
THAYER MEMORIAL LIBRARY

2015 Annual Report

**2015 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
OF THE THAYER MEMORIAL LIBRARY**

Chair: Emily J. Rose
Vice-Chair: Frank T. MacGrory
Secretary: Frank Streeter
Member: John Schumacher-Hardy
Member: Stephanné Fiori
Member: Stephen Piazza

DIRECTOR: Joseph J. Mulé
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR / ADULT SERVICES LIBRARIAN: Karen Silverthorn
CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN: Susan Mello-Conroy
SENIOR LIBRARY TECHNICIAN: Linda Ledoux
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS ASSISTANT: Marcia L. Jakubowicz
LIBRARY TECHNICIAN: Janet Baylis
LIBRARY PAGE: Janet Baylis
LIBRARY PAGE: Lisa D'Ambrosio
LIBRARY PAGE: Dorothy McCandless
LIBRARY PAGE: Gail Prewandowski
LIBRARY PAGE: Jo Agnes Santangelo
CUSTODIAN: Nancy Record

Hours:

Monday: 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM
Tuesday: 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Wednesday: 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM
Thursday: 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM
Friday: 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Saturday: 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Budget

In its 153rd year of free public library service to the citizens of Lancaster, the Thayer Memorial Library operated over two consecutive fiscal year budgets. From January to June, the Library operated on the final six months of FY15's municipal appropriation. Likewise, from July to December, the Library operated on the first six months of FY16's municipal appropriation. Table 1 illustrates the Library's *appropriated* municipal income for each fiscal year, affecting calendar year 2015.

TABLE I			
FY15 and FY16 Appropriated Municipal Income (AMI)			
<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Calendar Year Months</i>	<i>AMI</i>	<i>Δ%</i>
FY15	July through Dec	\$314,835	
FY16	Jan through June	\$324,889	3.19%

Factors affecting the Library’s appropriated municipal income in FY16 were largely a result of adjustments to wages and salaries after collective bargaining. In addition, this was the first year when building maintenance services expenditures were centralized and managed by the Town Administrator instead of the Library.

The Library met all budget-related requirements as outlined in *605 CMR 4.00: M.G.L. c. 78, ss. 19A and 19B* in FY15 and expects to do so in FY16 as well. As a result of meeting all of the Commonwealth’s regulatory requirements for public library service, the Thayer Memorial Library received a FY15 State Award totaling \$14,547, an increase of more than 19% from the previous year.

Highlights of meeting the requirements of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) over the course of fiscal year 2015 include:

- Maintaining the Library’s Minimum Appropriation Requirement (MAR) funded by the Town for both fiscal years.
- Sustaining 49 hours of public service per week.
- Meeting the Materials Expenditure Requirement (MER) by spending at least 16% of the municipal appropriation on books and other media. In FY15, the Library managed a media budget of \$59,227. Nearly 71% of FY15’s MER was funded using the municipal appropriation. The remaining MER was funded using revenue acquired as gifts, trust fund income, and fees collected from fines.

While the Library met all service standards established by Commonwealth statutes and regulations, it would not have been able to operate as it did throughout calendar 2015 without having augmented the Town’s municipal appropriation with non-appropriated or fee-based sources of income. These sources included revenue received as State Aid, trust fund income, grants, gifts, fines, and fees generated from the Library’s printing, copying and faxing services. Over calendar year 2015, the Library expended more than \$40,495 in non-appropriated or fee-generated revenue.

Non-appropriated and fee-based income funded public programs and events (\$11,197), purchased books & other media for the general collections (\$11,074), purchased office equipment, supplies & services (\$5,422), purchased museum & attraction passes (\$5,390), funded training & professional development services (\$2,796), purchased online magazine

subscriptions and streaming video services (\$2,000), funded lighting upgrades (\$1,906), and purchased computer & network equipment and services (\$711).

Attendance, Collections, & Use

Thayer Memorial Library remained a center for local information and activities in 2015. The Library provided a diverse selection of media choices to the public in multiple formats, including electronic, print, and digital. In addition, programs and events continued to draw a variety of people of all ages interested in seeing live performances as well as to meet fellow patrons. Local groups, whether municipal or private, had twenty-four hour access to meeting spaces which held groups as large as 68 patrons. Finally, demand to access the Library's Special Collections remained steady in spite of the very limited hours they were available to public. The Museum was opened on special occasions and available to the public by appointment.

At the end of December, the Library recorded 4,284 registered borrowers, or nearly 2/3 of all Lancaster residents. The public continued to visit the Library with great frequency in 2015. In total, nearly 51,000 patron visits were recorded.

The Library's collection size continued to evolve and grow based on public demand. In 2015, the Library's collection grew from 94,500 titles to more than 118,250 items, an increase of more than 25%. This growth was the direct result of adding more than 23,750 new downloadable media titles to the overall collection. In addition, more than 2,300 donated books, DVDs, and compact discs were added to the general collection, saving nearly \$20,000.

The Library subscribed to 173 magazines and newspapers and received an additional 16 subscriptions as gifts. In addition – and thanks in large part goes to the Progin Foundation, the Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library, and the Rosemary Davis Memorial Fund of the Greater Worcester Community Foundation – the Library was able to subscribe to 18 museum and attraction passes.

Circulation activity remained very strong and relatively unchanged in 2015. The Library circulated nearly 150,000 titles in all formats (print, non-print, and downloadable). In many cases the public actively utilized the Library's inter-library loan program, which brought media from other Commonwealth libraries to Lancaster to meet local demand.

Demand for downloadable content jumped more than 41% in 2015. However, overall use and popularity of these materials has yet to catch on when compared with total circulation activity. Less than 5% of all circulation transactions in 2015 were a result of patrons downloading titles. While demand for downloadable content is expected to continue growing, the Library shows no signs or evidence that demand for print materials is declining among users. Regardless of how the public acquired their library books, patron *readership* remained steady, and still accounted for roughly half of all total circulation activity.

The Library provided a wide variety of programs for various age groups throughout the calendar year, with continued financial support from the Greater Worcester Community Foundation Rosemary Davis Fund, George K. Progin Foundation, and The Friends of the Thayer

Memorial Library. In total, the Library provided the community with 466 programs (112 youth/354 adult) which were attended by more than 4,650 patrons. Programs included a weekly story hour, weekly screenings of currently released films, a young adult monthly book discussion, and two adult monthly book discussions.

Ongoing lifelong learning interest groups in writing and public speaking continued to meet weekly in 2015. Other interest groups that met weekly included a knitting group, Scrabble club, and a youth drop-in LEGO Club. In addition, civic and nonprofit groups and individuals actively used one of several meeting rooms to assemble in and conduct business, with approximately 300 gatherings held in 2015.

In May, Trustee Steve Piazza and his team of volunteers completed a comprehensive inventory of the Library's Museum. Along with a full cataloging of all 800 objects, a searchable online database was constructed and made available to the public through the Library's website.

Over the course of calendar 2015, the Library provided public computers for Internet access and word processing and offered wireless Internet access throughout the building for patrons who brought their own wireless devices. In May, all public computers were switched from Windows to the Linux operating systems.

In the era of the Internet patron demand for reference services remained in high 2015. More than 9,100 requests for information were handled by Library staff using all modes of communication.

Administration & Operations

In 2015, Thayer Memorial Library's Board of Trustees recognized the need to develop a new long range plan assuring the Library continues to provide excellent value while identifying opportunities for change as Lancaster's needs evolve. In anticipation, Library Director Joseph Mulé attended the Public Library Association (PLA) national conference in Indianapolis, with a charge to focus on library development and planning. The Board then commissioned an ad-hoc Strategic Planning Task Force to develop and recommend a plan for Library service sustainability and improvement for the next six years. The Task Force members included Director Joseph Mulé, Trustee Chair Emily Rose, Trustee Steve Piazza, former Trustee Maribeth Eugene, and ad-hoc members Assistant Director Karen Silverthorn and Children's Librarian Susan Mello-Conroy.

Building Plant

Lancaster endured one of the worst winters in recent memory in 2015 and the Library building was plagued with roof leaks and water infiltration in several public and basement locations. Lancaster's Fire Department and Department of Public Works responded on two occasions to remove snow from the roof before ice dams could form, without which the Library's leaks would have been far worse. By November, Olde Mohawk Historic Preservation completed work to rehabilitate the Library's slate roof system, which in some areas is more than 100 years old.

The Library finished its second major lighting upgrade in 2015. With money awarded to the Library by National Grid in 2014, the Library replaced dozens of lamps with preferable LED alternatives and installed occupancy sensors throughout the building to activate lights only when people are present.

In September, the Museum HVAC system controlling temperature, relative humidity and air quality failed. By the end of December the unit had not been replaced. In October, the Library's boiler, which was more than 25 years old, failed and was replaced by the end of the month. Finally, in December the iron, light-post fixtures framing the Library's front steps were repaired and upgraded with LED lamps.

Donations, In-Kind Gifts, and Volunteers

Over the course of the year, the Library received more than \$16,485 in gifts from the following people and organizations: Rosemary Davis Fund at the Greater Worcester Community Foundation, Inc. (\$7,800), Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library (\$6,244), Alan C. Nichols (\$1,000), Lancaster Cultural Council (\$500), Valorie Parent (\$500), Lancaster Garden Club (\$300), MOMS Club of Lancaster/Sterling (\$50), Henry Bowden (\$50), Susan Mello-Conroy (\$22), Stephen A. Roach (\$20), and Aurel Mooney (\$19).

The Library's loyal corps of volunteers continued to play an invaluable role enhancing the ability of the staff to deliver high-quality service to patrons. In addition to adding new members to its volunteer ranks, the Library was the recipient of more than 2,500 unpaid volunteer hours of service. Averaging more than 45 hours per week, volunteers saved Lancaster taxpayers more than \$26,250 in wages.

The Thayer Memorial Library volunteers include: Kami Alexander, Sharon Jordan Bahoosh, Amie Carabello, Rachel Carter, Lisa D'Ambrosio, A. J. de Chambeau, Keenan Doyle, Marie Espinola, Grace Fiori, Tyler Hunt, Susan Hurley, Elaine Jewett, Susan Kadlec, Caroline Ketchum, Kat Ketchum, Ceil Kirby, Nathan Madden, Monica McCarter, Roy McCoy, Barbara Meyers, Sandy Nowicki, Marilyn Pagé, Gail Prewandowski, Judith Riotta, Irene Roper, Jo Agnes Santangelo, Mary R. Sawyer, Kellie Shelton, Karen Silverthorn, South Lancaster Academy Volunteers, Susan Sussman, Linda Tatten, Kaitlyn Tobin, and Melissa Walker.

In addition, gifts in-kind were received from many benefactors. The Library wishes to recognize the following people, businesses and organizations for their services: Donna, Jeffrey & Brianna Ankstus, Bob Baylis and Main Street Automotive in Clinton, Dick Belanger, Richard E. Black, Lindsay Brunea, Allison Chisolm, Peter Christoph, Linda Demkoski, Jeanne F. Duffy and Women & Brigham Hospital, First Group School Bus in Marlborough, Francis X. Edwards and the Aldrich Astronomical Society's Library Telescope Program, Funrise/Hasbro of R.I., Peter A. Garofoli, Samantha Grantham, Myles Heffernan, Jr., Juniper Farms of Hudson, Bob Kadlec, Caroline Ketchum, Lancaster 4-H, Lancaster Girl Scouts, Lyric Farm, Nancy Malek and "Otis the Pig", Cynthia Maxfield and the Nashoba Community Partnership for Children, Susan Munyon, Marilyn & Jean Paul Pagé, Perkins School, Rick Piermarni from Ricky's Towing, Jon Roper, Scott's Doggs of Lunenburg, Seven Bridge Writes' Collaborative, Rebecca Shoer, Bob

Silverthorn, Toastmasters International, Utz Quality Snacks of Ayer, Corinne Walker, and Judy Zmijak.

The Library continued to benefit from the services provided through the Town's tax abatement program and wishes to thank those Lancaster residents who help this department meet its services goals.

Respectfully submitted,
Joseph J. Mulé, Director