GLOUCESTER LYCEUM & SAWYER FREE LIBRARY

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

DISCOVER THE PAST | CREATE THE FUTURE

## CREATE THE FUTURE

"As we create our future, the Sawyer Free Library is building a sustainable future with resilient infrastructure and quality educational experiences for young people and adults. By bringing people together, building awareness, inspiring action and deepening relationships, we pull our community together and renew our sense of belonging." *—Library Director Jenny Benedict*

SAWYER FREE LIBRARY
DISCOVER THE PAST, CREATE THE FUTURE

# LETTER
## from the President of our Board of Trustees

> "The 2025 Sawyer Free Library will be a center of intellectual and social engagement for our community."
> —*Mern Sibley*

The year 2023 was another very active year for our Sawyer Free Library. Our temporary location at 21 Main Street in downtown Gloucester's West End opened to the public in October 2022 and will be our Library's location until the opening of the 2025 Sawyer Free Library. The Library staff worked hard to create a welcoming, accessible, and functional space where everyone can connect and learn, and easily find the resources and services they are looking for. Soon after the move, the Library resumed a full calendar of free events, programs, and services. Launching the innovative Young Gloucester Scientist's Club was a great opportunity for the Library to expand its current STEM programs and encourage students to explore their interests in the sciences. As part of Gloucester's 400+ celebration, the Library continued its commitment to preserving and showcasing our city's rich history, from presenting a series of local authors sharing insight into Gloucester history to completing its important work of digitizing and allowing public access to the *Gloucester Daily Times* archive dating back to 1900 (more to come in future!). Thank you to Library Director Jenny Benedict and all the Library staff for all they do to make the temporary Library a welcoming hub.

The past year has been a busy one for the new Library building project. Through the fall and into the early spring, the project completed all its planning, zoning, and Historic District Commission approvals with the City of Gloucester, finishing with the Special Permit for height in May. In September, we held a joyful groundbreaking celebration with more than 200 people in attendance. Then, in mid-October, the construction fence went up. With construction officially begun, the library will be sending out monthly construction updates, so stay tuned!

The Sawyer Free 2025 Library will be a center of intellectual and social engagement for our community. Our renovated and expanded Library will have a 100-seat Community Room, meeting rooms, study rooms, a makerspace, a teen room, a beautiful expanded children's room, an enhanced Matz Art Gallery, a Local

History Room, and ample space for our book collection as well. These beautiful, functional new spaces will allow us to realize our mission of fostering connections across our diverse community, powering imaginations, encouraging curiosity, and welcoming everyone.

The 2025 Sawyer Free Library is the first of its kind on Cape Ann—a next generation public building with advanced sustainability features, including an all-electric heating and cooling system powered by onsite renewable clean energy from solar. The 2025 Sawyer Free Library will serve as a demonstration project and an educational resource for our entire community to learn about climate change and sustainability.

In addition to the $9M Public Library Construction Grant, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners awarded the project a further $1M Pandemic Escalation Payment, thanks to the efforts of our local elected officials including Senator Bruce Tarr, Representative Ann Margaret Ferrante and Mayor Greg Verga. The Sawyer Free 2025 Campaign conducted by the Sawyer Library Foundation has raised $7.5M from individual and corporate donors, including room-naming contributions from the Institution for Savings, Bank Gloucester, Cape Ann Savings Bank, Gorton's of Gloucester, and Sudbay Motors. Funding for the project has also been provided by the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund, a program of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, administered through a collaborative arrangement between MassDevelopment and the Mass Cultural Council.

Though our construction is underway, our fundraising for the project is not finished. We need contributions from everyone to completely fund this beautiful new building. Please visit our website, sawyerfreelibrary.org for ways to give to the 2025 Sawyer Free Library campaign.

Thanks to all of you for your support of our Library..

**Marion H. Sibley**
**President, Board of Trustees**
Gloucester Lyceum and Sawyer Free Library

# SAUNDERS House

## Saunders House

As reported in previous years, the Saunders House is in the middle of a multi-year, incremental restoration and preservation project to provide the community with increased gallery and meeting spaces to complement the more extensive 2025 Sawyer Free Library renovation and expansion project.

The WPA Frank L. Stoddard/Howard Curtis murals in the central hall and on the stairway were cleaned and restored in 2022 by Mehlin Conservation. With the support of our first Community Preservation grant, Mehlin Conservation restored the Curtis murals in the Anderson Room on the second floor in 2023. The CPA grant, with generous funding support from the Bruce J. Anderson Fund of the Boston Foundation, also made possible the structural stabilization project to repair structural deficiencies of the building. Structures North provided the project drawings, and Murray Mason has completed the brick and timber work in the basement, which included the installation of a 28-foot locally sourced white oak timber along Dale Avenue supplied by the Natti family. The work of the Nattis is highlighted in detail in the Fall 2023 issue of Cape Ann Magazine.

A Community Development Block Grant has supported the architectural work of the Spencer Preservation Group to design the plans for a lift and new accessible restrooms. A second CPA grant will help fund an HVAC system in the Saunders House to match the all-electric heating and cooling systems of the 2025 Sawyer Free Library. Additional funding has been awarded for the HVAC system through a second Community Development Block Grant.

When all this work is completed, Saunders House will retain the House's historic treasures, including the artistically significant murals; the parlor with its paneling, molding, window shutters, and seats; the central grand hall; and the impressive staircase with spiral newel post and twisted balusters. With greater accessibility and better climate control, Saunders will be a more attractive and welcoming community space for the use and enjoyment of all Gloucester residents.

# SUSTAINABILITY
## Capital Project Spotlight

### 2025 Sawyer Free Library: Building A Sustainable Future

The 2025 Sawyer Free Library integrates three distinct structures with complete interior renovations of the Library's existing 1976 and 1913 buildings and a new 14,000 sq. ft. addition. The architecture of the Library will seamlessly blend the old and the new, creating a structure that harmoniously combines tradition with innovation.

As an LEED Gold building with advanced sustainability features, the Library will also serve as a leading example of actions that can be taken in designing and operating a building to protect climate and nature based on design principles that put people first. The 2025 Sawyer Free Library is the first of its kind on Cape Ann—a next generation public building with an all-electric heating and cooling system powered by renewable clean energy generated on site. The renovated and expanded Library will optimize natural resources and light, ensure excellent air quality, prioritize public safety, and promote accessibility for all community members.

**The 2025 Sawyer Free Library will be an innovative and welcoming space reflecting the essence of the city and where technology, community engagement, and a commitment to learning come together to meet the many needs of generations of users.**

# COMMUNITY Impact

## Welcoming Space for All

The Sawyer Free Library's major transition to temporary space at 21 Main Street resulted in a complete reconfiguration of public services and collections. When the Library reopened, many people were surprised—and delighted—by the bright and welcoming space and the broad selection of materials for every age group. Before long, our innovative staff found ways to arrange the mobile shelving to accommodate a wide variety of engaging programs onsite. SFL@21 Main has hosted drop in playtimes, musical storytimes, a baby sign language class, 4th and 5th grade class visits, a 3-day middle school summer camp and a bookmaking workshop for kids, as well as Device Advice, romance book clubs, local author talks, local musicians, a consumer health expert and even a kale chips cooking demonstration for adults.

**"This looks great! It's cozy and has a ton of books."**
**"I'm amazed by what the Library has done with this space!"**

## Celebrating Our Heritage

In celebration of Gloucester's 400+, the Library launched over sixty years (1900–1965) of archival editions of the *Gloucester Daily Times* in digital format through the Library's website. The keyword search feature provides easy access to people, places and events, making the resource highly useful to residents, visitors and researchers at archival institutions.

Interesting and notable facts and stories from the digital newspapers have appeared in "Today in Gloucester History" social media postings, 1623 Timeline: Cape Ann videos and the Discover Gloucester Visitor Guide. Genealogists researching their family histories have been particularly delighted by the stories that they have discovered.

**"I've spent the past week using the *Gloucester Daily Times* digital archive. I'm addicted!"**

# By the Numbers

**108,813** WEBSITE VISITS

**30,204** DIGITAL MATERIALS CIRCULATED +14%

**4,004** PUBLIC COMPUTER USES +48%

## Cultivating Young Scientists

The Young Gloucester Scientist's Club introduced 4th through 8th graders to Gloucester community scientists actively engaged in careers across a variety of STEM fields.

Through partnerships with community agencies, the Library took students on after school outings for place-based, in person learning with scientists about the ocean, whales, turtles, vernal ponds and trees. The hands-on approach to learning and building community connections empowered over 400 middle schoolers to think like citizen scientists by observing, questioning and experimenting with the world around them.

To extend student interest and learning, Library staff developed a collection of 26 Young Scientist STEM kits that provide fun and engaging at-home family activities and curated related books and online resources.

**"From the Whalemobile, Mass Oyster Project, Cape Ann Vernal Pond Team and Maritime Gloucester, we both have a renewed sense of hope for the work being done to restore, preserve, educate, and conserve. These experiences with YGSC have strengthened the sense of place for both of us, and helped to create a community of like-minded people for us to connect with."** *—S. and S. Lucas*

*The Young Gloucester Scientists Club is supported by federal funds provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC).*

# FINANCIAL Report

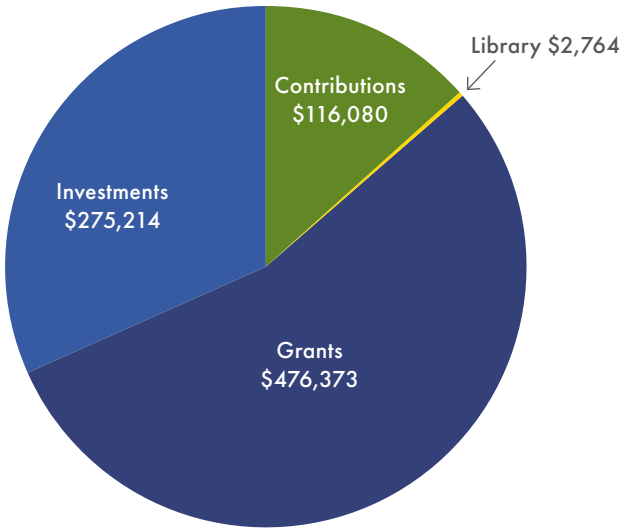
## CORPORATION PROFIT AND LOSS
**FY 2023: July 1–June 30**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Income** | |
| Contributions | $116,080 |
| Library | $2,764 |
| Grants | $476,373 |
| Investments | $275,214 |
| | **$870,431** |
| **Expenses** | |
| Member | $61,206 |
| Overhead & Depreciation | $216,129 |
| Operating | $218,455 |
| Board of Trustees | $176,038 |
| Grant to Foundation | $150,000 |
| | **$821,828** |
| **Net Income** | **$48,603** |

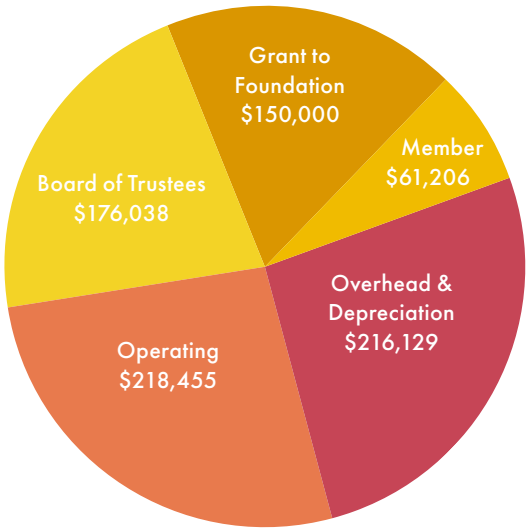
| | |
|---|---|
| **Corporate Liquid Assets** | |
| Balance on 6/30/2022 | $5,062,556 |
| Withdrawls | $(1,763,036) |
| Investment Return | $275,214 |
| **Balance as of 6/30/2023** | **$3,574,734** |

*The Library Corporation and the City of Gloucester jointly fund the Sawyer Free Library. The Corporation provided 36% of the Library's total expenses in FY 23.*

### Income Fiscal Year 2023




### Expenses Fiscal Year 2023



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**Joe Grella**
Board Treasurer, Capital Projects, Executive, Began 2018

**Anne-Marie Anderson**
Board Secretary, Governance Chair, Executive, Began 2018

**Geoff Bradford**
Saunders House Stewardship, Began 2023

**Peter Brau**
Financial Review, Capital Projects, Began 2019

**Jason Brisbois**
Corporate Communications, Began 2019

**John Day**
Saunders House Stewardship Chair, Executive, Began 2019

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Governance, Began 2022

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Saunders House Stewardship, Governance, Began 2021

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Capital Projects Chair, Governance, Executive, Began 2017

**Mayor Greg Verga**
ex officio 2021

**Library Director Jenny Benedict**
ex officio 2020

# OUR Staff

## Administration

**Jenny Benedict**
Library Director

**Beth Pocock**
Assistant Library Director

**Lisa Jonas**
Administrative Assistant

## Children's Services

**Christy Rosso**
Children's Librarian

**Marisa Hall**
Children's Librarian

**Justine Vitale**
Children's Supervisor

**Jessica Laurie**
Children's Library Assistant

## Customer & Community Services

**Helen Freeman**
Collections & Technical Services Librarian

**Julie Travers**
Local History Librarian

**Meg O'Neill**
Community Librarian

**Jenny Santomauro**
Community Librarian (July–Oct.)

**Leah Svensson**
Community Librarian (Jan.–June)
Library Assistant (July–Dec.)

**Joanne Dunajski**
Customer Experience Supervisor (Jan.–June)

**Alexis Morrill**
Library Assistant

**Katelyn Rivela**
Library Assistant

**Joe Wilkins**
Library Assistant (March–June)

## Digital Services

**Joella Allen**
Digital Services Librarian

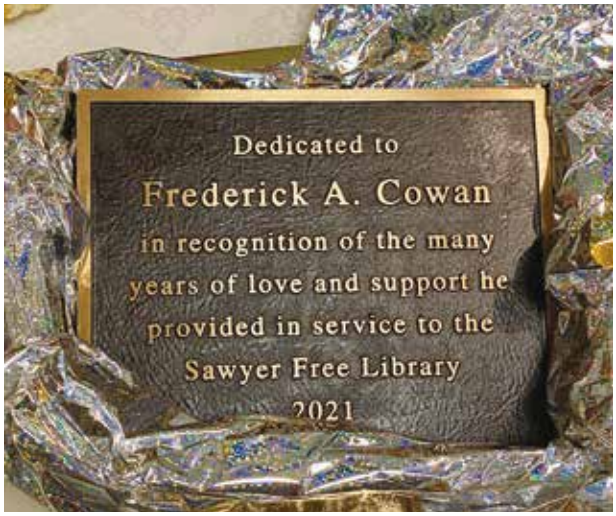
**Joanne Dunajski**
Public Technology Assistant (July–Dec.)

**Annalise Nakoneczny**
Public Technology Assistant (March–June)

## OUR MISSION

**To be a place of learning, innovation and creativity to nurture and strengthen the community.**

# OUR Volunteers

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Deborah Zaffiro
Keith Zellman
Margaret Ziering
Amy Zinti
Margaret Zorfas

“The very existence of libraries affords the best evidence that we may yet have hope for the future of man.”

*—T. S. ELIOT*

FRIENDS OF SAWYER

DISCOVER THE PAST, CREATE THE FUTURE

We provide support and funding for programs and activities that enhance the experience of visitors to the library. The interests of the community drive our efforts to deliver a wide range of programs, from speakers on local history to authors, and from discounted museums passes to scholarships for local art students.

We are grateful for our generous members whose dues, hard work, and dedication help us fulfill our mission. Please consider joining The Friends today and become a part of the Library’s enrichment of our community.

THE LYCEUM

DISCOVER THE PAST, CREATE THE FUTURE

The Lyceum continues to enrich the lives of Cape Ann residents through thought-provoking and intellectually rewarding programs in the arts, humanities, science, politics, business, and communication. We strive to select presenters from the extensive pool of talented local citizens, integrate feedback from every audience, and maintain the highest standards for each program.

## Ways to Give

SCAN ME

### Give today to our Annual Appeal

When you make a gift to the Sawyer Free Library’s Annual Appeal, you are supporting new programming and services that respond to the changing needs of our communities. Gifts, large and small, are a direct investment in the resources that enrich our fellow citizens of Gloucester’s quality of life. **sawyerfreelibrary.org/about/get-involved/donate/please-support-the-annual-appeal**

SCAN ME

### Invest in Our Future, Give to Capital Campaign

Our vision for the 2025 Sawyer Free Library is worthy of our heritage and our future. The reimagined building structures and interior layouts protect their historic feel while enhancing the Library as a place of creation and communication. It is a vision that fosters the values of place, belonging, and connection in the Gloucester community. **sawyerfreelibrary.org/building-renovation**

SAWYER FREE LIBRARY

Sawyer Free Library
21 Main Street
Gloucester, MA 01930

978-325-5500
www.sawyerfreelibrary.org