, 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit
- 350+ memberships from 20 states
- 15-member Board of Management
- 1 full-time and 4 part-time staff
- Manages the two historic house museums, a local history archive, and coordinates the care for the Lombard Cemetery
- Joint LHS/LHC committees (personnel, budget, etc.)

# Historical Commission's Mission

- Make recommendations to the Village Board on historic sites
- Join with the Historical Society to maintain character, culture, heritage of Lombard



Commission  
Budget

MUSEUMS

Work of the  
COMMISSION

Facilities  
maintenance  
Staff wages  
Professional  
Development

Local Landmarks  
Heritage Award  
Lombard Cemetery  
Sites Survey

LOMBARD'S MUSEUMS:  
A VALUABLE RESOURCE IN OUR  
COMMUNITY

# Sheldon Peck Homestead

## c.1839



- A National Park Service site on the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom
- Illinois home of nationally known folk art painter Sheldon Peck
- Four gallery rooms, an heirloom garden, and native prairie restoration

# Victorian Cottage Museum

## c.1882



- Opened in 1972 as Lombard's first museum on local history.
- Cottage has six period rooms for viewing and two office spaces.
- Carriage House has exhibit, meeting room, and archive and collection storage.

# Lombard's history is unique...

- Some stories to tell:
  - Lombard is the Illinois home of nationally known folk painter and radical abolitionist Sheldon Peck who's house was a verifiable station on the Underground RR.
  - Ellen Martin of Lombard became the first woman to vote in Illinois in 1891.
  - The "Birth" of Little Orphan Annie by Harold Gray was in Lombard in 1924.
  - And of course, Lombard's incredible Lilac heritage that began with the donation of Plum's collection to the community in 1927.



WHAT DOES THE LOMBARD  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY DO WITH THE  
SUPPORT DOLLARS?

*We fulfill our mission to collect, preserve, interpret, and promote the history of Lombard and to advocate for our community's heritage.*

- LHS is a 501 (c)(3) not-for profit organization
- By serving this mission, the LHS is enriching the Village of Lombard through pride in heritage.
- Our museums attract visitors to Lombard by promoting history, arts, culture, and lilacs...

# We provide tours of historic sites



# We conduct programs for Schools and Scouts

- Pioneer Life
- Local Lore (Cemetery Walk)
- Wagons West
- Seeking Freedom on the Underground RR
- Ellis Island Project
- 1882 Cover Girl
- Victorian Manners



# We participate in Lombard's unique events

- Lilac Time
- Memorial Day
- Sweet's Civil War Encampment
- Prairie Days
- Spooktacular
- Jingle Bell Jubilee



# We collect and preserve history

- Period clothing
- Business items
- Farm equipment
- Memorabilia
- Tools
- Household items
- Lilac time artifacts





# We have...

- 10,000 photos
- Est. 3700 artifacts
- 1000+ biography files
- 100+ maps
- 1000+ house files
- 500+ reference volumes



# We provide history lectures



- Beacon Hill
- Lexington
- Junior Women's Club
- Lombard Service League
- Rotary
- Kiwanis
- Senior Men's Club
- Chamber of Commerce
- First Church of Lombard



# We help improve the Lombard Cemetery through community partnerships

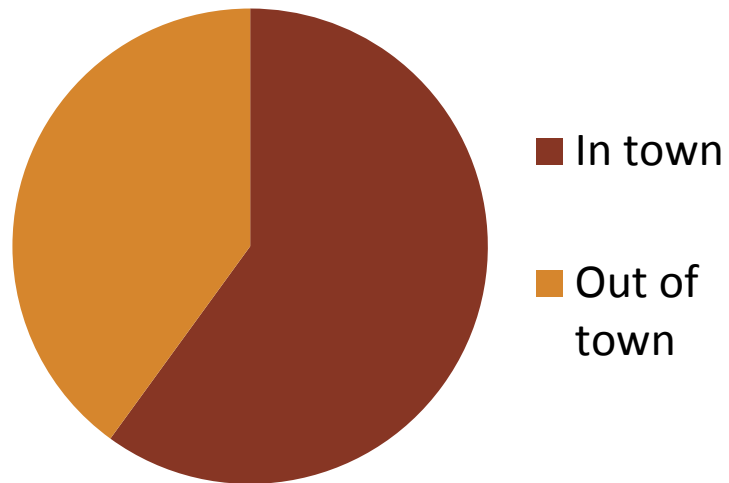




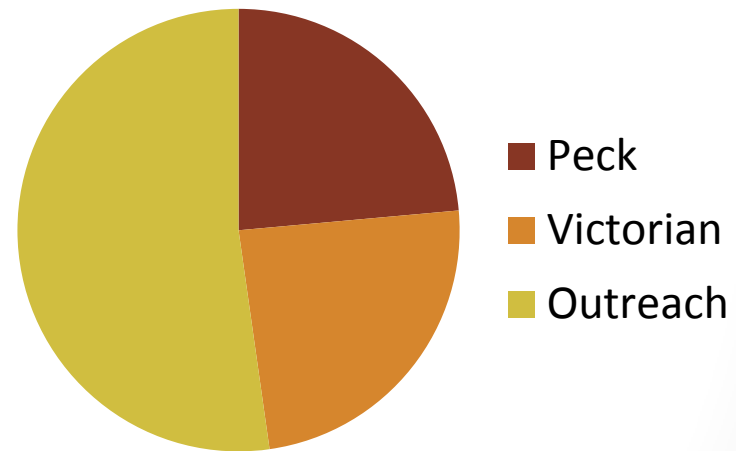
## **Growth in Visitorship**

# Who and Where do we serve?

## Who

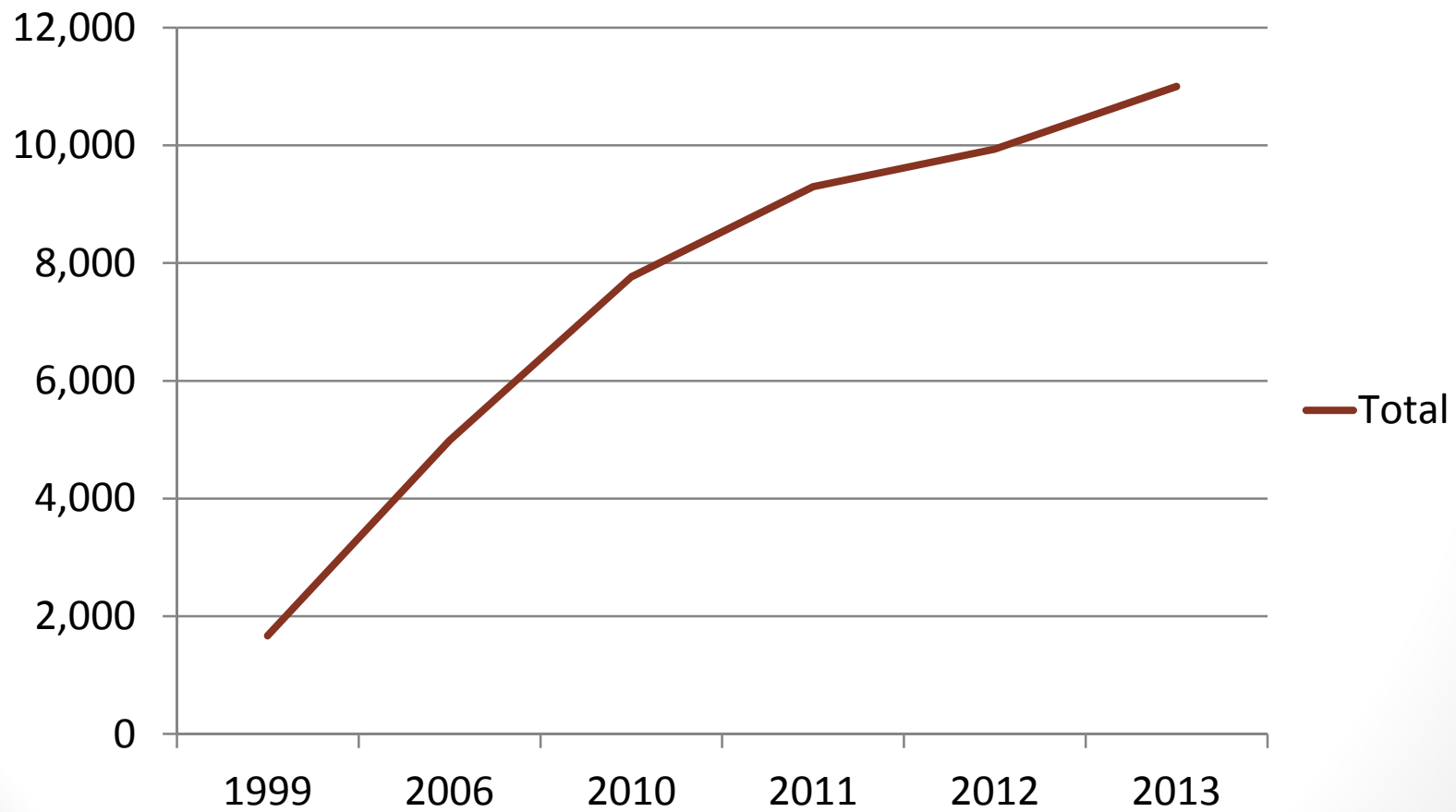


## Where



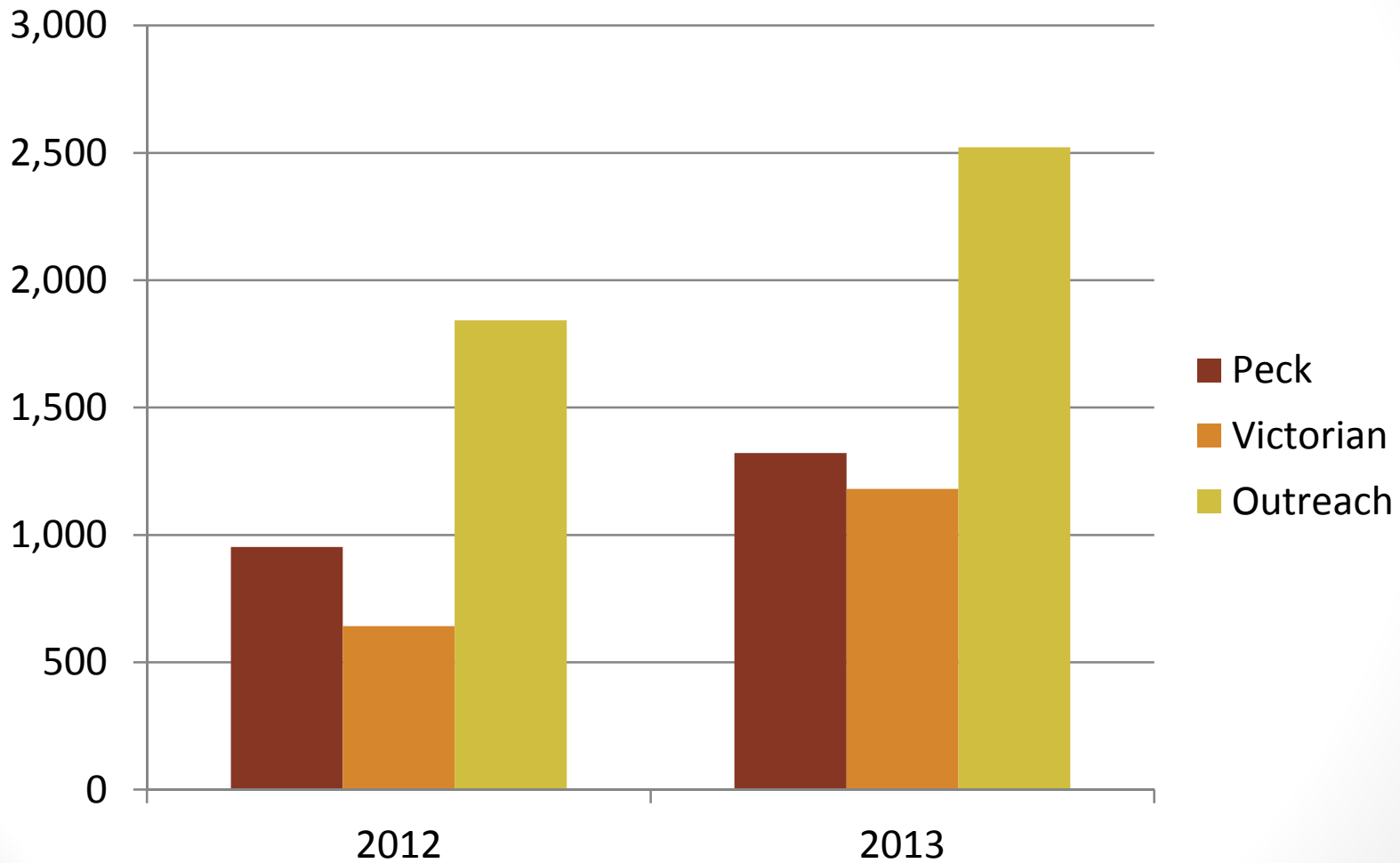
# Visitorship

## Number of Visitors





# 46% increase in visitors since Carriage House completed



# Challenges and Possibilities

A look at our budget

# The challenge of small museums...

## Museums are not sustainable business models

- Like park districts and libraries, museums require public funding to exist
- The museums in Lombard enrich our community and improve the quality of life for residents of all ages. We work to make Lombard a better place

# A look at the funding of area museums 2012-2013

Museum	Budget	% public funding	% private funding	Building owned/maintained by public entity?
Lombard	\$140,000	70	30	yes
Glen Ellyn	\$200,000	0	100	yes
Villa Park	unknown	10	90	yes
Downers Grove	unknown	100	0	yes
Elmhurst	\$800,000	71	29	yes
DuPage County Museum	\$161,000	80	20	yes



# Becoming More Independent

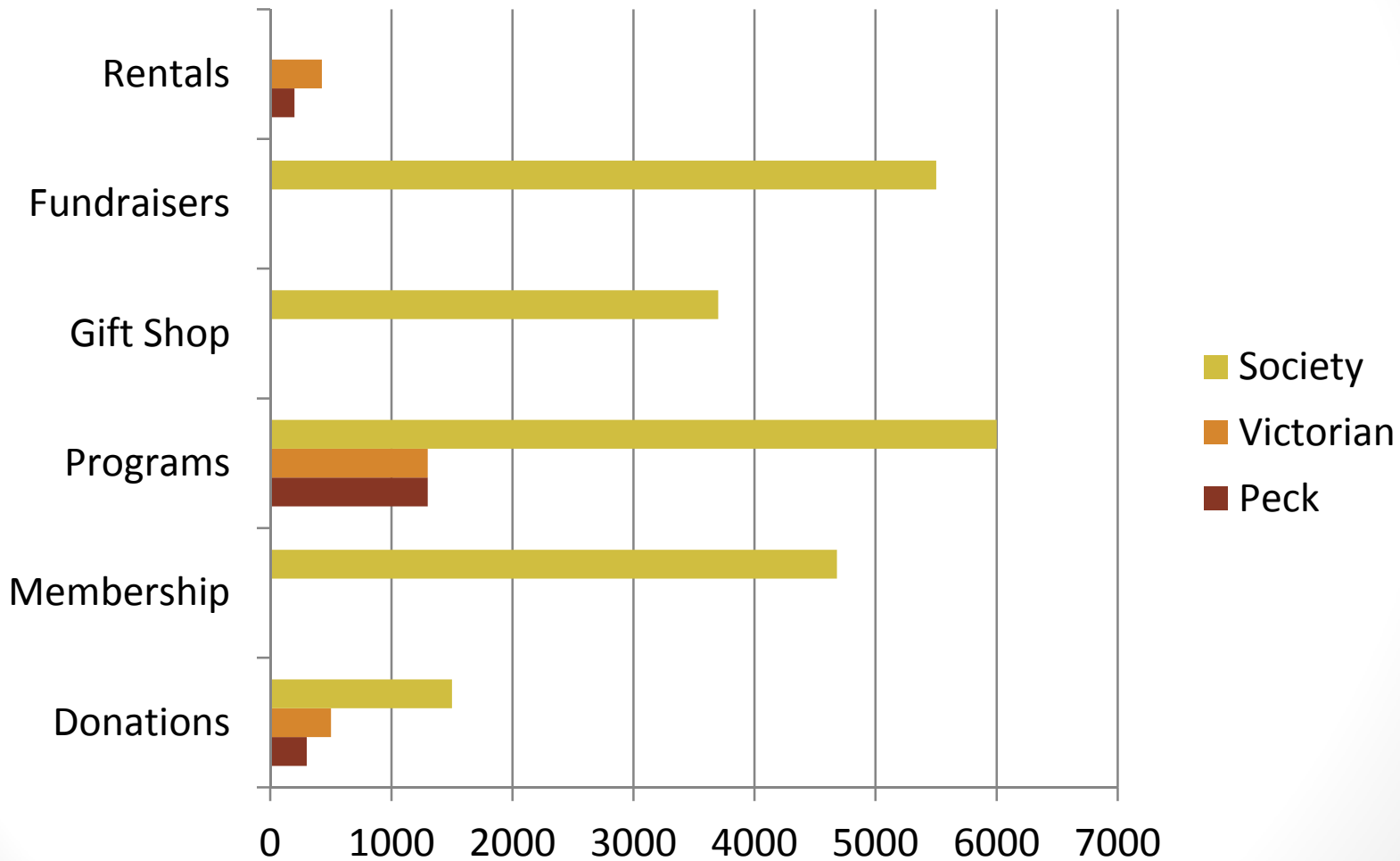
- Our Strengths

- Committed staff and volunteers
- Quality group programming people will pay for
- History people are interested in: Little Orphan Annie, the Underground Railroad, and Lilac Time
- New Carriage House
- 360+ memberships and 500+ virtual members

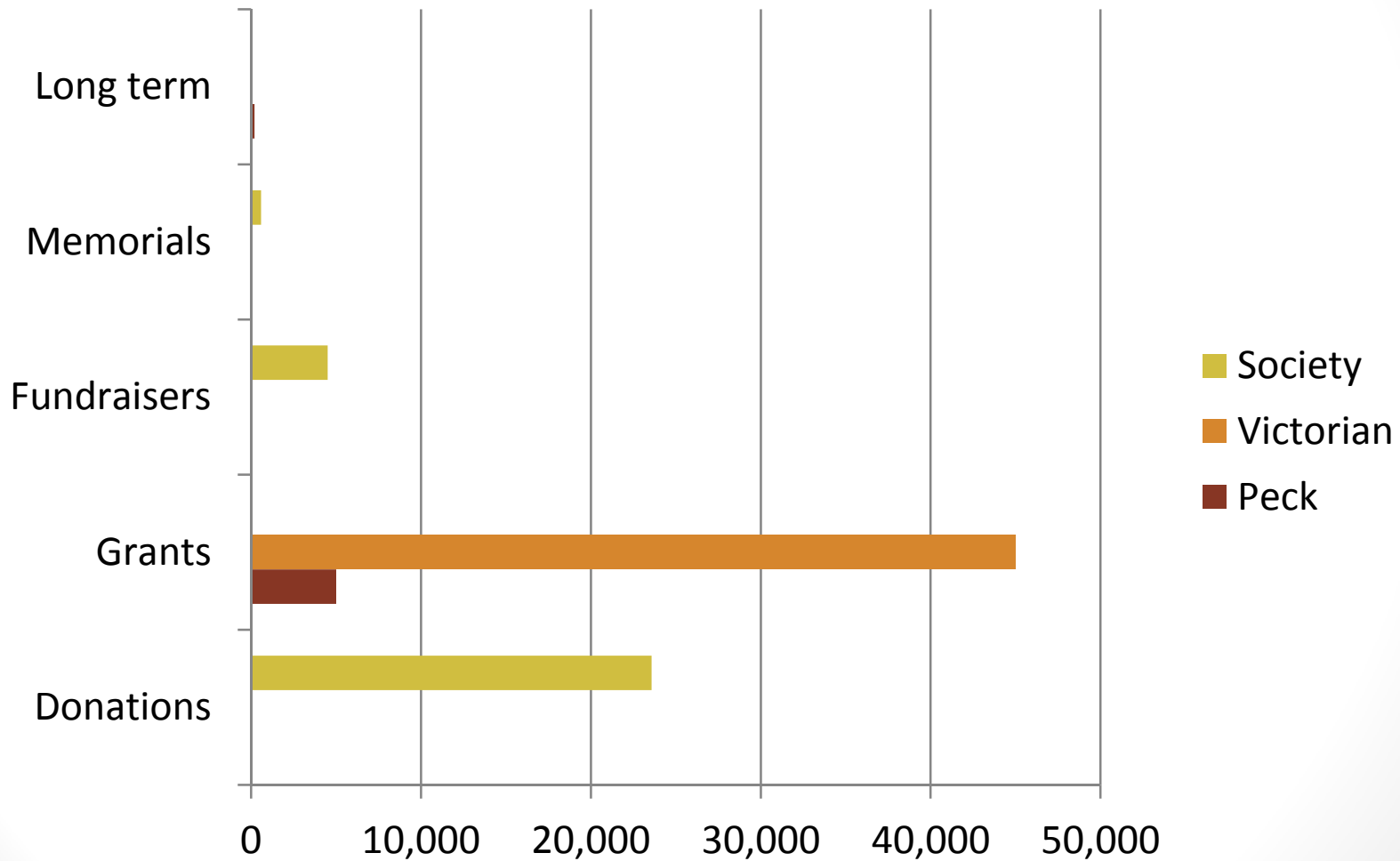
- Our challenges

- No admission charge for tours
- Limited private rental income
- Too few staff to expand services

# Society Revenue sources: Operating



# Revenue sources: Capital



# Challenge: Increasing Visitorship

## Challenge: Limited Hours

- Changing museum open hours takes a greater staff commitment.  
Currently, we do not have enough staff dollars to open more than four days per week.

## Challenge: Marketing

- Our advertising dollars are largely limited to Lilac Time.
- We have a volunteer committee that handles public awareness

# Possibilities: Our volunteers

- LHS Board effort- 15 members
- Docent tour guides- 10 regular docents
- Volunteer events- 100+
- Eagle Scout projects
- Maintenance and grounds- 4 regular volunteers
- Total volunteers hours annually 3500+



# Possibilities: Carriage House

**before**



**today**



# Possibility: New exhibits

A grant from the IDNR for \$45,000 has been acquired to develop new exhibits for the Carriage House

