



**Report presented to the Board of Trustees
by Margaret Morrissey, Director
October and November, presented November 27, 2023**

Building

- Town Manager and former Interim Town Manager are working on an RFP for the ceilings throughout the building. Measurements of the area in need of refurbishment have been provided by DPW.
- DPW has trimmed the hedges and shrubs. The perimeter of the parking lot has been cut back. A request to have the trees trimmed has been submitted.
- DPW installed the smart TV in Mills Room 11/28
- The annual building inspection by the town's Fire Inspector and Building Inspector was conducted on 9/27. The emergency lighting was not working to capacity. Batteries were already on order but as they had not been installed the library failed inspection.
- Quarterly filter replacement completed by DPW 10/20.
- Globe Signs has completed the refurbishment of both of the JEL mahogany signs and they look well and attract positive comments 11/16.
- Since 6/14 we have been experiencing intermittent issues with the elevator that were eventually resolved. We have been advised that the elevator is at 'end of life' and we need to consider a modernization program. TK Elevator has bought US Ascension 2000 elevators and has developed a 'modernization plan'. \$120K is the quoted cost and any upgrades to the electrical service, fire service etc., will be additional costs. A request was submitted to the ARPA Committee for funding and I presented the request at the 8/31 meeting. The Town Manager is working on alternative sourcing for funding for the Modernization.
- State elevator inspection conducted – passed 11/6
- Water Department Backflow Preventer test conducted – passed
- MPC was awarded the contract for HVAC in FY24. The preventative maintenance was conducted on 11/22. Two issues were identified in the report and a quote for the work has been requested
- Mills room key not returned by Western Mass Labor Action 11/20. No response to calls.
- Alarm sensors vacuumed throughout the building 11/27.
- Working with Guardian Energy and the Economic Development Department, DPW and Town Manager on a grant for weatherization of parts of the building. A proposal has been received for the two attics and is being reviewed. There is attractive incentive being offered by MassSave.

Chess Park

- Rendering by Joe Coan, landscape architect has been posted to the website, the eNewsletter and a copy sent to the Town Manager 9/26. A formal request for guidance on proceeding with the fundraising for the chess park has been made to the Town Manager.

Children's Room

- Programs offered in addition to the regular Story Time (Wednesdays and Fridays), Lego Club (Tuesdays and Thursdays), Crafty Wednesdays, STEAM and others.
- *Young Scientists Spring II* programs part of YFCP has been very successful. *Wiggles and Giggles* another YFCP sponsored program will resume in September.
- Summer Reading program 2024: *Read Renew Repeat*. Children's Librarian attended the iRead online event on 11/1. Coupon codes and ideas were shared at this event.
- YFCP *Young Scientists* program for ages 3-6 for a 6-week session returned in October.
- YFCP *Wiggles and Giggles* concluded the fall 6-week session which was very well received. Each week 16 children participated (the maximum number allowed by the YFCP).
- YFCP *Wiggles and Giggles Littles* ages birth to 24 months and *Wiggles and Giggles* ages 2-5 will be returning in January (*Littles* is a new edition). Programs will be held on Tuesdays back-to-back sessions starting at 9:30am ending at 11:00 am.
- WCAC Friday monthly visits have resumed in October. Visits are scheduled through and included April 2024.
- The annual gingerbread house making began 11/27, sponsored by the Friends of JEL. There will be three sessions accommodating 75 participants. The other workshops will be Saturday 12/2 and Monday 12/4.

Collection Development

- A 35 mm film was found in the Holmes Ammidown History Room and Archive in a can with a brief note indicating it was of Sacred Heart Church. It was a professional movie "Exclusive Pictures Taken for the Strand Theatre by Central Motion Picture Co. C.L. Raimondo Photographer". The film was thought to be in poor condition and it was vacuumed and is not deteriorated. I have spoken with Anthony Labbate, Preservation Manager at the Eastman Museum. He has provided some images of what we can expect from the digital version He was encouraging about the results we could anticipate from this process. A 4k scan has been done which includes editing and color correction. The funding for the project has been provided by Cornerstone Bank (\$500) and Southbridge Historical Commission (\$400.25) and Savers Bank have offered to cover the remaining cost (\$3,148.75). We are waiting for the check to clear and the digital copy will be available. Please note: 1,000 ft of film was salvageable and 50 ft. was destroyed by rust and environmental issues.

FOJEL

- Group met on 10/16 and 11/13 at 2 pm.
- Holiday book sale is set up on the lower level.

- The Friends approved sponsorship of some of the programs: Dr Teresa Fava Thomas (Hamilton Woolen Mills), Mark Wagner (Native Links) and the SMHS Jazz Band and Chorus.
- Members of the Friends offered books for sale at the Cornerstone Bank all staff event
- Date set for sorting the donations in storage

Garden

- Trustee Bernadette Meade has tidied up the garden at the back of the building. Planning is underway for next year's garden. Bulbs have been ordered by Bernadette and she and her friend planted them.

Grants and Donations

- Worked with over twenty potential performers and presenters to work on Local Cultural Council grants. LCC deadline 10/17. The library has submitted 22 applications to have sponsorship for programs in 2024. Notification of the awards is not expected until January 2024.
- Participated in the Mass Cultural Council office hours on Historic Facilities
- The family of the late Jeanne Ayotte has selected the JEL Children's Room as the beneficiary of the memorial gifts. Ms. Ayotte was a beloved first grade teacher at Eastford Road School.
- A gift of \$1,500 was received from the Olive I. and Anthony A. Borgatti donor advised fund at the Greater Worcester Community Foundation. It is unrestricted.
- Dr. Teresa Fava Thomas presented the library with a copy of an indenture between Willard Sayles and Gardnier Brewer "This historical business contract was between the two prominent founders [Willard Sayles and Gardiner Brewer] of the Hamilton Woolen Company in Southbridge, Massachusetts. It allowed Mr. Sayles to leave stocks in the company to his daughter Catherine [Sayles] Brewer. Catherine and her family had just moved in to their home at World's End Farm in Hingham, Mass."

Local History

- Working with the MOTT (MA Office of Travel and Tourism) grant group to compile a database of historic buildings, as part of a series of walking tours that are being planned.

Long Range Plan

- Staff is focusing on increasing the number of new patrons and issuing new cards.

Museum Passes

- OSV has limited hours which are not compatible with our museum passes. Discounted entrance will resume 1/12/2024.

Outreach

- The Southbridge Academy staff arranged for a tour of the library on 10/19. There were eight middle school students who attended.
- Southbridge food share collection box dropped off, and will remain until the end of the year.

- Participated in a Zoom call to discuss a future Legislative Breakfast with a Southbridge only focus. 11/21
- Attended The Last Green Valley (TLGV) presentation 11/28 on the Headquarters Site Selection Study. Earlier in the year, I was interviewed by Museum Insights, the consulting team.

Programs

- AJ (Andre) Juarez is the artist of the month of October. The library has his paintings on display. There was a conversation that was recorded between the artist and poet Bill Tremblay discussing the paintings and poetry.
- Donald Beal, photographer is the November artist.
- A Facebook Live broadcast was conducted during the Meet and Greet 10/5, and 11/2 as well as the SCTV recorded the show for uploading to YouTube.
- Book Club discussed *The Hacienda* by Isabel Canez 10/18 and *Undocumented Americans* by Karla Cornejo Villavicencio
- *Flamenco Boston* presented a program with two dancers, a vocalist and guitarist on 10/18. The event was funded by an LCC from the Southbridge Cultural Council.
- *The Carlos Odria Trio* performance on 9/27 was well attended. The event was funded jointly by the Friends of JEL and the Olive I. and Anthony A. Borgatti donor advised fund at the Greater Worcester Community Foundation.
- *Afternoon Author Talk* with Paulette Stout 10/25 and Rob Racicot will present on 11/29
- *Tuesday Knitting* continues to attract participants from area towns and from CT too.
- *Chess on Mondays* starts at 5:15 pm. The group is growing in popularity. On 10/16 there were a large group from the YMCA after school program.
- Dr. Teresa Fava Thomas presented a program "*From Merino Mania to the Textile Strike of 1934: Hamilton Woolen.*" 11/16. The program was recorded for later upload to YouTube.

Reference

- During the month many research questions were responded to, mostly on genealogy and vital records. Assistance was also provided on Hamilton Woolen Co.

Safety and Security

- The intruder alarm has malfunctioned 11/18 and has been checked.
- A wellness check was requested for a patron, on 11/14. Officer Lutta responded. The patron was under the influence of a substance and returned again in that state. A no-trespass order was issued.

Staff

- Jillian Ciapocha started as the new Technical/Circulation Assistant 10/25 and Noah Wallace as the Circulation Assistant 11/1

Tax Abatement

- Some of the five program participants have already reached the 65 hours required to complete the program. Two of the participants continue to volunteer each week.

Technology

- Postings were made to social media
- Town Hall has a new, updated Facebook page 11/27.
- Website reviewed and extensive updates made.
- Mobile Beacon (hotspots) system has finally completed their upgrade and restored the function of being able to turn off the data to a device, in the event it does not get returned. Borrowing hotspots has become very popular with patrons. The library owns 5 devices. One has already been replaced. Staff is currently reviewing the procedure and loan rules as they are not circulating as we had hoped. Some folks are not returning the devices and we need to have stronger incentives so that they continue to circulate
- Another upgrade to ComCat system is scheduled. No interruption to service is anticipated.

Teen

- The monthly *Take and Make* craft featured *Papel Picado Banner* celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month and a 3D Paper Pumpkin.
- Teen Advisory Group (TAG) meeting

Town Manager Meeting

- Met with Jack Jovan, Town Manager 11/14 to discuss various matters regarding the library. This was the first formal meeting and I presented a list of issues that we will be reviewing and working on.

Training/Professional Development

- Circ. Staff participating in CWMARS training on Metabase system
- Worked with archivist student from Simmons University on a professional field experience 11/1 and

Trustees

- At the Trustees request, a Giving page has been added to the website.
- The board meetings have been entered on the JEL Calendar available on the website.
<http://engagedpatrons.org/EventsCalendar.cfm?SiteID=9899&thisMonth=9&thisYear=2024>

Services

- The library was closed on Friday 11/10 and 11/11 (as the day falls on Saturday) in honor of Veteran's Day.
- The library was also closed on 11/23 and 11/24 for Thanksgiving.