

GLOUCESTER LYCEUM & SAWYER FREE LIBRARY

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

CHARTING THE COURSE



“The Sawyer Free Library was a constant antidote to the doldrums throughout the pandemic, offering everything from online lectures, yoga classes for kids, to activities and equipment on loan for pick-up, and favorite books and movies on rainy days. Having access to a remote workspace with free wi-fi within a few blocks was a saving grace.” – *Lenore Maniaci*



DISCOVER THE PAST, CREATE THE FUTURE



# LETTER

## from the President our Board of Trustees

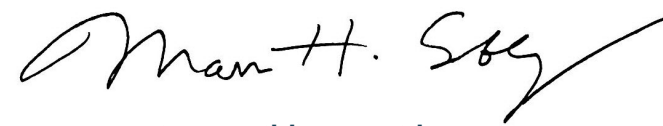
The Sawyer Free Library's mission is to be a place of learning, innovation, and creativity to support the community we serve. In this very challenging year, we have learned that whether our Library services are delivered in a physical location or digitally, they're not just "nice-to-haves" - **our services are vital to our community.** During these COVID times, our dedicated Library staff created virtual environments with responsive programming and learning opportunities for all ages. Online book clubs regularly ignited dialogue and forged connections across age groups and interests. Storytimes evolved from recorded videos to interactive experiences, allowing children and caregivers to sing and socialize with one another safely. And our Lyceum hosted acclaimed authors and engaging cultural programming for adults to learn about our community and the wider world.

The Library initiated many new and now permanent services. **We strategically invested in Digital Devices To Go, lending laptops, e-readers, tablets, and Wi-Fi hot spots to students, workers, job seekers, and caretakers.** We dramatically expanded our collection of e-books, downloadable audiobooks and online resources in response to the increase in our residents' needs.

During the past year, the Library also advanced plans to preserve and restore the historic Saunders House with a concept design approved by the Saunders House Stewardship Committee and the Library Board. Work got underway with the conservation of the WPA Frederick L. Stoddard/Howard Curtis murals in the main stair hall. Also, the Library submitted a CPA grant for stabilization work related to brick and timber structural repairs and for restoration of the Anderson Room murals.

We owe a tremendous "thank you" to Library Director Jenny Benedict and the entire Sawyer Free Library staff for their innovative solutions during these demanding and challenging times.

**Thanks to all of you for your support of our Sawyer Free Library.**

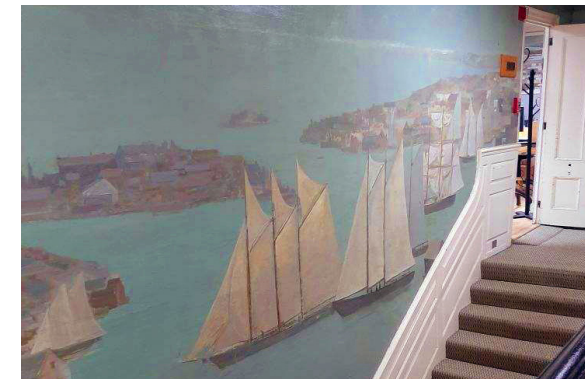


**Marion H. Sibley, President**

**Gloucester Lyceum & Sawyer Free Library**



Lisa Mehlin of Essex working on the mural restoration



WPA Frederick L. Stoddard/Howard Curtis murals



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# CAPITAL Project

## Sawyer Free Library

The project to renovate and expand the Sawyer Free Library is a once in 50-year opportunity to secure the future of our public institution. This year, the Library Board finalized the conceptual design for a renovation of the existing building and an expansion with a new modern addition toward School Street. The plan realizes our vision by respecting our history and modernizing our building for technological advancements, new methods of learning and new ways of sharing ideas and information.

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners determined that the updated design meets the programming requirements for the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program provisional grant of \$9,030,047. With these milestones accomplished, the newly established Sawyer Library Foundation is moving forward with plans for fundraising and the Library Board is laying the groundwork to have this project of revitalization and reimagination shovel-ready by early 2023.

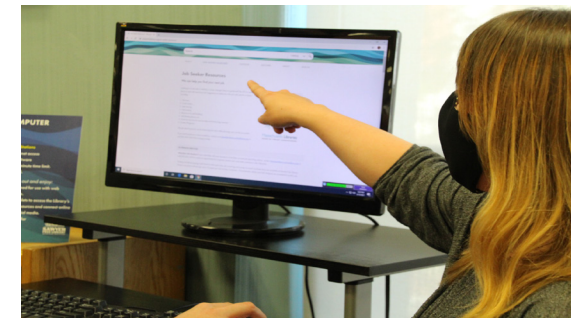


Dale Avenue view of the 2025 SFL

# COMMUNITY Impact

## Changing People's Lives Every Day

In 2021, Gloucester residents adapted to numerous changes in how they worked, went to school, played and socialized. At Sawyer Free Library, we heard every day how instrumental our tools and resources were to enriching people's quality of life and supporting their path to survival. This is how we built a stronger community.



Job Seekers Online Resources

## Supporting job seekers to get back to work

This year, Sawyer Free Library launched Job Seeker Resources, a program funded by an LSTA grant through the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. The combination of online workshops and recommended physical

and online resources supported residents to find job opportunities and develop skills, tools and confidence in job searching.

*Job seeker Maria Beck* who has been out of work for over 2 years shared, “It was really after I updated my resume and changed how I was writing my cover letters with tips and suggestions from the program that I started seeing some action from potential employers. The weekly sessions gave me a sense of being back in the working world--having connections with other people and learning new tools built my confidence back up.” Maria has had 5 interviews and will keep at it until she lands the right job with the right company.



### Keeping kids on track for school success

Research shows that children who read at home after school, on weekends and during the summer months have greater success with grade-level reading and even improving their test scores. Our librarians are experts in nurturing a love of reading and inspiring children to play with stories and language.



Keeping kids on track

*Parent Gina Robertson says, “My children and I go to the Sawyer Free Library about once a week to browse and check out books. We deeply appreciate the knowledgeable librarians. Through COVID, we probably had 100 books out all the time. My kids love sitting with big piles of books around them. Now that they are older, they love reading about their interests. When the books about Sacajawea came in, my daughter immersed herself and got lost in that girl’s world for hours on end.”*



The Robertson Family

## By the Numbers

**44,898** Children’s books circulated in FY 2021 **+47%**

**105** Staff hours per week devoted to children under the age of 11

**10** Preschool classrooms visited regularly by librarians

### Helping digital learners to navigate a digital world

Digital skills are essential for achieving success at work and in school and for people to feel included in our community. At the Sawyer Free Library, digital learning is a lifelong opportunity for everyone in our community.

This year we launched our Digital Devices to Go collection and Device Advice service. People who otherwise would not have had a connection to the Internet checked out the 13 wi-fi hotspots 263 times and the 10 Chromebooks 131 times. Each checkout provided a Gloucester household with two weeks of Internet access. One-on-one Device Advice appointments were consistently booked with people asking for assistance with accessing digital library resources and enabling device accessibility settings for visual impairments.



Stephen Lajoie, Technology Librarian

*“The Sawyer Free Library’s Device Advice program helped me immensely. The library staff helped me climb out of the “fossil age” and into getting closer to functioning in the technological age. At the young age of 75, I am just beginning to learn my way around a laptop. You can teach an old dog new tricks if the teacher (i.e. librarian) is patient!”*

*—Digital Learner Marilyn Amspacher.*



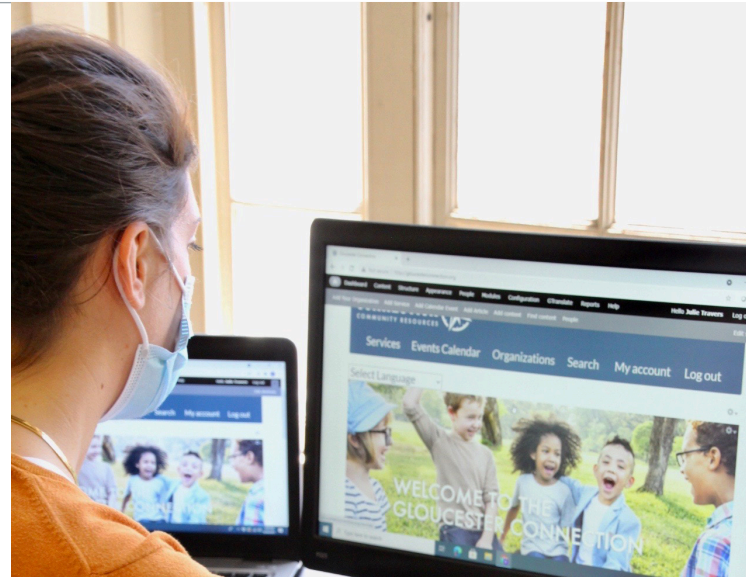
Marilyn Amspacher and Joann Dunajski, Public Technology Assistant



### Connecting newcomers and life long residents to our community

In April, Sawyer Free Library with key support from Wellspring House launched a new community website, Gloucester Connection. The site centralizes and consolidates local and current information about Gloucester's educational, health care and social services. With a multilingual and searchable online directory and event calendar, the site is a welcoming connection for newcomers to Gloucester and lifelong residents.

In the first six months, close to 900 new users have visited the site.



Exploring Gloucester Connection

*Newcomer Brenda Allerd, student in Wellspring House's Adult Learning Initiative College Readiness Program, said, "I was introduced to the Gloucester Connection through Wellspring. I wish it had been here when I moved to Gloucester in 2019. It is a great way to find the things that I need that Gloucester offers. When I first came to the area, like any other new resident I had questions and had to look all over but now with this website anyone with questions from basic needs to transportation can get all of their answers right here in one spot! It's an excellent resource, one that I now use often and have been spreading the word about it to my friends."*

# FINANCIAL Report

## CORPORATION PROFIT AND LOSS

FY '21  
July 1 - June 30

### Income

Contributions	\$131,047
Library	10,772
State Aid Funding	48,840
Interest/Dividends	1,122,745
Other	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,313,414</b>

### Expenses

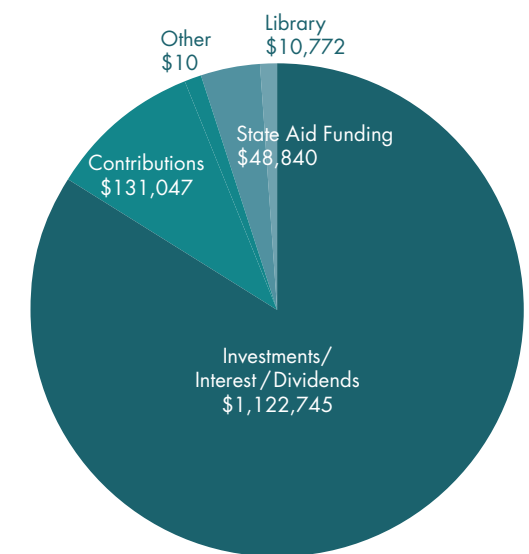
Member	\$29,919
Overhead	217,604
Depreciation	127,676
Operating	82,745
Board of Trustees	120,665
Grant to SLF	150,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$728,609</b>

**Net Income 584,805**

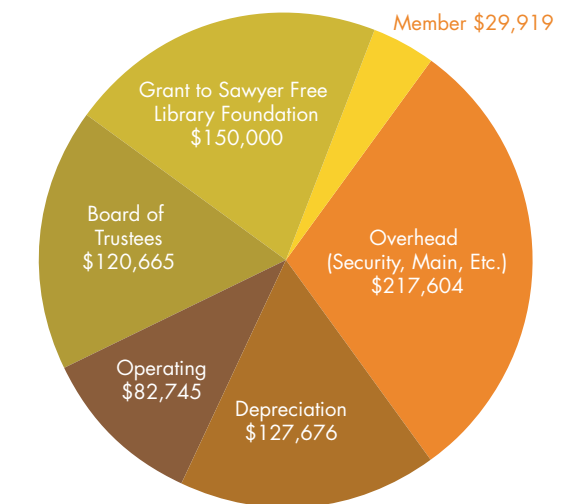
### Corporate Liquid Assets

Balance on 6.30.20	\$5,686,360
Withdrawals	(453,670)
Investment Return	1,122,745
<b>Balance on 6.30.21</b>	<b>\$6,355,426</b>

## Income Fiscal Year 2021



## Expenses Fiscal Year 2021





# OUR Board

**Our Vision:**  
To foster the values of place, belonging  
and connection in the Gloucester community.

**Fran Aliberte** - Corporate Communications  
Chair, Capital Projects, Began 2017

**Anne-Marie Anderson** - Secretary  
Began May 2018

**Peter Brau**  
Began 2019

**Jason Brisbois**  
Corporate Communications, Building & Grounds  
Chair, Began 2019

**Fred Allis Cowan**  
Past President, Building & Grounds Chair,  
Capital Projects. 2012 - 2021

**John Day**  
Began 2019

**Peter Feinstein**  
2017 - 2021

**Neil Glickstein**  
Began 2020

**Joe Grella**  
Treasurer, Began 2018

**Priscilla Malboeuf**  
Began 2018

**Beth Morris**  
Began 2021

**Melanie Murray-Brown**  
Began 2020

**Simon Paddock**  
Capital Projects Chair, Began 2017

**Joann Riley**  
Sanders House Stewardship  
2018 - 2020

**Mern Sibley** - President,  
Sanders House Stewardship, Began Feb 2017

**Marsha Sloane**  
Lyceum Committee Liaison,  
2019 -2021

**Mayor Sefatia Romeo-Theken**  
ex officio 2015

**Jenny Benedict**  
ex officio 2020



Sawyer Free Library Director Jenny Benedict. Ribbon cutting celebrating the new awning over the library's amphitheater in memory of longtime board member and civic leader Janis Davidson Stelluto.

# OUR Staff

## Administration

**Jenny Benedict**  
Library Director

**Beth Pocock**  
Assistant Library Director

**Lisa Jonas**  
Administrative Assistant (May-June)

**Annemarie Sanfilippo**  
Administrative Assistant (Dec-April)

**Stella Mantzourani**  
Administrative Assistant (July-Nov)  
Retired

## Children's Services

**Christy Rosso**  
Children's Librarian

**Justine Vitale**  
Children's Supervisor

**Linda Bosselman** (July-Nov)  
Library Assistant  
Retired

**Kristen Lauderdale**  
Library Assistant (July-Aug)

**Katelyn Rivela**  
Children's Library Assistant  
(Nov-June)

## Customer & Community Services

**Helen Freeman**  
Collections & Technical Librarian

**Jacklyn Linsky**  
Local History Librarian

**Jenny Santomauro**  
Community Librarian

**Julie Travers**  
Community Librarian (Feb-June)

**Lara Vilahomat**  
Community Librarian (July-Nov)

**Mari Martin**  
Library Assistant

**John Prybot**  
Library Assistant

**Cindi Williams**  
Library Assistant (July-Oct)  
Retired

**Leah Svensson**  
Library Assistant (Dec-June)

SFL's Own Clawdia



Justine Vitale, Children's Room Supervisor



# OUR Volunteers



Hogan-Lopez Family

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Trustees, Corporate Communications, Capital Project

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# A Special Thanks!



The Friends of Sawyer Free Library is dedicated to supporting and improving the library user experience. Funds raised by membership fees, the popular Book Shop, the annual Art Auction Funds and other fundraising activities are given to SFL to be used for library programs, museum passes, and projects needed for all departments. The money and work provided by the Friends is vital to the continued success of the Library and its mission.



The Gloucester Lyceum seeks to enrich the lives of Cape Ann residents through thought-provoking and intellectually rewarding programs. Based on both ancient and American Lyceum traditions, the Gloucester Lyceum was founded in 1830 and hosted such luminaries as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Oliver Wendell Holmes. Today, the Gloucester Lyceum is revived in a rapidly changing and dramatically more challenging world. We are grateful to the Gloucester Lyceum for providing people and ideas in a public forum which fosters a spirit of community and participation.

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