

2019 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
THAYER MEMORIAL LIBRARY

MISSION STATEMENT

The Thayer Memorial Library brings people, information, and ideas together to enrich lives and build community.

OUR CORE VALUES

Passion

We love the Library, we love Lancaster, and we love what we do.

Free and Open

We promote intellectual freedom and privacy for all.

Inspiration

We enhance learning, the free flow of ideas, and civic responsibility.

Respect

We respond to all with courtesy and compassion.

Integrity

We uphold a bond of trust between the Library and the community as stewards of our collections and our building.

Legacy

We treasure the history of Lancaster and its Library as we embrace the future.

BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

January – December

Chair	Emily J. Rose
Vice-Chair	Frank T. MacGrory
Secretary	Frank S. Streeter
Member	David I. Spanagel
Member	Kathryn Engelhardt
Member	Stephen Piazza, <i>Jan. – May</i>
Member	Richard R. Bianchi, <i>June – Sept.</i>
Member	Anne T. Ogilvie, <i>Dec. –</i>

LIBRARY STAFF

Director	Joseph J. Mulé
Assistant Director / Adult Services Librarian	Karen Silverthorn
Children's Services Librarian	Susan Mello-Conroy, <i>ret. Apr.</i>
Youth Services Librarian	Maren Caulfield, <i>May –</i>
Office Manager / Technician	Linda Ledoux, <i>ret. May</i>
Office Manager / Technician	Janet Baylis, <i>June –</i>
Special Collections Clerk	Marcia Jakubowicz
Assistant Technician	Jo Agnes Santangelo, <i>June –</i>
Pages	Lisa D' Ambrosio
	Dorothy McCandless
	Gail Prewandowski
	Rachel Carter, <i>June –</i>
	Melanie Turpin, <i>June –</i>
	Meredith Brummer, <i>June –</i>
Building Supervisor	Richard Kravfe

HOURS OF SERVICE

Monday	10 – 8
Tuesday	12 – 8
Wednesday	10 – 8
Thursday	10 – 8
Friday	10 – 5
Saturday	10 – 2

*Many library resources are available 24/7 online at:
www.thayermemoriallibrary.org*

OUR 157TH YEAR OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE

In 2019, Thayer Memorial Library [Library] fulfilled our mission operating from our historic structure on the Town Green. Free and open to all 49 hours per week, and with around-the-clock online access to media and services, the Library was a place where visitors found what they needed: information, ideas, and a community space to meet with fellow citizens. The Library again certified with the Commonwealth, ensuring that Library cardholders could take advantage of accessing millions of media titles from libraries across Massachusetts.

The value of all library services from borrowing books, audio recordings, movies, museum passes, e-books, and other media as well as attending programs, using networked computers, and booking meeting spaces in 2019 was more than \$2.25 million. The Library was an excellent investment and provided Lancaster citizens with nearly \$9 of services to citizens for every dollar appropriated by the Town.

In 2019, the Trustees and staff moved into year four of the Library's Strategic Plan taking the Library into the future with recognition of its historic past. Please see our website to read the full plan.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Director Joseph Mulé developed and implemented a computer-based data collection and reporting database for the staff to use. This computer application provided a means to collect service data to prepare reports and to assist in grant preparation and institutional development. He also implemented improved cybersecurity for wireless network users in consultation with Town IT Director John DiTommaso. As part of the Library's participation in the Central and Western Massachusetts Resource Sharing network [CW MARS], he chaired a task force to investigate developing Library eCards. Director Mulé continued his close association working with the Perkins School and served as one of its Ambassadors.

Director Mulé and Trustee David Spanagel met with Lancaster's legislators at the annual Legislative Day on Beacon Hill sponsored by the Massachusetts Library Association. As part of the Director's continued professional development, in October, Mr. Mulé attended the 2019 New England Library Association Annual Conference: *Challenging Expectations Together* in Mystic, CT.

In December, Mr. Mulé was accepted into the Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official [MCPPO] Program *Public Contracting Overview* course. These classes covered procurement, contracting, ethics, and practical advice for municipal officers who deal with municipal contracts as part of their duties. With large building projects planned or underway, this was extremely valuable in preparing specifications and overseeing contracted work.

Many promoted and newly-hired staff members participated in training opportunities such as webinars, visits from other library professionals, or attended training elsewhere in the Commonwealth. Most of these opportunities were free and provided by the CW MARS network and the Massachusetts Library System.

Assistant Director Karen Silverthorn's grant application to the Rosemary Davis Memorial Fund at the Greater Worcester Community Foundation was once again successful. Programs funded through this grant, in memory of Lancaster resident Rosemary Davis, promoted animal and environmental education for children and adults. See table 5 for a list of the Rosemary Davis Memorial Fund programs held at the Library.

Ms. Silverthorn worked with the Commission on Disability to display the Disability History Exhibit across 23 panels. The exhibit was developed by Alaska's Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education and was on display in the Library's reference room for the month of October.

The Board of Trustees reviewed and updated a number of policies in keeping with current professional practices to enhance public services and procedures for implementation. For example, automatic renewals were implemented for loaned items not returned by their initial due date. Be sure to check our website for updated policies and procedures.

Library partner organization, the Thayer Memorial Library Foundation, dissolved in 2019 with the balance of the funds they raised donated to the Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library. The Friends of agreed to take on the Foundation's role in managing funds for large fundraising initiatives.

As other partnerships emerged, the Library undertook an initiative to execute a Memorandum of Understanding [MOU] with partnering organizations. The Seven Bridge Writer's Collaborative was the first MOU executed in 2019 with The Friends of Thayer Memorial Library beginning the process.

Trustee Richard Bianchi unexpectedly moved from Lancaster only three months into his tenure. The Board worked with the Board of Selectmen to implement the process for appointing a replacement member. The Selectmen posted the vacancy, and the Trustees made a recommendation after interviewing the applicants. Member Anne Ogilvie was appointed in December.

STAFF CHANGES

In 2019, two long-standing members of the staff retired. Susan Mello-Conroy left at the end of April after serving as Children's Services Librarian for almost 17 years. Ms. Mello-Conroy had an impact on many of the Town's children and their parents as she applied her talents, ingenuity, and resourcefulness to improving Library services. Big Truck Night, Lego Club, and Teen Book Group are a small sample of her innovative approach, providing appealing occasions for Lancaster's young citizens at the Library. Ms. Mello-Conroy retired as one of the Library's longest-serving children's librarians.

Linda Ledoux, Office Manager and Head of Technical Services, retired at the end of May after 39 years of devoted service to the Library and the Town. During that time, Library services and technologies evolved as the building expanded, and staff responded to meet growing public demand. Ms. Ledoux worked with five directors over her tenure and was among the longest-

serving staff members during the Library's 157-year history. In her work behind the scenes, with those in Town Hall and at the circulation desk, Ms. Ledoux's competence and composure were greatly appreciated.

These departures led to staff promotions and the arrival of new coworkers. Each new staff member dove into learning new job responsibilities and Library procedures under the guidance of senior staff while public service was seamlessly maintained.

Maren Caulfield joined the Library as Youth Services Librarian in May. Ms. Caulfield immediately began reviewing the collection, services, and working with Trustee Kate Engelhardt to collaborate with the Lancaster Parent Teacher Organization and teachers at Mary Rowlandson Elementary School. Together and with reading specialists from the School, the group reimagined the Library's Summer Reading Program. In July, the new initiative, "MRE & Me," was a smashing success, with over 100 students, caregivers, and teachers, including the Principal, gathering together for two well-attended events during the summer prompting the School to request a third event as winter break approached.

Janet Baylis, Assistant Technician and Page, became the Library's new Office Manager and Senior Technician. Jo Agnes Santangelo, Page, was promoted to Assistant Technician. This allowed the Library to add three part-time Pages to the staff: Rachel Carter, Melanie Turpin, and Meredith Brummer. Each staff member brought a fresh and enthusiastic perspective to the Library. Please introduce yourself to any of them as they rotate duties at the circulation desk.

HISTORY AND COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

May was Lancaster History Month at the Library. Assistant Director Karen Silverthorn's presentation "Dashed Hopes: the Story of the Lancaster Industrial School for Girls from 1856 – 1905" was one of three Library programs held. Ms. Silverthorn coordinated the Library's participation in the "Freedom's Way Hidden Treasures" initiative of the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area of the National Park Service. See table 5 for a list of the Lancaster History Month programs held at the Library.

The Current Topic Case exhibits highlighted the Library's history, particularly the 90th anniversary of the Children's Room wing dedicated in 1929. Other anniversaries noted were:

140th – the addition of the spiral staircase in Memorial Hall in 1879

130th – the enlargement of the Library with a new brownstone façade, rear book stacks, and new roof with a copper cupola above the stained glass skylight in 1889

20th – the renovation, expansion, and rededication as Thayer Memorial Library in 1999

CIRCULATING COLLECTIONS

In 2019, the Library added 6,810 items to the general collection and a myriad of titles to its eMedia collections [Overdrive and Hoopla]. Table 2 shows the Library owns more than 880,000 items broken down by several media types. Exceptionally, more than 93% of the titles owned by the Library are eMedia that require a device to use. All of these titles were purchased by and shared with libraries that comprise CW MARS or separately as part of the Hoopla service only Lancaster residents can use.

Furthermore, although the Library has access to an extensive and wide-ranging eMedia collection, most citizens preferred using conventional books, magazines, and videodiscs. Overall, more than 90% of all Library transactions were for conventional media. In addition, more than 61% of all media transactions [conventional and electronic combined] were to check out a book. Table 3 illustrates the circulation by media type at the Library in 2019.

Table 2. Collection Breakdown by Media Type

Media Type	Totals
Books	40,201
Newspapers and Magazines	2,331
Compact Discs	7,749
Blu-ray and DVDs	8,521
eBooks	406,756
eAudiobooks	105,905
eVideos	17,578
eMagazines	160
eMusic	272,048
eComics	17,914
Video Games	463
Microfiche/film	87
Miscellaneous [passes, art, kits, etc.]	944
Grand Total	880,657

Table 3. Circulation Breakdown by Media Type

Media Type	Totals
Books	51,789
Newspapers and Magazines	2,065
Compact Discs	6,207
Blu-ray and DVDs	24,065
eBooks	4,657
eAudiobooks	4,040
eVideo	414
eMagazines	134
eComics	74
eMusic	196
Video Games	965
Miscellaneous [passes, art, kits, etc.]	978
Grand Total	95,584

Funding provided by the Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library, Lancaster Garden Club, and the Rosemary Davis Memorial Fund at the Worcester Community Foundation underwrote the all attraction pass acquisitions listed in table 4.

Table 4. Museum and Attraction Passes

Animal Adventures	Museum of Russian Icons	Trustees GO Pass
Butterfly Place	Mystic Aquarium	USS Constitution Museum
Davis Farmland & Megamaze	Salem Witch Museum	Worcester Art Museum
Garden in the Woods	Symphony Pro Musica	Worcester Bravehearts
Mass State Park Parking Pass	Tower Hill Botanic Garden	Baseball Games

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

The Library scheduled 507 programs that 4,475 citizens attended. All of these programs were funded using grant funds and gifts donated to the Library. In addition, the Library collected Candy for Veterans, Food for Fines, offered workshops making fleece items for those in need, and provided donation sites and minimal promotion for initiatives run by Lancaster students and groups. [cat shelters, shoes, used greeting cards, and calendars for craft purposes].

In 2019 the Library-sponsored Summer Music Series was moved outdoors on successive Wednesday evenings centered at the gazebo on the Town Green. Community groups offered refreshments, and the number of participants indicated that the change was appreciated. The Library’s annual End-of-Summer Lawn Party on the Town Green celebrated the close of Summer Reading programs with a performer. Community participants joined in to offer grilled food, frozen treats, tours of the First Church bell tower, a family workout, lawn games, and tours of

the Rescue Squad ambulance. The Library also participated in Halloween on the Green in October. A full list of all the events held at the Library is as follows. Many of the programs held in 2019 are listed in table 5.

Table 5. Programs and Events at the Library in 2019

Weekly

Story Hour
Knitting Club
Blockbuster Movie
Toastmaster's Public Speaking Club
Snuggles and Stories [x17]

Rosemary Davis Series

Discover the Owls of New England

The World of Owls
Wiggles and Waggles!
Ani-Motion
Edible Landscaping
In the Groves
Touchable Tales Story Hour
North American Trackers
Raptor Migration: Who Goes? Who Stays?
The Art of Bird Photography

Lancaster History Month

The Battle of Ball's Bluff, VA
Dashed Hopes: The Story of the Lancaster
Industrial School for Girls from 1856-1905
If These Trees Could Talk

Monthly

Adult Book Group [x2]
Tween Book Club [x6]
Computer Help with Mr. Roper
Read to a Therapy Dog [x5]
Every Child Ready to Read [x8]
LEGO/Thomas Club [x6]
Crafternoon [x2]
Family Movie [x6]
Scrabble

7 Bridge Writers Collaborative

Open Mic Night
Critique Groups
Writing Workshops [x3]
Muse Class
Memoir Class

Music Series

T.J. Wheeler Concert
Knock on Wood Concert
The Delmatics Concert

The O-Tones Concert

Decatur Creek Concert

Other Noteworthy Programs

Kidz Can Cook
Fun Fused Glass
Harry Potter Birthday Party
Escape Room [x3]
Robert Rivest mime

Weaving Workshop [x4]

Perkins field trip to the Library
Girl Scouts tour of the Library
MRE 1st grade field trip to the Library
MRE & Me summer reading program [x3]
Checkers Tournament
Board Game Mania [x2]
Volunteer Leadership Open House

BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS

Another Green Communities Grant was completed, which included LED lighting upgrades, the connection of an efficient power generator, and the installation of a variable flow system application on the Libraries boiler. However, in December of 2018, as a result of vendor negligence while installing spray foam insulation in the attic, Memorial Hall's 150-year-old plaster ceiling was severely damaged and required extensive restoration. The Building Committee spent most of the first half of 2019 evaluating the extent of the damage, planning repairs, and finding competent contractors to repair the fractured ceiling. After receiving an insurance settlement in July, the project to restore the ceiling and repair the attic commenced and was completed in September.

The work entailed the construction of an engineered platform installed above the circulation desk which provided a workspace for artisans repairing the Memorial Hall ceiling [decorative plaster, wall and ceiling plaster, gold-leaf restoration, painting, sprinkler head replacement, stained glass cleaning] while protecting patrons, staff, and the building. Support posts attached in the basement ensured stability. Attic floor repairs above the ceiling stabilized walkways and the "dome," protected light fixtures, and provided a secure attachment of lath for the ceiling of the rotunda. Temporary fire suppression was installed during the work. Eventually, and with great care, the Memorial Hall plaster ceiling was repaired and returned to its characteristic magnificence.

Heating oil tanks were replaced, and re-plumbed as planned, but the evaluation of the building envelope and HVAC needs shifted focus again as additional air conditioning and climate control units failed. "Fix upon breakage" became a less than viable strategy. In addition, the Building Committee pursued capital grants and began to consider proposals to repair the Library's original slate roof and to restore the bay windows in the Children's Room

Representatives from the Library, Energy Commission, HVAC vendors, and Town Administrator met with a consultant and discussed replacing failed components and upgrading existing HVAC infrastructure. As a result of this meeting, a proposal conveyed by Northern Energy Solutions suggested an energy-efficient HVAC installation upgrade project over three years. Included with the proposals were saving incentives provided through the Green Communities program and from National Grid. In addition, a capital appropriation to pay for portions of the project was approved at the Annual Town Meeting in May 2019.

Representatives from the Library met with a preservation architect concerning the preparation of a comprehensive building assessment. The Board voted to hire Spencer, Sullivan, & Vogt preservation architects to do the study and assist with grant preparation for application to the Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund [MPPF] in March 2020. The study will prioritize building needs to include in an MPPF grant application and to prioritize future work.

LANDSCAPING

Building plantings and grounds updating for attractive, low-maintenance grounds continued. Boulders were placed in the yard behind the Children’s Room for outdoor seating. Crushed stone was placed around the building perimeter after foundation plantings were removed.

FUNDING LIBRARY SERVICES

Thayer Memorial Library provided wide-ranging services to meet the needs of citizens through the financial support of Lancaster voters, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, grants awarded by non-municipal agencies, and gifts from generous supporters. In 2019 the Library’s expenditures were funded with income received in the latter half of FY2019 [January-June] and the first six months of FY2020 [July-December]. In total, the Library expended more than \$411,500 on services and supplies. More than 15% [\$62,000] was funded using non-appropriated income from State Aid, trust funds, fines, fees, grants, and gifts.

Municipal Support

The Library’s municipal appropriation funded operational expenses, including wages, the purchase of books, magazine subscriptions and other media, the CW MARS membership, office, and housekeeping supplies, and building maintenance services. Table 6 illustrates municipal appropriations to the Library in FY2019 and FY2020.

Table 6. Municipal Apportions in FY2019 and FY2020

<i>FY2019</i>		<i>FY2020</i>	
January - June		July - December	
Appropriated Municipal Income	352,119	Appropriated Municipal Income	357,550
		Change	1.54%

State Aid

A municipality and its library must be annually certified by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners [MBLC] as meeting statutory and regulatory requirements to receive State Aid to Public Libraries funding. Lancaster and the Thayer Memorial Library met all requirements to certify with the Commonwealth and received a State Aid award. Requirements for certification included:

- Being open to all residents of the Commonwealth.
- Being open for service 49 hours per week.
- Expending a reasonable portion of the library's total budget on library media.

- Reciprocally lending books to other libraries.
- Filing all necessary reports with the Commonwealth.

As a result of certifying with the Commonwealth, the Library received a State Aid award of \$14,548.

Grants

The Library was able to sustain a wide range of programs for children, adults, and families through the support of several grant organizations. In addition to programs, grant funds were also used to purchase museum passes, media for the collection, equipment, and professional training for staff members.

We are fortunate to have the Friends of Thayer Memorial Library who are dedicated to directly supporting the Library. The Lancaster Cultural Council also provided support through funds from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. The Rosemary Davis Memorial Fund of the Greater Worcester Community Foundation supported programs that educated the public about nature and the environment, wildlife, and animal-human interactions. The Lancaster Garden Club purchase museum passes to Garden in the Woods and Tower Hill Botanic Garden.

Other Funds

Thayer Memorial Library also received income from trust funds, memorial donations, special gifts, fines, and fee-based services or programs.

In-kind Donations

Books, compact discs, DVDs, magazine subscriptions, and other donations were accepted from the public throughout the year. In 2019, 1,506 titles were added to the collection, with an estimated value of more than \$23,500.

Volunteers

Library users and the Board of Trustees generously donated many hours of time assisting the Library staff. In 2019, scheduled volunteers provided 1,628 hours of service at TML. Using information from the Independent Sector, a Washington, D.C.-based network of nonprofits, foundations, and corporate giving programs, the value of their time is \$52,364. In addition, the Friends of Thayer Memorial Library contributed countless hours towards fundraising; especially of note is the Annual Book Sale, which runs over several days in early October.

Thayer Memorial Library thanks the citizens of Lancaster for their continued support!