

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Bellingham Public Library

LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NICOLE BUCKLEY, CHAIR
CAROL BIRD, VICE CHAIR
MACALA LAMOUR, SECRETARY
SUZANNE GARTEN
LAURA HOWARD

"The public library is a center
of public happiness
first, of public
education next."

John Cotton Dana

Library Staff

Bernadette Rivard
Director

Cecily Christensen
Reference Librarian

Steven Fowler
Senior Youth Services
Librarian

Amanda Maclure
Public Services & Teen
Librarian

Pauline Krajcik
Anne Kuncewicz
Barbara Pacak
Library Technicians

Carol Bonnell
Library & Accounts
Payable Assistant

Diane Nelson
Library & Children's
Assistant

Melissa Denham
Renee Milliken
Ashalena Rua
Jane Vichi
Library Assistants

Jim Maher
Custodian



Bellingham Public Library

THE LIBRARY IS BACK!

Honorable Members of the Select Board and the Bellingham Community:

In 2022 all of the services the library provided to the community before the pandemic were fully restored!

Service	Increase between 2021 and 2022
Days Open	18%
Hours Open	29%
Items Checked Out	17%
Library Visitors	71%
Museum Pass Use	27%
Meeting Room Use	96%
Reference Questions	85%
Internet Use	146%
Adult Programs	43%
Adult Program Attendance	20%
Children's Programs	46%
Children's Program Attendance	45%
Teen Programs	100%
Teen Program Attendance	112%
EBook Checkouts	6%



We are thrilled that use of library services is continuing to increase and are hopeful that 2023 will restore our usage statistics to pre-pandemic levels. With the continued support of the town and library community, we are confident this hope will become a reality!



FY2021-FY2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

As we get back on track, we are ticking off some of the plans we made in 2020 for the upcoming 5 years. Some of these projects are still impacted by the remnants of the pandemic, but we are happy to be moving forward on others!

Completed Facility Projects

- In the late spring, aluminum cased windows – that open – were added to selected areas of the building to improve air flow.
- Air filtration units were added to the four rooms that have closing doors.
- The exterior of the library building was painted in the fall. When the building was painted, it was recommended that we replace the remainder of the 30+ year old windows to make them maintenance free. This project will be added to the next plan (FY2026 to FY2030).
- Updated electronic controls were added to our HVAC system as the controls we had were no longer supported or able to be maintained.

In-Process Facility Projects

- Outdoor space for children's programming – funds were approved at November 2022 Town Meeting.

Pending Facility Projects

- Paint lofted interior spaces
- Increase storage space – install shed in area outside Teen Room
- Upgrade lighting
- Patio outside Teen Room
- Renovate Restrooms

Programs & Services Plans for 2023

- Expand school outreach
- Start Homework Club



LIBRARY PROGRAMS

We offered 934 library programs during the 2022 calendar year that were attended by 16,162 people!

Adult Programs

537 adults attended 73 programs including: Yoga, Music Concerts, and Craft & Art Programs. Our most unique program this year, the Mass. Memories Road Show, was a collaboration with the Healey Library at UMass Boston.

In November, 49 Bellingham history lovers came to the library with 169 photos of Bellingham people, locales and events to tell the story of the photos and have them digitized for an online archive that will soon be added to photos from other communities at openarchives.umb.edu. This program was made possible by a cadre of volunteers (pictured to the right).



In addition, the library hosted the closing of the Bellingham 300th Anniversary Time Capsule in August. This event was delayed from the spring of 2020.

Teen Programs

1,990 teens attended 156 programs at the library in 2022. These teens participated in our after-school program. From 2 to 5 pm each school day, dozens of 7th to 12th graders find their place in the library Teen Room to do homework, play videogames, make crafts, and hang out with their friends.



LIBRARY PROGRAMS

Children's Programs

13,635 children and caregivers attended 705 programs for preschool children and school kids in kindergarten through 6th grade.

Our regular weekly programs included: ASK (After School Kids), Alphabits, Baby Time, Chess Club, Film Fridays, Adult/Child Book Club, Graphic Novel Book Club, and Ring a Ding.

Special programs included: Dr. Seuss Party, Camp Millionaire, Krafty Kids, Mr. Vinny the Bubble Guy, Halloween Haunted Houses, and more!

This also includes programs that were recorded and viewed on YouTube.





SERVICES

Partners

The library partners with a number of organizations in Massachusetts to provide expanded library services to our residents. These include:

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) – The MBLC is the state agency that certifies libraries and ensures state standards for library services are being met. Public libraries are required to meet certain budget and service levels each year in order to maintain certification and receive State Aid. By maintaining certification last year, the library will receive **over \$30,000** in State Aid in FY2023. For the past two years, due to decreased funding during the pandemic, the library applied for, and was granted, a waiver of State Aid requirements. Due to increased funding from the town, in 2022 the library met all state requirements.

Central/Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing (CWMARS) – CWMARS is our library network. Our annual dues to the network fund the shared library patron and item database, a staff and public computer network, our Wi-Fi network, and access to numerous electronic resources, including eBooks.

Massachusetts Library System (MLS) – The library is a member of MLS, which provides delivery of items between Massachusetts libraries, as well as access to online resources. They also provide continuing education for library staff.

In 2022, nearly **16,000 items** (books, DVDs, audiobooks, and more) were borrowed from our partner libraries through MLS delivery. In addition, we sent out over **18,000 items**.



SERVICES

Electronic Resources

The library continues to expand resources that people can access online. In 2022 we offered access to the following resources, by category:

- **Audiobooks** – **Hoopla** Audiobooks, **Overdrive** Audiobooks through the Libby App
- **Business Resources** – **A to Z Databases** Reference, Research, Marketing, Mailing Lists/Sales Leads and Job-Search Database
- **eBooks** – **Hoopla** eBooks, **Overdrive** eBooks through the Libby App
- **Genealogy Resources** – **Ancestry.com** Library Edition, **Fold 3** Military Records, **Heritage Quest**
- **Job & Career Resources** – **Learning Express Library Job & Career Accelerator** – build resumes, find a career match, and more
- **Journal & Magazine Articles** – **Gale Databases** provides reliable information on topics including biographies, history, business and health
- **Language Learning Resources** – from **Mango Languages**, **Lingo Lite** and **Transparent Language** Online
- **Magazines** – **Flipster** Magazines, **Hoopla** Magazines, **Overdrive** Magazines through the Libby App
- **Movies & TV** – **Hoopla** Movies & TV, **IndieFlix** Independent Films, **Kanopy** Streaming Video, **Qello** Concert Films & Documentaries
- **Music** – **Freegal** Sony Music Library, **Hoopla** Music
- **Newspaper Archives** – Access archives of the **Boston Globe** from 1980 to the present and the **New York Times** from 1985 to the present
- **Online Courses & Tutorials** – **Craftsy.com** Online Craft Classes, **250 Great Courses**, Library Tutorials through **Niche Academy**, Online Courses on topics from Accounting to Yoga from **Universal Class**
- **Tutoring Services** – Brainfuse's **HelpNow** Tutoring & Homework Help

Access all of these resources at our website:

<https://www.bellinghamma.org/library/online-resources>



STAFF & LEADERSHIP CHANGES

In August, the library welcomed **Melissa Denham** as our newest Library Assistant. Melissa interned at the library to complete her MLS degree in the summer of 2022 and was hired when a position opened soon after the summer ended. Melissa has been offering children's programs, including a very well-received Sensory Story Time since the fall of 2022.

In November, **Steven Fowler, "Mr. Steve,"** our beloved Children's Librarian moved to South Carolina with his family. At his Farewell Celebration, Bernadette Rivard, Library Director remarked: "The past 11+ years have been times of great growth for the Bellingham Library, and we are so fortunate to have had you as a team member during this time. The



library's children's programming has grown by leaps and bounds due to your talent and dedication to this community. You will be missed by the children, your co-workers, and the entire community. You are Bellingham's own Mr. Rogers – you have a rapport with children that few can match." In the photo above, Bernadette presents Steve with the "Key to the Library."

In December of 2022, **Macala Lamour** was appointed to the Library Board of Trustees to fill a seat that had been empty for over a year. Macala is a homeschooling parent who brings to the board a unique perspective on library services.

At the time of publication, the Library Trustees have hired a new Children's Librarian to serve Bellingham's children in 2023 and beyond!



COMING IN 2023!

The library is going fee free!

In the fall of 2022, following the recommendation and lead of our library network, CWMARS, the Library Board of Trustees voted to join the over 150 other libraries in our network to no longer charge fines or late fees on books, DVDs, audiobooks, magazines, and other general circulating materials. The exception to this policy is any equipment that can be reserved and returnable museum passes.



Story Walk®

In collaboration with the Town Common Trustees, the Bellingham Library will be installing a professional StoryWalk® on the Town Common. The StoryWalk® will begin on the Mechanic Street entrance to the Common. There will be 19 panels set up on posts on the exterior walkway of the Common, featuring picture books, town history or any other content that is suitable for the season or event taking place on the Common.

Bellingham is Open for Business!

The library has been granted a \$10,000 Library Services & Technology Act (LSTA) grant from the Institute of Museum & Library Services (IMLS). The grant is administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). The grant will enable the library to offer programs and services to local businesses, including training, workshops and a one-stop shopping place on our website for business information.

