

## Library Annual Report 2022

### Welcome Back

It was gratifying to see more patrons visiting the Wilmington Memorial Library (WML) in 2022 as the pandemic threat began to subside. To further promote this comeback, WML hosted a Welcome Back Week campaign from June 18 to June 25. *Welcome Back Week An Overdue Celebration* inserts were included in the May water bill mailing to all households. The week's programming began with a book brunch led by Trustee Eileen MacDougall (of Book Stew fame). Other events included a lecture by Chronicle's Ted Reinstein, the annual Big Wheels event at the Swain Green parking lot and the grand opening of the Storywalk® at Rotary Park.

All staff participated in the Welcome Back Week programming, including demos of the 3D printer with Technology Librarian Brad McKenna, cooking with Circulation Librarian Lisa Crispin and crafting with Cataloging Librarian Laurie Wierzbicki. Patrons loved the surprise treats we offered each day. In addition, patrons donated items to the food pantry in place of fines. The week's finale event was the summer reading kickoff concert with Matt Heaton. During the week, we checked out 4,220 items - a 33% increase in circulation over the same time period in 2021.

While still offering virtual and outdoor programs, the number of indoor programs increased during 2022. In September, the Youth Services staff hosted a Tiny Art Show for patrons of all ages. The only requirement was that the work had to be smaller than 3 inches in every dimension. We had 147 tiny art submissions that were displayed throughout the library. Over one hundred artists, friends and family attended the Tiny Art show reception featuring tiny treats, tiny seltzers, and the tiny art, all accompanied by soothing piano instrumentals.

The Welcome to Wilmington Reception, which had been on hiatus since 2019 due to the pandemic, was held on October 17. Seventeen nonprofit groups, nine town departments plus Wilmington Public Schools and Shawsheen Valley Tech welcomed 75 new residents.

In October, the Wilmington Sons of Italy provided funding support for programs that celebrated Italian Heritage Month including the return of the popular After Hours Concert on Friday evening. Tickets sold out within a week and the concert, "An Evening with Frank Sinatra" featuring performer Lucio Sandro Russo, received rave reviews from attendees.

Other themed programs presented throughout the year focused on happiness, Irish culture, the environment and mental health. We appreciate the funding support from Wilmington Family Counseling for events focusing on mental health.

### Reading Inspiration and Challenges

WML offered a variety of fun reading challenges for all ages during the year. We organized a "March Madness-themed" reading competition against five other Massachusetts libraries (Andover, Chelmsford, Georgetown, Melrose, and Reading) throughout the month of March. Wilmington made it to the final "Championship" round before losing to worthy opponent Georgetown. We have some very competitive patrons! 274 patrons read 368,930 minutes.

Team Tewksbury took home the trophy in the 2022 Reading Rivals competition. While we did not win this year, Team Wilmington logged an impressive 1,343,826 minutes reading, nearly double our 2021 total of 765,538. We also increased participation this year, with 680 participants to last year's 516. Combined, Tewksbury and Wilmington logged almost 3 million minutes of reading! The Youth Services staff offered a variety of ongoing passive reading challenges throughout the year including *1,000 Books Before Kindergarten* challenge. This reading challenge encourages parents to read to their child with the goal of success in kindergarten and beyond. There were 214 readers registered

and 20,422 books read by the end of the year.

A permanent Storywalk® at Rotary Park, funded by the Friends Annual Appeal, was installed in early June. The Storywalk® Grand Opening was held on June 23 as part of our Welcome Back Week, with 65 patrons in attendance. Many families have reached out since to tell us how much they enjoy having the Storywalk® there. The winter story, *The Leaf Thief* by Alice Hemming, was installed in December and will be changed again in spring 2023.

The all-ages Summer Reading Program, “Read Beyond the Beaten Path,” featured a variety of incentives using the online reading tracking software Beanstack. There were 575 children who registered for the summer reading program plus 179 adults. Statistics are up over last year but still a little behind pre COVID registration numbers.

In September, Children’s Book Author and Illustrator, Bob Shea, painted a mural in the Children’s Non-Fiction section. The project took two full days to complete and depicts a whimsical train filled with Bob Shea’s well-known book characters. Bob Shea is scheduled to return for a book reading and activity in February during school vacation week.

### Technology and Digital Services

We added a weekly drop-in Tech Help session on Saturdays in addition to the weekday drop-in and the one on one hourly sessions. Our tech librarians continue to provide digitization services including conversion of VHS tapes, 8 MM tapes and 7”an 9” reels. We added HBO Max and Netflix to the Amazon Fire Stick for patrons to borrow providing access to certain programming not available on DVD. The Library of Things now includes a flatbed scanner, thermal camera, moisture meter and a Cricut cutting machine. New to our digital offerings this year are the *Washington Post* newspaper and the *New York Times Games*.

### Friends of the Library

The Friends of the Library marked its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary on September 25. Over the years, the Friends have provided financial support for many projects including the library makeover, wonderful library events for all ages, and many new initiatives such as the Peggy Kane Reading Garden, the Storywalk® at Rotary Park and the Children’s Room mural. What makes the Friends so special is the people who have dedicated so much time over the years and worked tirelessly to see the organization grow to what it is today. Thanks to all!

### Personnel

There were a number of staff changes in 2022. Assistant Library Director Charlotte Wood retired in June after almost 20 years of service. Charlotte spearheaded many new initiatives at WML including the library makeover and the Mass Memories Road Show. Circulation Assistant Ruth Ellen Donnelly also retired in June. Ruth Ellen worked at the main desk greeting patrons for 26 years. Following these retirements, Youth Services Librarian Danielle Masterson was appointed Assistant Library Director and Assistant Children’s Librarian Nicole Chevalier was appointed Youth Services Librarian. Amy Cairra joined the staff as the new Assistant Children’s Librarian. Part-time Library Associates Jean Diorio and Eric Berube were promoted to full-time Library Assistant positions supporting circulation/cataloging and technology/marketing. Part-time Library Associate Jackie Strob was promoted to a full-time Library Assistant position following the resignation of Jean Diorio in November. Marketing Librarian Ellen Boyle resigned in September with Mary Nicholson becoming the Marketing Librarian in October. Rebecca Lowe, Christine Johnston and Meghan Tompkins joined the staff as part-time Library Associates during the year.

Adult Services Librarian Erin Driscoll attended the Public Library Association Conference in March in Portland, Oregon. Assistant Library Director Danielle Masterson attended the Massachusetts Library Association Conference in Hyannis in May and Youth Services Librarian Nicole Chevalier attended the New England Library Association Conference in Manchester New Hampshire in October. Teen Services Librarian Sara Rottger attended the New England Chapter of the Association for Information Science and Technology in Pittsburgh in November using a scholarship award that helped subsidize her attendance. Sara was also selected to be a judge in the 23rd Annual Mass Book Awards on the Middle Grade / Young Adult panel.

At the biannual staff meeting in June, Krista McLeod, Library Director at the Nevins Public Library in Methuen and Chairperson of the Massachusetts Library Association Intellectual Freedom Committee, gave a presentation to library staff, members of the Board of Library Trustees and Friends Executive Board about the principles of intellectual freedom which helped prepare staff for responding to the recent increase in book challenges that are occurring across the country. WML received two formal requests for reconsideration: *Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness* by Anastasia Higginbotham and *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe. After reviewing each request for reconsideration, Library Director Tina Stewart determined that both books met the criteria in the library's collection development policy and would remain in their respective collections. An appeal was submitted to the Board of Library Trustees for the book *Gender Queer*. The vote was unanimous to support the Library Director's decision.

At the December staff meeting, Patty Sullivan from Dementia Friends Massachusetts gave a presentation that helped staff better understand dementia and how the library can respond and support those with this disease. We look forward to working with the Elderly Services Department on its goal to make Wilmington a Dementia Friendly community.

A staff Accessibility Committee was formed to ensure that library services are accessible to all. Assistant Library Director Danielle Masterson completed a six-month, library-specific American Sign Language course. The class focused on teaching librarians vocabulary that would help staff communicate with an ASL-fluent patron during an average interaction. Assistant Library Director Danielle Masterson and Technology Librarian Brad McKenna joined the American Library Association's Bridging Deaf Cultures Committee. We encourage patrons to contact the library at [access@wilmlibrary.org](mailto:access@wilmlibrary.org) if they need any accommodations or auxiliary aids in order to use the library building, programs or resources. An accessibility page will be added to the library's website in early 2023 to make residents aware of accessibility services.

### Library Building Makeover

After the Town rejected proposals for a new library in 2005, staff initiated a major makeover of the building reclaiming space by aggressively weeding the collection and removing book stacks. This makeover continued over the course of the last seventeen years with creative use of space and limited funding. In 2018, the Town completed a Facility Master Plan Report that reconfirmed the library "needs to be significantly expanded." However, due to competing municipal and school priorities, it is not until 2034 that building construction improvements for the library are scheduled to be addressed. Given this and new trends in library services, staff began once again to reassess how to incorporate creative use of the building's limited space in order to support library services and programs for the next 20 years.

WML was notified in May that it was the recipient of a \$100,000 grant from the Cummings Foundation to address the revitalization of the first floor of the library. Additional funding from the the Barbara Johnson Trust Fund plus state aid and support from the Friends of the library will help fund the "next makeover" project. Staff has been working with Oudens Ello Architecture on this project with summer 2023 as the expected completion date. Going forward, WML is committed to

making the library an inviting destination and remaining a relevant and vital community service for all residents.

LIBRARY STAFF  
(as of December 31, 2022)

Library Director-Christina Stewart  
Assistant Library Director-Danielle Masterson  
Administrative Assistant-Gloria Corcoran

Adult Services Librarian-Erin Driscoll  
Marketing Librarian-Mary Nicholson  
Technology Librarian-Bradley McKenna  
Youth Services Librarian-Nicole Chevalier

Assistant Librarian Circulation Services-Lisa Crispin  
Assistant Librarian Technical Services -Laurie Wierzbicki  
Assistant Librarian Children's -Amy Caira  
Assistant Librarian Teen Services -Sara Rottger

Library Assistants  
Eric Berube  
Jacqueline Strob

Part Time Library Associates  
Britney Chin, Meghan Tompkins  
Rebecca Lowe, Christine Johnston

Library Pages  
Daniel Epie, Lian Juergens, Hannah Noah,  
Kyle Spinney, Neda Stoeva, Amanda Tran, Amber Vlamis

## LIBRARY STATISTICS FOR 2022

### Hours Open Weekly

Monday through Saturday 9-5  
Monday through Thursday evenings 5-9

Population		23,349
New Patrons Registered		1109
Total Registered Borrowers		9387
Library visits		133,243
Items in Collection		48,408
Downloadable eBooks and Audio Books		62,547
Print and Electronic Subscriptions		3904
Museum Passes		13
Circulation		178,895
Physical	153,649	
Digital	59,032	
Interlibrary Loan		41,406
To other libraries	16,160	
From other libraries	25,246	
Information Services		
Information Desk Transactions		3185
Internet Sessions		6,481
Website Visits		406,626
Library Programs		715
Children's Programs	291	
Teen Programs	56	
Adult Programs	368	
Total attendance at programs		10,099
Children's Programs	6,743	
Teen Programs	309	
Adult Programs	3,047	