

2005 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
OF THE THAYER MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Chair: Emily J. Rose
Vice-Chair: Frank MacGrory
Secretary: Frank Streeter
Member: Jacqueline Cashin
Member: John Schumacher-Hardy
Member: Michael Lukaszewicz

DIRECTOR: Joseph J. Mulé
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/ADULT SERVICES
LIBRARIAN: Anne White
CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN: Susan Mello-Conroy
SENIOR LIBRARY TECHNICIAN: Linda Ledoux
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS ASSISTANT: Marcia L. Jakubowicz
LIBRARY TECHNICIAN: Charlotte Follansbee
LIBRARY PAGE: Janet Baylis
LIBRARY PAGE/SUBSTITUTE: Sandy Altucher
CUSTODIAN: Nancy Record
MUSEUM GREETER: Cecilia Thurlow***
TRUSTEE MINUTE RECORDER: Carolyn Stump***
TECHNICAL SERVICES AIDE: Theresa Schartner***

Hours:

Monday: 12:00 PM – 6:00 PM
Tuesday: 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Wednesday & Thursday: 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM
Saturday: 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM (closed on Saturdays in June - August)

With a new strategic plan, an industrious staff firmly in place for a second year and operating budgets substantially augmented from non-appropriated gift revenue, the Thayer Memorial Library, in its 143rd year of service to the citizens of Lancaster, substantially approached maximizing its resources and continued to grow circulation and program services.

Budget

Over the calendar 2005, the Library again operated in a budget environment that was relatively stable and without event. From January to June, the Library worked on the final 6 months of FY2005's municipal appropriation. Likewise, from July to December, the Library worked on the first six months of FY2006's municipal appropriation. Table 1 illustrates the Library's total operating municipal appropriations for each *fiscal* year, affecting the *calendar* year 2005. In both

cases, increases in appropriation were due in large part to maintaining all staffing levels throughout calendar 2005 and increasing custodial wages to include an additional five hours starting in July as well as keeping pace with the rising costs of operating and maintaining various building systems (fire suppression, HVAC, etc.). Over the *calendar* year 2005, the Library spent in total \$228,349 spread over both *fiscal* year appropriations.

Table 1

Fiscal Year	Months Utilized in Calendar 2004		Total Fiscal Year Municipal Appropriation	Δ% from Previous Fiscal Year
FY2005	Jan.to	June	213,106	2.37%
FY2006	Julyto	Dec.	222,576	4.44%

Furthermore, the Library was able to meet all related budget requirements as outlined in 605 CMR 4.00: M.G.L. c. 78, ss.19A and 19B in FY2005 and is anticipated to do so, as well, in FY2006. As a result of meeting all of the Commonwealth’s requirements for public library service, the Library received its FY2005 State award of \$10,574, a 25% increase in State funds from FY2004’s \$8,486 grant. Although welcome and put to good use, this uncharacteristic fluctuation was actually the result of a mistake originating at the Commonwealth’s Department of Revenue. Since this discrepancy was not discovered until FY2006, after the State and Lancaster reconciled and closed the FY2005 budget, the Library was not required to return any of the award. In contrast, the FY2006 initial State Aid Award was \$9,026 or a drop of 15% since the year prior.

Highlights for meeting FY2005 and FY2006 MBLC requirements include:

- Maintaining the Library’s Minimum Appropriation Requirement (MAR) provided by the Town for both fiscal years.
- Sustaining 38 hours of public service per week for both fiscal years.
- Spending at least 19% of total operating expenditures on purchasing books and other informational materials. Over FY2005, which ended in June, the Library’s total operating budget, including appropriated and non-appropriated funding sources, was \$266,470, of which \$51,882, or 19.47%, was expended on materials. The Town’s appropriation covered about 66% of the required material expense with the balance coming from the Library’s non-appropriated sources (trust fund income, gifts, etc.).

While meeting all service standards provided by Commonwealth statutes and regulations, the Library would not be able to exist as it did throughout the calendar 2005 without the good fortune of having non-appropriated sources of income available to augment municipal appropriations. Over calendar 2005, the Library spent \$43,715 in non-appropriated funds provided by income earned in trusts, collected in revolving funds, awarded as State Aid to public libraries provided by the Commonwealth, and gifts donated by individuals, estates and foundations.

The Library expended a total of \$18,368 of *Trust Fund* income to purchase books and materials (\$9,799), supplement maintenance expenses (\$4,667), purchase staff related services such as association dues and travel expenses (\$635), enhance programming endeavors (\$373), extend office supply purchases (\$118) and pay the wages of our Special Collection Assistant (\$2,775).

The Library manages three *revolving accounts* used to collect revenue and to make targeted purchases. Over calendar 2005, the Library expended \$1,232 from its *revolving accounts* to maintain and supply its public copy machine (\$599) and replace damaged or lost books and materials (\$633).

The Library maintains several *gift* accounts established to accept donations from individuals, estates, and organizations. The Library continued using funds initially awarded to the Library in *calendar 2004* from the George K. Progin estate (\$10,608) and received substantial gifts from the Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library (\$2,500) Rosemary Davis Memorial Fund of the Greater Worcester Community Foundation (\$1,170), benefactor Alan C. Nichols (\$1,000) and over \$800 was collected in the Library's nondescript, general gift fund. Likewise, with the passing of patron Janet Polack, relatives and friends donated \$390 on her behalf to purchases bestsellers and other noteworthy publications. Over the course of the calendar 2005, the Library expended \$13,909 in gift expenditures from five of its gift sources. Purchases made with gift income included programs and events (\$7,486), books, museum passes, and other collection related materials (\$3,698) and equipment, including a state-of-the-art color, laser printer (\$1,020) and die cut machine (\$1,676).

The Library spent \$10,207 of its *State Aid* income over the calendar 2005. Over 35% of the State Aid money spent in the calendar year 2005 went towards salaries and wages (\$3,584). Other notable State Aid expenses included purchasing books and other collection related materials (\$3,411), lights and other repair and maintenance supplies and services (\$1,720), office and professional supplies and services (\$930), supporting Adult and Youth program endeavors (\$320) and other miscellaneous items and services (\$242). Finally, the Library expended \$738 in Library Expansion Mitigation funds beautifying the Library's landscape.

Building and Operations

The Library again faced building maintenance-related issues throughout the year, mainly with regard to its HVAC system. However, three nefarious vandalisms marred what would otherwise be one of the brighter years in the Library's eventful history.

The first vandalism was discovered in January by a patron attending a Board of Selectmen's meeting in the Library's Nathaniel Thayer Dexter Meeting room. As she departed, she noticed that at least one digit was missing on the hand of the *Winter* Cherub figure of the Four Seasons Statuettes. In August, custodian Nancy Record discovered the ground floor, men's bathroom grossly defaced with human excrement. Not long after this in September, an attempt to unlawfully gain access to the contents of the Library's external material dropbox was discovered while the Director was going through the morning ritual of emptying it. All three of these incidents were reported to the Lancaster Police Department, which opened a separate

investigation for each. All three events seemed to be isolated and unrelated to one another, and no significant leads or suspects have been identified. As of this writing, all three cases are described by police as being opened and ongoing. Furthermore, issues regarding the security of the Library and its valuable possessions were discussed at great length throughout the year by the Board of Trustees. As a result, the most notable change has been limiting public access to the ground floor, where two of the three incidents occurred.

The calendar year 2005 was also marked with other ordinary building maintenance issues. In April, the Library finally had painted the ceiling in the Museum, which was marred with water stains as a result of an undetected leak in the calendar 2004. Also, in April, a valve failed in fan coil unit (FCU) #1, which served the original Children's Room (this unit is one of the Library's older units whose existence predates the last major building renovation when many new FCU's were added). As a result, heated air spilled into the room when cool air was called for.

In May, another leak was discovered coming from the attic, this time coming from the sump pump associated with the FCU serving the Library's Museum. Thankfully, the problem was found early and was quickly remedied before any severe damage was suffered. After years of difficulties, FCU #3, which serves Memorial Hall, was shut down entirely. Currently, the Library cannot afford to replace the unit, and there is no future plan now to do so. Like with FCU #1, in June, a similar temperature regulating valve failed in FCU #4, which serves the Technical Service Office. Also, in June, a photocell that controls the Library's outside lights and the battery backup to the fire detection system failed. Lastly, a leak in FCU #8 serving the Constance V. R. Thayer Dexter Special Collections Room was discovered by staff in December. In total, over 42% of these items and other maintenance-related work were covered by the Library's non-appropriated sources of income (State Aid, trust fund income, etc.).

Again, progress was made throughout the year to improve the attractiveness of the interior and Library's grounds. Early in the year, an ad-hoc End Panel Committee was put together to help beautify the Library's stacks. Consisting of Building Fund President and retired Library Trustee Kathy Dugan, the Library Director, and staff Anne White and Linda Ledoux, the committee was charged with recommending the design of the end panels as well as for settling on an appropriate contractor to complete the work. In June, the Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library, led by retired Library Trustee Susan Polansky and volunteer Kathy Suits, beautified the Libraries grounds by planting small shrubs and completing other essential landscaping duties. With Prison Mitigation funds dwindling, F. W. Gorham Landscaping of Leominster was called in to complete minor work, which included freshening the Library's mulch beds.

Collection, Circulation and Other Activities

By the end of December 2005, the Library's collection count rose to 58,986 materials, up approximately 4% from 56,870 at the end of 2004. Many of these items were purchased, but a substantial number of DVDs and compact discs were anonymously donated over the course of the year. In total, the Library processed and added 5,206 items to the collection. Although many of these items were immediately available to the public, almost all of the materials in the Constance V. R. Thayer Dexter Special Collections Room were accessible for a minimal time (M,

W, and Th 4 – 6 PM) when staff were available or by appointment. The Library purchased seven more print serial subscriptions in 2005 than in 2004 for a total of 74 titles. In addition and thanks in large part to funding provided from the George K. Progin estate, the Library was able to subscribe to six more attraction passes for a total of ten, including two passes for Davis’s Farmland and Mega Maze!

As of the end of December 2005, the Library recorded 5,153 registered borrowers. The Library estimates over 70% of Lancaster residents possess a library card. Not surprisingly, as the table below illustrates, overall circulation also continued to rise over 2005.

10-year Average	Calendar 2004	Calendar 2005	Δ% from Calendar 2004	Δ% from 10- Year Average
55,674	68,887	80,066	16.23%	43.81%

Analysis of annual circulation statistics reveals two trends. First, that patron demand for competing media types, namely in audio and video formats, is markedly rising. Over calendar 2005, non-print (compact discs, videocassettes, etc.) circulation rose 29% over 2004 counts. The Library has responded aggressively to this trend by diverting material purchasing funds to expand and diversify DVD and compact disc collections. Furthermore, while patrons of the Library are circulating non-print media in record fashion, there is still ample evidence that public demand for the printed word is substantial and continues to be a primary feature of overall Library service. For instance, approximately 60% of circulation activity included either a book or magazine in 2005.

The Library once more provided more non-school related programming activities for all ages throughout the calendar year 2005 than it ever has. In total, the Library provided 124 (37 Adult and 87 children) programs, which is up approximately 13% from only a year ago when it produced 110 (30 Adult and 89 children) programs. Total attendance for all events was up 15% to 2,883 in 2005, up from 2,504 in 2004.

In addition to providing story hours and a Summer Reading Program, the Children’s Department also continued providing a Young Adult book discussion group and 19 additional programs of varying themes funded using money from the George K. Progin estate. In addition to providing eight programs funded by the Rosemary Davis Memorial Fund of the Greater Worcester Community Foundation, the Adult Department again implemented its own Summer Reading Program and continued its series of Adult programming titled “Learn from Your Neighbors” (Neighbors). The Library was able to provide eight Neighbors programs and provided Library patrons the unique opportunity to meet and become acquainted with some of Lancaster’s notable and talented residents. Likewise, in addition to 12 Adult book discussions, the Library once more collaborated with Lancaster resident Ms. Christiann Gibeau and continued the Film Literacy series, which discussed eight different films throughout the year. The Library also had the good fortune of hosting a legislative breakfast, which included speeches from Senator Robert Antonioni, Representative Harold Naughton, and Representative James Eldridge. Finally, the 4th

annual "Food for Fines" program was held to assist families in Lancaster who had fallen on tough times in 2005. Patrons who donated non-perishable food to the cause had all of their late fees waived. The program commenced around Thanksgiving and ran until December 24. All food donations were collected by Jean Syria and Denise Hurley in conjunction with the Lancaster Police Department, which then distributed the food to Lancaster residents.

The Library endeavored to reach out to Lancaster residents using targeted publicity. In April, the Library purchased its own domain name (<http://thayermemoriallibrary.org/>), continued to publish its newsletter the "Clarion: The Quarterly Newsletter of the Thayer Memorial Library" for the second straight year. In addition to providing updated calendar information in both the Item and Lancaster Times & Clinton Courier, other Library related pieces included:

- an article on The Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library by Jenny Contonio in The Item on Friday, 28 January 2005
- an article featuring Trustees Frank MacGrory, John Schumacher-Hardy, and tax abatement worker Cecile Thurlow discussing the Library's Museum by Karen Nugent that appeared in Worcester Telegram and Gazette on Monday, 07 February 2005
- an article featuring Trustee Frank MacGrory explaining the Library's Museum by assistant editor Christine Quirk of the Lancaster Times & Clinton Courier on Thursday, 07 April 2005
- beginning in September, several articles were published in the Lancaster Times & Clinton Courier mainly based on "The Lancaster Town Library: Continuity, Change, and Personalities, 1862 - 1990" by Marge Fischer and Leslie Perrin Wilson.

The Board of Library Trustees worked closely with the members of Lancaster's Historical Society to begin a project of restoring the Library's Washburn Civil War Flag. By the end of the year, the Historical Society funded an exploratory project to determine the condition of, as well as obtain several proposals to preserve the flag. World War II artifacts, including a Japanese bayonet, were put on permanent loan from Lancaster resident and retired Selectman Donald Boucher. Mr. Boucher also worked closely with Trustee John Schumacher-Hardy and provided several articles from his time in the Navy, including photographs, medals, and official naval documents.

Even when not in use for everyday services or Library-sponsored events, the Library building was often still being utilized by some governmental or private agencies to host non-library specific meetings or events. In the calendar year 2005, the Library provided around-the-clock access to its meeting rooms located on the building's ground floor and recorded 230 uses.

Donations, Volunteers and Other Unpaid Help

Money and gifts-in-kind were received from many of the Library's benefactors including George Babich, Bob Baylis, Big Truck Night Crew, John J. Bryce, Central Massachusetts Regional Library System (CMRLS), Effie Chigas, Kathleen Clancy-Irr, Pete Christoph, Erin DeCoste, Kathleen Dugan,

David Dunn, Dunn and Company, First Church of Christ, Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library, Christiann Gibeau, Laura Harrington, Theodora Kalivas, Kathleen Kurfess, Lancaster Cultural Council, Legacy Publishing, Mark Leonard, Rhea K. Lesage, Frank Merlino on behalf of the George K. Progin Estate, Anne Mazzola, Perley Mears, Annette Morris, Alan C. Nichols, Valorie Parent, Rosemary Davis Fund of the Greater Worcester County Foundation, R. Geraldine Ryan, John Schumacher-Hardy, David E. Siano, Joyce Low Sobetzer, Sarah Spencer, Library Building Fund, Wilbur Tolman, Susan Polansky, Jeanne Rose.

The Library's loyal corps of volunteers continued to play an invaluable role in assisting the staff in delivering quality service to patrons. In addition to adding new members to its volunteer ranks, the Library was the recipient 1,227 unpaid, volunteer hours of service up over 70% from 720 hours.

Averaging over 23 hours per week, volunteers saved Lancaster residents \$10,282 in wages (based on the wages of an entry-level page). Additionally, the Library further utilized the Town's tax abatement program and added two more workers: Carolyn Stump was added as the Board's minute's recorder and Theresa Schartner as a technical assistant. Cecile Thurlow completed her second year as the Library's Tax Abatement Museum greeter.

Sandy Altucher, Caroline Atkinson, Victoria Atkinson, Cheryl Baylis, Janet Baylis, Ross Beyerly, Arthur Bowen, Anthony Bryan, Emily Carlson, Emily Castner, Britlin Chapman, Rhyvere Christopher, Kathleen Clancy-Irr, Yadyris Collado, Bob Conroy, Kyle Conroy, Jennifer Cornelius, Emely Corominas, Deb Cortes, Nico Chrisner, Anny Cunha, Helen Dorval, Cornelius Driscoll, Kathy Driscoll, Kayla Ducharme, Becky Erb, Elaine Fahey, Jessie Fahey, Hope Fiori, Stephanie Fiori, Chris-Ann Foster, Kristof Foster, Stehanie Fuller, Christiann Gibeau, Rachel Glover, Nathan Grunder, Paula Harvey, Kelsey Hawkins, Margaret Howell-Walton, Alan Joseph, Bob Kadlec, Bill Kilbourn, Ceil Kirby, Leonard Kelley, Lynn Kluft, Bridgit Lawlor, Justin Liu, Margaret MacLaughlin, Juan Marte, Dot McCandless, Norma McCarty, Karen McGarity, Shoshana Klein Mulé, Tim Murtland, Lily Narbonne, New River Academy, Laura O'Neil, Jill Perreira, Susan Polansky, Liliot Provost, Teresa Quinn, Margaret Scarborough, Madeline Schmitt, John Schumacher-Hardy, Natasha Sivananjai, Emma Sneiderman, Ken Stafford, Desiree Tetreault, Ellen Warila, Natalie Warila, Dan Warner, Nikki Warner, and Linda Winick.

Respectfully submitted

Joseph J. Mulé, Director