

GRATEFUL DEAD



STUDIES
ASSOCIATION



2020 ANNUAL
REPORT



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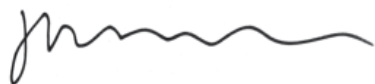


introduction

This year marked a milestone in the history of the Grateful Dead: the fiftieth anniversary of the release of band's landmark albums *Workingman's Dead* and *American Beauty*. Fittingly, it also marked the first meeting of the Grateful Dead Studies Association. Although separated by a half century, these events reflected their subjects in interesting ways, despite their very different forms. For the Dead, the two albums formalized a shift in their music that had been unfolding for much of the previous year, a turn to Americana that had always been a part of their musical DNA but had been obscured by their psychedelic explorations. On a larger level, it was an equally groundbreaking year for the Association—and like those albums, the events of 2020 were not only organic, but the end result of many years of hard work and planning.

This report provides a survey of those results. Despite the trauma and dislocations of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Association's officers, members, and supporters launched a range of projects and initiatives in 2020 that put the organization on a strong footing and mapped an ambitious agenda for the future. With the formal launch of the Association in August, the Association began to enroll members and the Executive Council began to plan our first conference meeting. We also drafted an ambitious publications plan, providing a blueprint for a suite of online and print publications to document our work and make it accessible for members, researchers, and interested readers.

Descriptions of these efforts can be found here, along with details of the Association's membership, donors, and finances. Although the Association's first year of formal operation was abbreviated, those five months represented the culmination of more than three years of work by the Association's founders and officers. Members can be proud of what the Association has accomplished, and we look forward to continuing to honor that faith and support as we all work together to further the scholarly study of the Grateful Dead.



Nicholas G. Meriwether
President

major projects

Publications

The most visible effort this year was the unveiling of our two websites, one for the Association, www.deadstudies.org, and the other for the journal, www.gratefuldeadstudies.org. Both sites launched on August 1, coinciding with Jerry Garcia's birthday, which is when the Association began formally enrolling members. The websites represent the most visible aspect of the Association's publications, but work continued on a range of additional efforts as well. The second edition of our newsletter appeared in the fall, with print copies mailed to members and an electronic version made available on the Association's website. Planning for the next element in the Association's publications plan, the Proceedings, also concluded, with content specifications and a design that complement the journal. Volume 5 of the journal progressed from planning to the editorial stage, with work continued on reformatting and updating earlier volumes to make them web-ready as well.

Conference

The Executive Council debated several possible hosts for our meeting and ultimately decided on the Popular Culture Association. The PCA was attractive not only due to its interdisciplinary scope and international reach but also for its long institutional and scholarly history. Not only was the PCA born in the same era that birthed the Dead, its scope includes several larger contexts that usefully connect it with Grateful Dead studies, from the 1960s to popular music to fan studies. In January, work began on the Association's application to establish a Grateful Dead area at the PCA. Our application was approved in May, and the Executive Council began planning our first conference meeting, scheduled to be held in 2021.

Archive

Another major effort this year was securing an agreement with Northwestern University Libraries to host the Association's archive. Working with curators and archivists at Northwestern's

Deering Library, the Association will begin spearheading a project in 2021 to build a comprehensive archive documenting the study of the Grateful Dead, with articles, theses, books, and a wealth of associated manuscripts and ephemera. The Association's records will comprise an important part of the collection, along with records from earlier conferences on the Dead, held at the University of Massachusetts–Amherst in 2007 and San José State University in 2014.

Organization

The Association completed its formal organization this year, chartered as a California charitable organization operating as a not-for-profit corporation organized under federal 501c3 guidelines. The Executive Council met four times during the year, refining a publications plan and beginning work on the foundation for a comprehensive development plan. Planning for additional initiatives also commenced, including a committee framework and membership initiative, to be implemented in phases over the next two years.

Membership

With a soft launch in August and only an informal word-of-mouth effort, the Association still enrolled a total of 61 members in only five months. That number includes 20 charter members, whose generosity provided critical start-up funds. Less than half of that number were attendees of the Association's organizational meeting held at the Southwest Popular/Culture Association conference in 2019, confirmation that the appeal of the Association is broad-based. A membership outreach initiative is slated for development in 2021.

gifts and donors

gifts

The Association was supported by several major gifts in 2020 along with a number of smaller contributions. One donor provided a much-needed direct payment of \$2,007.28 which subsidized several infrastructural requirements; the Association was also fortunate to have a donor contribute \$4,289.98 of in-kind payments that underwrote our facilities costs. We had our first endowment donation of \$675.00 as well as our first restricted gift, a \$100.00 contribution for one of the Association's major initiatives. These gifts not only provided crucial support for a fledgling organization, they validate the work of the Association by demonstrating that our mission and efforts inspire the support of a wide range of stakeholders.

donors

The following individuals made gifts to the Association in 2020:

Anonymous

Wai Chee Dimock

Andrew R. McGaan

Nicholas G. Meriwether

James Pollock

Rick Wallach

Overview

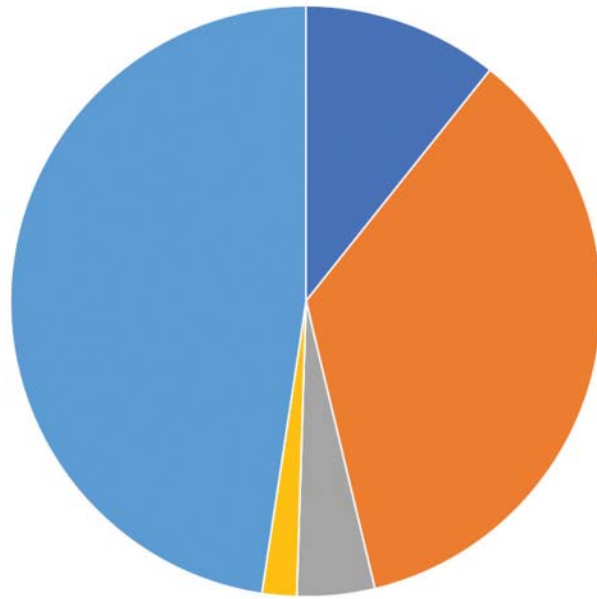
This summary provides an overview of the Association's income and expenses for 2020. The bulk of our revenue followed the launch of the Association's websites in August, although expenses were incurred from the start of the calendar year, a continuation of the ongoing start-up costs that commenced with the work to organize the Association that began in 2017, as detailed in the 2017–2019 report, available at the Association's website, <https://deadstudies.org/reports/>. The Association operates on a cash basis and uses that for our reporting; we relied on donors to pay expenses, primarily start-up costs, before we began accepting dues, which comprise the majority of income for the year.

The Association ended our first year of incorporation with a positive balance sheet, reflecting significant gifts that offset operating costs and several major expenses. Income consisted of membership dues and gifts, primarily in-kind but some direct payments. All expenses were paid in full as they accrued, with no debts or liabilities carried over to 2021.

Despite projected increased program costs in 2021, largely due to rising paper prices and print expenditures for the journal and also the inaugural publication of the *Proceedings*, the Association ended the year in strong shape financially, with assets sufficient to cover estimated one-time costs projected in the first two quarters of 2021 and still leave a positive balance sheet for the year. The Association currently benefits from low overhead due to an all-volunteer administration and substantial direct and in-kind donations that underwrite major infrastructure costs such as facilities rental and Internet access.

Income

The Association's income for 2020 was \$18,462.21, as seen below (\$1.06 in interest income is not reflected on the chart, due to graphics limitations). Dues accounted for the majority of that figure, accounting for \$8,805.00 (48%); that reflects the one-time contribution of 20 Charter Members, whose dues provide the equivalent of five times the dues of an annual regular membership, less membership promotion costs, detailed under Expenses.



2020 Income

In-Kind Donations	\$6,577.38
Direct Payments	\$1,978.77
Cash Donations	\$785.00
Dues	\$8,805.00
Journal Sales	\$350.00

Total Public Support	\$9,341.15
Total Income	\$18,461.15

In-kind contributions were the second largest source of income, accounting for 35% of the Association’s income for the year, or \$6,577.38. Legal expenses associated with the completion of the Association’s incorporation accounted for the largest single donation, followed by operations space, Internet access, and other overhead. This figure does not include intangible costs associated with graphic design, software programming, website development or other marketing and media infrastructure costs, which continue to be significant aspects of the Association’s needs. Those services are not provided by professionals in those industries, making their contribution nonquantifiable according to IRS rules. Based on comparable fees, those contributions are significant, estimated at \$12,000.00 in 2020, but cannot be included in the numbers reported here.

Direct payments—donations paid directly to vendors for necessary Association costs such as mailings, printing, and website hosting—accounted for \$1,978.77 of income, or 11%. Cash donations accounted for \$785.00, including \$100.00 in restricted gifts, and the rest unrestricted. Journal sales accounted for the remainder: \$350.00, or \$335.00 net, after taxes and mailing costs.

Expenses

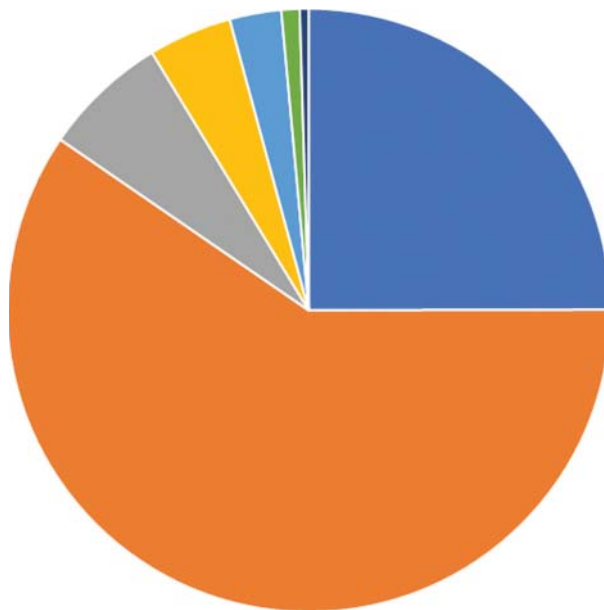
Total expenses for the Association in 2020 were \$9,441.32. The only known expense not reflected is minor, an estimated sales tax of \$15.00 accrued in 2020 but not due until 2021. The largest category of expenditures in 2020 was infrastructure, a total of \$5,628.32; this includes office space costs of \$4,125.00; computer software and

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hardware costs, \$622.56; Internet access, \$164.88; office supplies, \$272.36; and website hosting and domain name registration, \$345.12. The second largest category of expenses was \$2,357.50 in incorporation costs, primarily legal expenses associated with completing California state registration. Membership expenses were \$633.80, reflecting marketing materials charges of \$343.06 and charter membership promotional costs of \$290.74. Mailing costs were \$422.46 and credit card processing expenses were \$261.61. The online format meant that conference expenses were minimal, only \$92.44, and the Association's membership in the Council of Editors of Learned Journals was \$45.00.

For 2021, many of these costs should remain stable, such as facilities and Internet access as well as most office expenses; the in-kind donations that fund the bulk of those expenses is also expected to continue. Computer charges should drop significantly and we anticipate no legal fees. Publication costs will increase, due to the publication of the first volume of the *Proceedings*, along with conference expenses, in the event that the Association can meet onsite and not virtually.

Although it was an abbreviated year, the Association's balance sheet for 2020 was strong. While some costs remain unquantified, due to the reliance on in-kind service donations for basic services such as graphic design and website development and maintenance, that is appropriate for a small, all-volunteer, not-for-profit association. Those practices offer a sustainable model with low overhead as part of a fiscally conservative approach that husbands income from membership dues and cultivates donors, which should ensure financial stability and facilitate steady growth.



2020 Expenses

Office and websites	\$ 5,628.32
Incorporation	\$2,357.50
Membership	\$633.80
Mailing	\$422.46
Credit Card Fees	\$261.61
Conference	\$92.44
Professional	\$45.00

Total Expenses \$9,441.13

leadership

Executive Council

Nicholas G. Meriwether *President*

Granville Ganter *President-Elect*

Kurt Torell *Vice President*

Beth Carroll *Treasurer*

Jan Wright *Secretary*

Board of Advisors

Bernie Cahill *Activist, Inc.*

David Lemieux *Grateful Dead Productions*

Mark Pinkus *Rhino Entertainment, Inc.*

Alan Trist *Grateful Dead Productions, ret.*

Board of Advocates

Scott Krafft *Deering Library, Northwestern University*

Andrew R. McGaan *Kirkland & Ellis, LLP*

James Pollock, CPA

charter members

Established by the Association's constitution, Charter Membership is a special category of participation that provides additional funding to help launch the Association. Twenty individuals became Charter Members in 2020, giving generously to help establish a strong foundation for the Association. The category closes at the end of 2021.

2020

Jeffrey Aulgur

Susan Balter-Reitz

Barry Barnes

Melinda Belleville

Gary Burnett

Philip Eliasoph

Granville Ganter

Nicholas G. Meriwether

Jon Ney

Joseph Noonan

Nathaniel Racine

Peter Richardson

Stan Spector

Kurt Torell

Robert Trudeau

Rick Wallach

Ron Waloff

Robert G. Weiner

Jay Williams

Jan Wright

