



CONCORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY CORPORATION

2016
ANNUAL
REPORT

CONCORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY CORPORATION

129 Main Street, Concord, MA 01742
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The Concord Free Public Library Corporation Board of Trustees is an active, engaged volunteer group that spends countless hours focused on honoring, preserving and improving the library.



From left: Lowell S. Smith, Diana Clymer, Jeffrey Adams, Cristina Coletta Blau, Richard Briggs, Jr., Sherry F. Litwack, O. Mario Favorito, and Frederick H. Lovejoy, Jr.

President’s Message

Dear Citizen of Concord,

We are pleased to send you this Annual Report from the Concord Free Public Library Corporation for fiscal year 2015-2016.

It has been a year of growth for the Library. The results of our Annual Appeal were 10% higher than our goal and we saw an increase in both dollar amount and number of donors. We are *extremely grateful* for this strong support of the Library since we believe it reflects donors’ perception of the Library as a significant cultural and intellectual center for people in our community.

We have seen significant increases in program attendance for all age groups, including adults, young adults, and children. The Library is buzzing with activity, and we are bursting at the seams. While people continue to use the Library in traditional ways, people are increasingly using the Library in new ways as well.

The Library Corporation contributed over \$600,000 to the Library in FY 2015-2016 for buildings and grounds; special collections exhibits, programs, and acquisitions; insurance; security; equipment; scholarships; and books and materials.

Our landmark collaboration with the Concord Museum on the Wyeth exhibitions was a smashing success no matter how you measure it. Having two significant Concord institutions partner in this way shined a light on our community and highlighted the extraordinary resources we have in our town. Of course, we are excited to have the five panels from *Men of Concord* back in the Thoreau Room and encourage you to enjoy them.

Some people question the relevance of libraries in today’s world. To the contrary, the role of libraries and the mission of *our* Library is as relevant and important as ever in a democratic society, eloquently expressed in John Palfrey’s book *BiblioTech: Why Libraries Matter More Than Ever in the Age of Google* (and *in person* when he visited our Library last year). Our long-range plan, informed by the public through community focus groups, reflects how *our* Library needs to evolve and grow to remain a vital community resource. We look forward to sharing our plans with you as they develop and will continue to include the town in our planning process.

Warmest wishes,

Sherry Forman Litwack
President, CFPL Corporation

Two benches were dedicated in memory of library staff members who passed away. The first was dedicated by her family for Claire Perduyn, a beloved children’s librarian at CFPL. The second was dedicated by family and friends for Martha Proctor, a cherished member of our community. These lovely tributes beckon passersby to sit and reflect, enjoy the weather, or read a book. We are so grateful to be the recipients of these gifts.



EXCEPTIONAL BOOKS THIS YEAR

Fiction

My Name Is Lucy Barton by Elizabeth Strout
The Nightingale by Kristin Hannah
The Summer Before the War by Helen Simonson
The Girls by Emma Cline
Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi

Non-Fiction

Life Animated: a Story of Sidekicks, Heroes, and Autism by Ron Suskind
When Breath Becomes Air by Paul Kalanithi
The Gene: An Intimate History by Siddhartha Mukherjee
The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humbolt’s New World by Andrea Wulf



Dr. Andrea Resciniti constructs this masterpiece every year. She has been doing this for the Library for over 20 years!

Williams Scholarships

The Library Corporation was able to once again offer scholarships to four Concord residents studying the arts.

These scholarships are possible as a result of a generous bequest by Charles H.S. Williams. Each year, the Library identifies qualified candidates for the scholarships through collaboration with the Concord Carlisle Scholarship Fund. For the 2016/2017 academic year, the Corporation will grant scholarships in the amount of \$2750, as follows: Meghan Garvey, Muhlenberg College; Timothy Collins, Dennison University; Elanna Honan, Boston University; and Helen Wargelin, Northwestern University.

The Library Corporation is proud to support these young people as they pursue their studies. We encourage high school seniors who reside in Concord or attend secondary school in Concord AND who are intending to pursue further study in the Arts after graduation to consider applying for the scholarship in the spring. Please visit the CC Scholarship Fund website for further information.

Why I give to the Library

Having gratefully utilized the library’s resources whether looking for current fiction or doing historical research, it is a joy to be able to help support the preservation and interpretation of the collections.
Judith Fichtenbaum

Library Director's Report

The Concord Free Public Library (CFPL) continues to thrive as we deliver programs and services in support of community interests and mission fulfillment. The past year's accomplishments include: the launch of a new logo and more consistent branding for library programs and services; increased collaboration with local organizations; and expanded programs for all ages, including more hands-on learning opportunities. Through the Full STEAM



Exploring the Library's secret fairy garden

Ahead Library Services & Technology Act (LSTA) grant, children participated in a Scarecrow Festival where they learned about the science and technology skills utilized by Town occupations; created imaginative fairy gardens; and explored the growing process through the raised garden beds at the Sudbury Road entrance. Building on the success of this program, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners has awarded CFPL a \$7,500 LSTA grant to expand the library's role as an educational play space for preschoolers.

In April, CFPL launched the exhibition, "From *Thoreau's Seasons* to *Men of Concord*: N.C. Wyeth Inspired", which ran concurrently with an exhibition at the Concord Museum of the 12 original panels created for the book by artist N.C. Wyeth. This collaboration was very meaningful for both organizations and drew in guests from a wide geographic area. Over the year, CFPL enjoyed additional community collaborations with the Concord Recreation Department, Umbrella Community Arts Center, the Rotary Club of Concord, and Concord's public and private schools.

Other popular programs included: a talk with John Palfrey, author of *BiblioTech: Why Libraries Matter More Than Ever in the Age of Google*; a new cookbook club where participants share and discuss their creations; a successful community reads series based on *The Martian* by Andy Weir; and a meditation/relaxation series in the Transcendental Alcove. CFPL also hosted a very successful summer reading series with Tai Chi on the lawn; summer concerts; a literary walk to Sleepy Hollow Cemetery with historian Jayne Gordon; and a panel discussion with Concord Olympians, moderated by *Boston Globe* Senior Sports Writer Kevin Paul Dupont, which honored Renee Garrelick's work as founder of the Concord Oral History Program. Exhibition opportunities have been expanded to include the Fowler Branch Library's community meeting room, where we displayed photographs of space taken by astronauts at the International Space Station and photographs of local athletes by sports photographer John Keklak. Additional services of note include the availability of free training courses via **Lynda.com** for Concord residents, and the opportunity to borrow wireless hotspots and/or a Starblast Telescope.

Please subscribe to the library's social media accounts and online newsletter in order to receive progress updates throughout the year. Thank you to my colleagues at the Concord Free Public Library for their dedicated service to the Concord community, to the Library Corporation Trustees, Friends of the Concord Free Public Library, and our many volunteers and supporters.

Kerry Cronin, Library Director



Why I give to the Library

We support the Library as the heart and soul of our community. Special Collections, Poetry Readings, computer access, teen programming, the New Fiction shelf, the gorgeous Reading Room: the CFPL is a welcoming and vibrant intellectual and cultural center reflecting the values of Concord and its rich heritage.
Lissa & Carter Winstanley



Fencing demonstration by Marx Fencing Studio of Concord

THE FRIENDS OF THE CONCORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Friends of the Concord Free Public Library is a nonprofit organization of more than 1,200 members. We serve the Library and the community in a number of ways:

- We fund book and media purchases, special programs, and Library staff professional development.
- We develop and present free programs at the Library, including concerts, readings, and film series, as well as programs for children and youth.
- We do community outreach that includes providing donated books to Open Table and Concord Prison Outreach and other organizations.

In 2015 we presented the annual Ruth Ratner Miller Award for Excellence in American History to Robert Dallek, an acclaimed historian and author of a landmark biography of *President John F. Kennedy, An Unfinished Life*. Our gifts and programs are funded through memberships, sales of donated books, and sales of *Historic Concord*, a book published by the Friends. Books are for sale every day on the Friends Book Sale shelves at the Main and Fowler Libraries.

The Friends' Holiday and June book sales are our biggest sources of revenue, and are also much-loved community events. The Holiday Sale in December 2015 raised more than \$8,600, and the June 2016 Book Sale on the Lawn raised a record-breaking \$22,663.75! The heart and soul of this operation is a team of enthusiastic volunteers who sort the many volumes donated to the Friends and prepare them for the book sales all year long. If you'd like to donate books, see the reference librarian at the Main Library.



Origami workshop for children

To learn more, or to join the Friends



cfplfriends.org



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SPECIAL MUSIC SERIES

One of the musical gems of Concord's cultural scene is the "Music from the Library" chamber music series of free concerts, sponsored by the Friends of the Library. In 2017, "Music from the Library" will celebrate its 20th anniversary season of presenting world-class artists in the intimate acoustics of the rotunda at the Main Library. Past artists have included Russell Sherman, Yehudi Wyner, Eliot Fisk, Anthony Deane Griffey, Anonymous 4, Stephen Drury, and Matt Haimovitz, to name just a few.

The 20th anniversary season will showcase Greater Boston area artists, opening on Saturday, February 11 with The Borromeo String Quartet, followed on March 11 by pianist Anastasia Seifetdinova, and concluding on Saturday, April 8 with the Eric Hofbauer Quintet. All concerts begin at 7:30 p.m. Each concert is followed by a reception during which audience members can meet the artists. Advance reservations, beginning two weeks prior to each concert, can be made at **concordlibrary.org**.

Special Collections Report

For the William Munroe Special Collections, much of 2015/2016 was devoted to gallery exhibitions and related programming. The formal opening of “*The Reality Which Surround Us*”: Thoreau’s Landscape in Survey, Text, and Image was celebrated on October 16, 2015. More than one hundred guests enjoyed a festive reception, the performance of piano and vocal music from the Library’s collection of Sophia Thoreau’s sheet music, and a lecture by geologist, author, and academic Robert M. Thorson.

Beginning in April 2016, the exhibition “From *Thoreau’s Seasons* to *Men of Concord*: N. C. Wyeth Inspired” — two years in the making as part of a collaboration with the Concord Museum—drew unprecedented publicity and foot traffic to the Art Gallery. It provided opportunity to design a rich series of accompanying programs, and to build upon the CFPL’s relationship with a sister Concord institution.

Staff Assistant Constance Manoli-Skocay facilitated meetings of the art jury responsible for selecting work to fill the gallery during times when Special Collections was not using the space. She also researched and installed a series of engaging small displays in the foyer of 129 Main Street, outside Special Collections, and at the Fowler branch. In addition, Project Archivist Janaya Kizzie planned an exhibit of West Concord postcards. This exhibit formed the capstone to a project to digitize the Concord Postcard Collection. Along with the Gourgas family papers, the Robbins-Conover-Mills documentation of the history and use of Herbert Wendell Gleason’s photographic negatives, and addenda to the records of the Kalmia Woods Corporation, this is one of four collections that Janaya Kizzie processed this year. These special projects were funded by appropriations by the Library Corporation to the Town of Concord.

In addition to planning events related to our two major gallery exhibitions, staff arranged a variety of other programs to promote engagement with and understanding of Special Collections holdings. In July 2015, Curator Leslie Wilson spoke to attendees of the Thoreau Society Annual Gathering about Thoreauvian Alfred Winslow Hosmer, and to registrants in a teachers’ seminar on Transcendentalism and reform (funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and led by Dr. Sandra Harbert Petrulionis). She and Manoli-Skocay also facilitated multiple individual research sessions for seminar attendees.

In September 2015, Special Collections hosted a lecture by James Schlett, author of *A Not Too Greatly Changed Eden: The Story of the Philosophers’ Camp in the Adirondacks*—a book for which the Library’s William James Stillman painting *The Philosophers’ Camp in the Adirondacks* (1858) provided key documentation.

Over the course of the year, we assisted Concord Academy classes and CCHS “Rivers and Revolutions” students with research projects. Wilson presented to students from Calvin College and Emerson College; a Wayland book group; Concord-Carlisle Adult and Continuing Education classes; the Library’s monthly Tuesday book group; the Concord Rotary Club; a group of Beecher family members; CFPL staff members; and the Concord Retired Men’s Club. Collectively, staff responded to 1,765 research inquiries in 2015/2016.

Technical Associate Robert Hall made a significant dent in our cataloging backlog of Concord Pamphlet, Vault Collection, and Concord Authors Collection acquisitions. Staff and interns from the Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science processed and described a total of fifteen archival and manuscript collections. Wilson and Manoli-Skocay also participated in creating new documentation in the form of nine oral history interviews. Hall mounted the results from each of these projects on the Special Collections pages of concordlibrary.org.

Finally, Leslie Wilson and collaborator Joel Myerson (Carolina Distinguished Professor of American Literature, Emeritus, University of South Carolina) are delighted to have found a publisher for their Emerson iconography. Planning began for both a March-May 2017 Emerson portraits exhibition to celebrate publication of the iconography, and a July-October 2017 exhibition to mark the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of Henry David Thoreau.

Why I give to the Library

I never cease to be amazed at what a great treasure is the Concord Free Public Library. Special Collections is a first-rate archive whose rich resources I have been exploring for the last four decades in my academic career. The general collection is spectacular in its offerings of current literature and nonfiction; and now we can bring our grandchildren to the children’s room, as we once did our sons and daughter. Add to this the many talks, poetry readings, concerts, and exhibitions! We are so lucky to have such an extraordinary cultural resource so close at hand and at the heart of the community.

Robert A. Gross

Digitizing the Concord Postcard Collection

The Library’s Concord Postcard Collection, a long-hidden part of the William Munroe Special Collections, has taken center stage following a six-month digitization and processing project. A small collection in size, (it would fit easily into a couple of shoeboxes), the postcard collection covers over a century of Concord history in images and brief but heartfelt letters to friends and family. Among the many images of Concord in the collection, there are rare photographs of buildings no longer extant, famous residents, and moments in town history thought undocumented. Now in digital form, the collection of over 850 postcards brings an ephemeral aspect of Concord life to the world.

Like Instagram and Twitter today, postcards were a favored way to send brief messages and share pleasing images. Innovated by the German printing industry in the 1860s, the picture postcard gained popularity in the United States at the World Columbian Expedition in 1893. Concord’s appeal as an idyllic landscape and historic destination led to the creation of postcards by printers and photographers from around the world. Many of these postcards made their way to Special Collections over the years, resulting in a compendium of engaging historical imagery of the town.

Project Archivist Janaya Kizzie began the complex process of making the collection accessible in the fall of 2015. Kizzie had to develop a plan, scan hundreds of images, match the images to the data that would make the images searchable, and mount them on the library website. Kizzie and Robert Hall, Special Collections’ Technical Services Associate, worked together to create a series of Concord Postcard Collection webpages [<http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/postcards/index.html>] that acts both as a research tool and an exhibit. Each page is easy to use and accessible by most devices, while providing the level of detail that invites and enriches research and exploration. Most importantly, the public is able to learn about Concord’s history in a relatable, visually appealing format.

WYETH REPORT

“From *Thoreau’s Seasons* to *Men of Concord*: N. C. Wyeth Inspired” was one of two dovetailing exhibitions developed as part of a collaboration between CFPL and the Concord Museum. The preparation of the exhibition required the skills of many people over the better part of two years. Focusing on the pull between N. C. Wyeth’s creative impulses and the demands of the marketplace, the Library’s exhibition provided the contextual background behind the 1936 publication of *Men of Concord* (selections from Thoreau’s journal with illustrations from paintings by Wyeth and unattributed pen-and-ink sketches by Wyeth’s teen-aged son Andrew), while the Museum’s told the artistic story behind the book. The Library and Museum each published a catalog, and offered a slate of programs to accompany their exhibitions.

The Library Corporation lent the Museum the five N. C. Wyeth *Men of Concord* panels that hang in the Thoreau Room and ceremonially sent them on their way with a party in late March. CFPL Corporation President Sherry Forman Litwack and Curator Leslie Wilson spoke at the send-off event. The audience at the April 15 Library exhibition opening was more than two hundred and fifty strong. Concordian Joseph Coolidge Wheeler delivered moving remarks about Caleb Kendall Wheeler, the brother in whose memory the first *Men of Concord* panel was given to the Library. Elliot Bostwick Davis, John Moors Cabot Chair in the Arts of the Americas Department at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, then spoke about the influence of Thoreau on the art of three generations of Wyeths—N.C., Andrew, and Jamie.

On June 5, the Library hosted a lively panel discussion about Wyeth, Thoreau, and *Men of Concord*. The panel consisted of Wyeth biographer David Michaelis, Thoreauvian Sandra Harbert Petrulionis, and art historian Alan Wallach, and was moderated by Leslie Wilson. On September 10, artist and illustrator Ilse Plume delivered a talk titled “Art Inspired, Art Commissioned.” Leslie Wilson offered gallery tours throughout the run of the exhibition and provided an introduction to it in a video that was posted on YouTube, along with videos of the exhibit opening and panel discussion.

Cocktail party guests at the send-off of the *Men of Concord* paintings
© Emily Law Photography



The Annual Fund

As stewards of the Library, the Library Corporation owns the buildings, grounds, and special collections and is responsible for preserving, maintaining, protecting, and improving these invaluable town assets. Your gift to the Annual Fund supports the Library Corporation in this important mission.

Why I give to the Library

Concord is a town with many treasures — historic, literary, architectural, and natural resources. For me the greatest treasure is the Concord Free Public Library and its Fowler branch. It was created by the generosity of William Munroe who built the building and initiated its endowment. Further generosity built the Fowler branch financed in memory of Loring Fowler by his daughter. Through the years the Library Trustees have taken leadership in expanding the Library to meet the needs of citizens for more library space and for access to modern technologies.

Scholars from around the world come to use the Library's treasures in its Special Collections. But more important to me is that the books, music, art, and internet access at the Library can be enjoyed by Concord citizens of all ages. Programs from preschool story hours to scholarly displays in the gallery and musical performances all enrich the lives of Concord citizens.

Barbara Anthony

Why I give to the Library

The Monument Group Companies choose to support the Concord Free Public Library so that our employees may benefit from having access to a world class library.

Byron E. Woodman, Jr.

Why I give to the Library

We traditionally think of libraries as quiet places — and certainly Concord's two libraries offer peaceful places for reading, research, and learning. But our library also hums with the sounds of community, of music, of world renowned speakers, of the engaged voices of children and the conversation of old friends. It's a busy place, and a welcoming place.

Sally Schnitzer

The Annual Fund helps to sustain CFPL by supporting our operating budget. It is made up of hundreds of donations of all sizes that combine to make a direct investment in the everyday functioning of our library. It remains, year after year, a significant source of revenue for the Library Corporation.

Each year, the Annual Fund helps make amazing things happen for our community. The gifts directly support the purchase of new books, updates to technology, Special Collections, exhibits, the preservation and care of the buildings and grounds, scholarships, and much more!

We are so grateful to our outstanding supporters.

Thank you!

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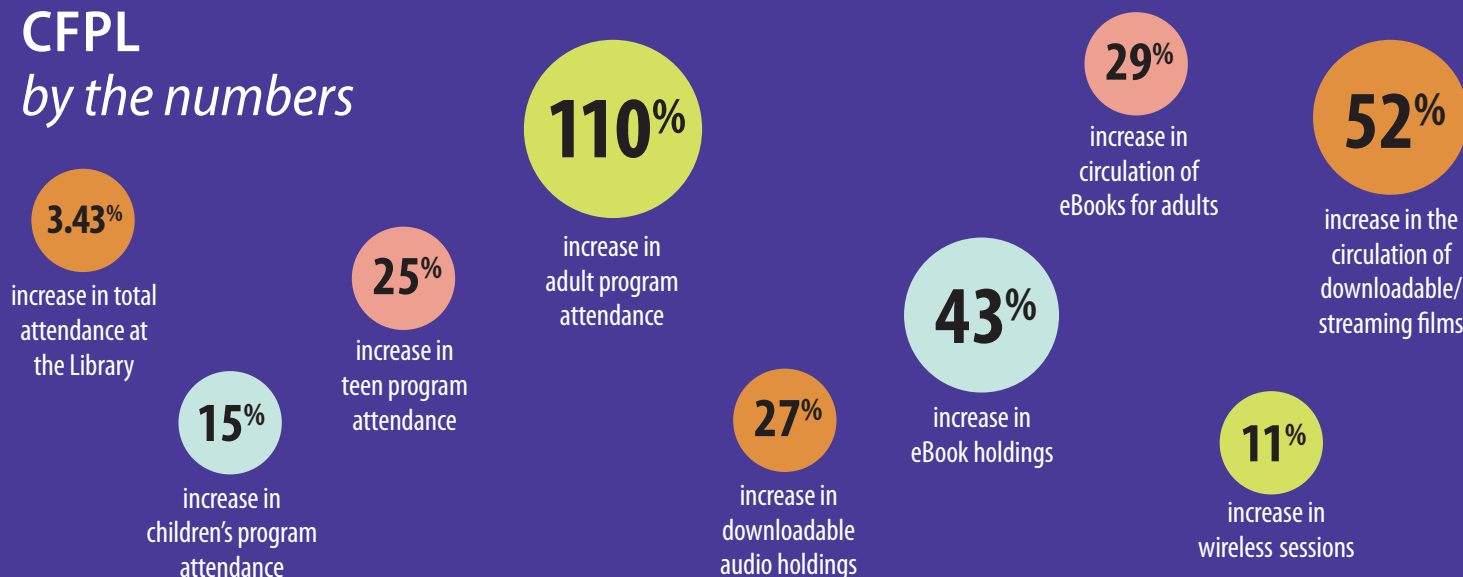
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