# Brewster Ladies' Library



Photo by Gabrielle Griffis

2022 - 2023 Annual Report

## **Brewster Ladies' Library Association President's Report**

### JOAN PERNICE



Joan Pernice, Past President

This year has truly been an outstanding one for the Brewster Ladies' Library Association. The energy, creativity and optimism of the Board of Directors, volunteers, and Association members was evident in many successful events and expanded programs.

Coming out of Covid, with the library once again being fully open and programs being scheduled and widely attended, we are seeing a great enthusiasm for our library and what it offers the community. The adult and children's staff have offered an incredible variety and number of programs, and the community has responded enthusiastically to being a part of this creative and vital town institution.

It has been an exciting year for the Membership Committee. Through the work of the Committee, chaired by Susan Stewart, membership in the Association is at the highest level in many years with almost 600 members.

We have made July our official membership month. Our members were treated to free ice cream on the members-only opening day of the Book Sale. During the first couple of weeks of the Book Sale, a table was set up outside the Book Sale entrance to promote memberships and make people aware of how important membership is to our Library. This also provided a wonderful opportunity to meet members and hear from them about what the library means to them.

We sponsored a membership breakfast in May with various special drawings and gift cards to town businesses. We continue to offer a discount on Library Store items to members. And of course, members have the first opportunity to reserve tickets to our Nickerson Lecture program in the Fall.

In short, our membership is a reflection of the strength of our library. We look forward to seeing it continue to grow, attracting even more members as we provide them with excellent service and programming to meet the needs of a diverse and ever-growing community.

Membership dues and donations contribute to the operating budget of the Library and give financial support to programs such as the Sunday Concert series offered through the fall and winter months.

These Sunday Concerts were at full capacity and thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. Because of this overwhelming response, the Board of Directors approved an increase to the concert budget so that additional concerts could be offered and the honorarium to guest musicians increased.

The annual Book Sale continues to be a significant fundraiser for the Library and a community event much anticipated by many patrons and town visitors. In fact, we hear that many visitors plan their vacations around the dates of our Book Sale! This year, summer 2022, over \$30,000 was raised to support the Library's operating costs. With gratitude for all their hard work, we thank the volunteers led by Hannah Larson who put in innumerable hours preparing for the Book Sale and assisting shoppers.

## **Brewster Ladies' Library Association President's Report**

Our "Little Free Libraries" continue to be a huge success throughout the summer months. These brightly decorated "take a book" bookcases are located at Paines Creek Beach, Breakwater Beach, Crosby's Landing, Drummer Boy Park, Nickerson State Park, and Captains Golf Course.

Ross Gorman and his group of volunteers ensure each week that these little libraries are stocked with books for children and adults. What a wonderful opportunity for the library to extend its resources to a wider community and promote both reading enjoyment and literacy skills for young children. For the volunteers this is indeed a labor of love that they have graciously undertaken for the past three summers. They are an outstanding example of volunteerism.

At last year's annual meeting, I had the privilege of introducing a new program developed and offered by the Board and Association volunteers—the Discovery and Enrichment Program. This program, based upon a life-long learning model, offers lectures on topics chosen for their relevance, current affairs, and thought-provoking energy. This year the Committee, chaired by Pat Meservey, offered a selection of pertinent and highly acclaimed programs. There is a review of the Discovery and Enrichment Program in another section of this annual report.

The Fall of 2022 was a special year for our annual Nickerson Lecture which we were able to resume after a hiatus due to the pandemic. We re-started this annual event with the award-winning and nationally acclaimed journalist Bob Woodward as our speaker. The demand was so great that we added a second talk, and "sold out" both events. Over 700 patrons participated in the lecture and book signing. We were delighted to attract a high-profile, contemporary journalist and he met every expectation. It was a spectacular event.

For the Fall of 2023, we were equally delighted to welcome Geraldine Brooks, a Pulitzer Prize winner for fiction, to our community. Ms. Brooks resides both on Martha's Vineyard and Australia and is well known for her immersive, character-driven historical novels. The event took place on Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup>.

We are grateful for the financial support of Frances Mapes Nickerson whose bequest to the Library supports this opportunity to bring exciting presenters to our community.

During 2021 the BLLA Board of Directors convened a committee to develop and implement a BLLA Scholarship Program whereby graduating Brewster high school students going on to higher education would be eligible for a scholarship award. Last year was the first year of the BLLA Scholarship Program with one award. We are now pleased to be able to build upon this program and fund two scholarship awards.

You will find a report of the Scholarship Committee and profiles of the two awardees in another section of this annual report.

In April, we welcomed Brittany Taylor as the new Director of the Brewster Ladies Library. Her experience, energy, and leadership are already proving to be a great addition to the Library.

It has been a great honor to serve as President these last three years. I am extremely pleased to be able to pass this on to Lisa Perkins. The Board of Directors of the Association has exciting and challenging opportunities ahead for the library. In collaboration with our new Director and incredible staff we know great things will happen!

## **Library Director's Report**

### **BRITTANY TAYLOR**



Brittany Taylor Library Director

I am thrilled to present my first annual report as the Director of the Brewster Ladies' Library. While my own tenure spans only six short months, this report, thanks to help from the Library's superb staff, touches on events throughout the 2022-2023 fiscal year. Given the already exceptional achievements of the last year, I am incredibly excited for what the coming year will bring to the Library.

Rebounding from COVID-related disruptions and navigating post-pandemic life in fiscal year 2023, the Brewster Ladies' Library has continued to serve as an innovative community anchor for the town of Brewster. With extensive programming, diverse offerings, and vibrant gathering spaces for community members and visitors alike, the

Brewster Ladies' Library is proud to offer a safe space with access to information, services, and community connection for all.

### The Library and Its People

The migration to a new Integrated Library System (ILS) called Koha, with Bywater Solutions providing support and hosting services, served as the biggest change for BLL in fiscal year 2022 - 2023. This open source management system that enables all of the Library's operations, from cataloging to checking out a book, promises to provide greater flexibility at a lower cost with Bywater providing more comprehensive implementation, maintenance, and support. In conjunction with Koha, the Brewster Ladies' Library, along with the rest of the CLAMS network, has introduced Aspen Discovery, an integrated public catalog that seamlessly combines standard item records with all formats, e-content, and more in a way that both provides a better user experience and improves access to all of the Library's offerings.

The Brewster Ladies' Library also welcomed several new staff members to its team in 2022/2023. In August 2022, Joanne Clingan joined the Library's Circulation Department as Assistant Circulation Manager. With 15 years of library experience, Joanne has brought excellent customer service and cataloging skills to Brewster and has worked to enhance a Memory Support Collection that contains books, guides, activities, music, videos, and other resources dedicated to helping individuals suffering from memory loss and their caregivers. In April 2023, the Library welcomed new Director Brittany Taylor, who took over the helm after Cindy St. Amour's retirement. Finally, the Library was very pleased to add two wonderful substitutes, Patrick DePratti and Sharon Shaw, to its roster.

#### **Programming & Services**

Libraries have been at the forefront of national issues, serving as the battleground for book bans, censorship, and other challenges to intellectual freedoms. Although the Brewster Ladies' Library did not receive any formal challenges to its collection or its services, our Library has worked to remain a safe space and to protect the right to read for all of its patrons. Highlights in this effort include the launch of an intergenerational Banned Book Club and the development of a Collection

# **Library Director's Report**

Development Policy, a document that explains the Library's collections and its procedures regarding the selection, acquisition, deselection, and challenges of library materials. Aside from intellectual freedom considerations, the Library also offered an impressive array of just over 350 programs for all audiences that helped foster a strong sense of community and provide both entertaining and informational events for the Library's many patrons. BLL saw the return of pre-pandemic programming staples such as Toddler Town, the Lego Club, the After School Maker's Club, the Halloween Parade, the Winter Concert Series, and much more. The Library was particularly proud of its sustainability-focused endeavors, which included a regular Fix-It Clinic, a monthly Boomerang Bag Sewing Bee Program, and outreach at the Eco Expo, a mini trade show focusing on ecological and economic sustainability at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History.

In addition, Brewster Ladies' Library had a successful Summer Reading Program for both children and adults, with 242 children and 102 adults registering and receiving a free book thanks to the support of the Brewster Ladies' Library Association. BLL also received a great response from the return of its One Book, One Town, which chose Agatha Christie's Crooked House as its subject. This event, spearheaded by Adult Services and Reference Librarian Devon Evans, featured a book discussion, movie matinee for the film based on the novel, and a wildly popular Murder Mystery Party.

Finally, the Brewster Ladies' Library is excited to announce the digitization of the historic collection with 71 titles being cataloged, transported to Boston Public Library, and processed by the Digital Commonwealth. In fiscal year 2024, these items will be accessible through the Library's website and through the Internet Archive to people all over the world.

#### Conclusion

While the Library's renovation has been put on pause indefinitely, the Brewster Ladies' Library is proud of its fiscal year 2023 accomplishments and excited for its future in the Brewster community. The Library, along with its new Director, remain committed to providing a safe and welcoming space for free access to a range of resources and services to further enhance the quality of life of its patrons.

# **About Brittany Taylor**

A native Cape Codder, Brittany attended Nauset Regional High School before earning a bachelor's from Middlebury College and Masters in Library and Information Science from Simmons College. Prior to arriving at the Brewster Ladies Library, she spent 8 years at the Provincetown Public Library, most recently as their Assistant Director. At the BLL, Brittany hopes to highlight the already robust program offerings, provide support to the amazing staff, and ensure that the Library continues to be the heart of the Brewster community. Brittany lives in Orleans with the two loves of her life: her husband Nick, and their dog, Leroy.

## <u>2022 - 2023 BY THE NUMBERS</u>

### **FY 2023**

### **BLLA FINANCIAL DATA**

Association Revenue \$209,169
Association Expenses \$167,583
Town Operating Expenses \$706,119
Total Library Expenses \$873,702

Town Contribution 80.8% Association Contribution 19.2%

The Association budgeted to nearly breakeven at \$25,000 net income. Revenue was 26% higher than budget due to strong income from memberships and small donations.

The used book sale generated \$35,000, \$8,000 more than the previous year.

With higher revenue and expenses close to budget, the new income was \$37,914.

Membership and donation income was very good at \$72,000, 15% better than last year.

Not included above:

- Realized gains/losses from endowment and investment portfolio of \$190,658
- Expense for annual Nickerson lecture, \$74,630
- Onetime significant donations of \$300,000 and \$12,500.



We welcomed 57,720 patrons through our doors this year.

New Borrowers were 746 (Previous year: 641, 1.6% increase)

**Newsletter Subscribers: 3,405** 



OverDrive Outside Network

Holds by Brewster Patrons: 4,238 Items Borrowed by Brewster: 7,727 Items Borrowed From Brewster: 4,656



Total Physical Items Circulated: 120,666

Overdrive Circulation: 33,802

Adult Programs: 120

Adult Attendance: 1,449

• Youth Programs: 47

Youth Attendance: 789

All Ages Programs: 18
 All Ages Attendance: 16

• All Ages Attendance: 194

Total Brewster Card Holders: 7,894 (4,462)

town residents

Meeting Room Usage: 332

2022 - 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

# **Nancy Broberg**

Named 2023 Sarah Augusta Mayo Award Winner



Named for one of the two founders of the Brewster Ladies' Library, the Sarah Augusta Mayo Award was established in 1998 to recognize outstanding service and contribution to the Library by a volunteer. To date, there have been 41 exceptional recipients and the BLLA is pleased to add a 42nd member to this illustrious group.

**Nancy Broberg** has been volunteering for the Brewster Ladies Library for over 20 years as part of the book mending group. A school librarian in her professional life, Nancy began her volunteer work on June 13, 2002. She was trained in the complex art of book mending by Irene Luebke, who went to the Library of Congress to be trained herself and was the Mayo Award recipient in 2015. Nancy was a quick study and soon was an integral part of the team, forming powerful connections and friendships with her fellow volunteers, particularly Irene.

When Nancy eventually took the helm of the book mending group, she worked to train new members with kindness and enthusiasm. When COVID hit in 2020 and most people were sidelined from their volunteer work, with the Library closed to the public and isolation measures in effect, Nancy continued to work to mend the Library's materials. Even recently, in the new post-pandemic world, Nancy would take home the most difficult books that needed more time and care to repair.

The whole Brewster Ladies' Library wishes Nancy the sincerest congratulations and a happy retirement from her volunteer work!

2022 - 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

### The Brewster Ladies' Library Association Scholarship Program



Jillian Gilmore



**Tucker Johnson** 

The BLLA Scholarship Committee (comprised of Pat Meservey, Susan Stewart, Eileen Bergquist, Joan Pernice, Emily Degnan, and Lisa Perkins) reviewed applications from 18 graduating seniors from Nauset Regional High School (16), Sturgis Charter School (1), and Cape Cod Regional Technical High School (1). Considerations for selection of the two recipients of the scholarship included: residency in Brewster, attendance at a post-graduate school, GPA, personal recommendation, extra curricula involvement, volunteer/community work, employment, future goals, and, of course, financial need. These 18 students uniformly demonstrated strong academic records, a wide array of activities and community work, well-articulated future goals, and very strong recommendations. It was a tough choice for the committee to say the least.

After careful review of the applications, the committee is excited to present these two applicants as very worthy of receiving one of the two \$2500 scholarships to be awarded this year:

Tucker Johnson from Cape Cod Regional Technical High School: Tucker's transcript reflected a very strong level of achievement in highly challenging courses, with a GPA of 4.067. In spite of having Covid interrupt schooling, he has held a summer job since his freshman year painting houses; he has volunteered weekly at a local animal shelter; and joined and stayed with the cross-country team all four years. He will be attending Worchester Polytechnic Institute; his ultimate goal is to obtain a Ph. D. in mathematics and follow in his mother's footsteps as a teacher. What impressed the committee about Tucker was his ability to articulate his awareness of his growing maturity and development of intellectual curiosity while in high school. He admitted that when starting at Cape Tech he didn't think it was the place for him, but found that the institution, according to Tucker, "has boosted my confidence, helped me see my potential, and forced me out of my comfort zone to try new things...I have grown into the person I am because of this institution." His counselor noted that Tucker "is insightful and wise.. and is the quintessential student who is adored by teachers and his peers alike."

Jillian Gilmore from Nauset Regional High School: Jillian was in the top 10% of her class at Nauset with a GPA of 4.40, taking highly challenging courses since her freshman year. While committing a significant portion of her out-of-school time to ballet, she also has worked as a ballet teacher for young children, tutored middle school students, has been involved in several organizations in school, played the violin since first grade, volunteered at a physical therapy center, and worked 2 summer jobs. Jillian plans to pursue a degree in neuroscience at Purdue University with a goal of attending medical school. Her goal is "personal" as she noted that she had family members with neurological disorders and she would like "to make a mark on the path to managing and curing these disorders." Her AP biology teacher noted her discipline and consideration of others and her role as a class leader. That teacher gave her her "highest recommendation."

2022 - 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

## **Volunteers Make It Happen**



**Book Binders** 



Youth Volunteer



**Book Sale** 



Volunteer Shelvers

The Library was fortunate to have over 175 volunteers share their time and talents to devote 12,075 hours to Library endeavors this year. While this incredibly dedicated group helps the Library with a myriad of daily tasks, volunteer highlights included the work of more than 40 volunteers at the 2022 Nickerson Lecture featuring Bob Woodward, the tireless work of our Book Sale volunteers throughout the summer and winter months, the resumption of the homebound delivery program, contributions to Beautify Brewster, and participation in the Brewster in Bloom Parade, which featured an even mix of staff, volunteers, and Board members. Participating in the Department of Children and Family's "Giving Tree" initiative, the BLL was also able to provide 85 foster families with gifts for the holidays.

### 2022 - 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

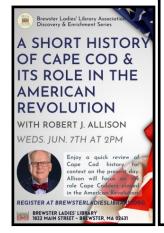




We had a soft launch of our Discovery & Enrichment Program in the summer of 2022 with four successful events, three of which were in partnership with the Brewster Conservation Trust. Building on this experience, we launched a new "season" in January of 2023. Nine programs were

presented with a total of approximately 500 patrons attending in person and 200 participating through Zoom. We were delighted to have our neighbors as presenters with all having a connection to Cape Cod. Our evaluations informed us that the presentations were very well received, and we received many suggestions for upcoming programs.





While presentations are free to the public, we have requested donations to support the Library. We do not have a final accounting currently; however, it is our expectation that the donations far exceed the costs of offering the program and therefore provide more support to our talented Librarians to expand their program offerings also.

The schedule for the Fall was published in the August Newsletter.



## **Confidential Corner**

The Library is proud to join other Cape libraries in the establishment of a Confidential Corner, an initiative that offers titles on sensitive subjects, such as addiction, mental health issues, and gender identity, which patrons can "borrow" anonymously without being required to check them out and without any due date restrictions. Launched through the hard work of Gabrielle Griffis, the corner contains materials and pamphlets from organizations such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Independence House, PFLAG, Barnstable County Department of Human Services, and more. BLL hopes to add a Young Adult Confidential Corner in the Teen Room in fiscal year 2024.



2022 - 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

### ADULT PROGRAMS





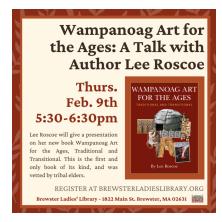
The Adult Summer Reading Program was reinstated in 2022, with over 100 adults enrolling. The success of the program and excitement of those who registered carried over so that we offered the program again in the summer of 2023. Of particular interest is that we feature local Brewster businesses for our prizes, which we'll continue to do in the future.

Along with Adult Summer Reading, the adult programming calendar was full year-round with some focus on more diverse aspects of Cape Cod along with familiar favorites such as arts and craft classes, local history, the Master Gardeners, and panel discussions. Some of the best-attended adult programs of the year include The Crisis in Ukraine in Historical Perspective, Wampanoag Art for the Ages, Civil War and Reconstruction, Native Plants for Cape Cod, Journeys in the Light, and Henry Beston's Cape Cod.

#### **Some Quotes from Program Participants:**

Quote about E-Books 101: "Many thanks to BLL for hosting E-books 101. What a huge help, especially to senior-seniors who might be intimidated by the techy world. It is marvelous to be able to access e-books and audio-books. The class was a game-changer!"

Quote about A Grave Situation: A Walking Tour of the Brewster Cemetery with the Brewster Historical Society: "100% loved! I found this absolutely fascinating! Well researched and executed. Loved the period characters that showed up for the presentation. I know there is so much more to learn here in this one avenue alone. You have whetted my appetite and curiosity, as libraries should!"





2022 - 2023 HIGHLIGHTS



The 2023 fiscal year saw 47 youth programs with 789 total attendees, with an additional 18 all ages programs that included 194 attendees. This year saw the return of BLL youth programming staples such as weekly outdoor and indoor story times with Miss Michelle, After School Makerspace, Lego Club, and Toddler Town.

The 2022 Summer season included highlight programs like "Not Really So Scary Animals" with the Joys of Nature, a magic show with Sean Burke, a live birds show with "Amazing Animal Ambassadors," a monthly kids "Messy Art Class," a Kindness Rocks painting event, an outdoor Movie Night at the Sea Camps, and a Sea Turtle program with the Mass Audubon.

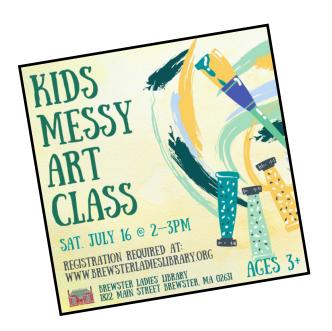
Along with our standard recurring programs, the BLL also boasted numerous exciting and well-received programs throughout the year, particularly around school vacation weeks. During February Vacation, the Library offered "Tales to Tails: Reading to Therapy Dogs," a kids' digital painting workshop, and family yoga. April Vacation week saw "Animals in Spring" with the Joys of Nature, "Buildwave: a Kids' Hands-on Building Game Workshop," and an art workshop.

Other youth services highlights from the 2022-2023 year include National Parks A-Z book event with author Gus D'Angelo, the return of the Halloween Parade, featuring the Singing Princesses, and a Build-a-Fort Night!



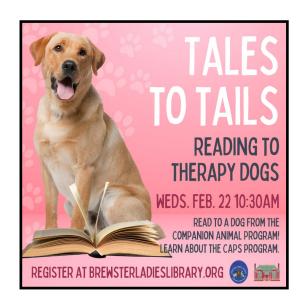
2022 - 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

## **More Youth Programs**









2022 - 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

## **Youth Area Enhancements**



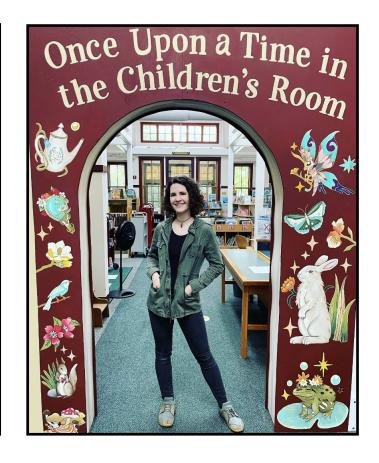
In an effort to better serve the Brewster community and its constituents, BLL undertook several exciting projects thanks to the work of the Youth Services team of Assistant Director/Youth Services Librarian Nori Morganstein, Assistant Youth Services Director Gabrielle Griffis, and Library Assistant to Youth Services Cheryl Murphy.

#### Children's Area:

The Children's section saw the addition of a book archway, built by Custodian Rick Cronin and hand painted by the talented Gabrielle and lovely new nature-themed furniture. Kids immediately began enjoying the new tables and reading inside the flowery Green House, while the archway receives constant compliments.

#### Teen Room:

Meanwhile the Teen Space received a thoughtful makeover featuring a fresh coat of paint, upcycled bookcases, new chairs, beanbags, and a fun rug. A new Teen Art Cart that contains free artmaking materials available for teens who visit the Teen Room and the launch of the new Young Artist Fellow program also promises to create an inviting space.



### **Appreciation and Memorial Gifts 2022—2023**

In	<b>Memory</b>	of F	Priscilla	<b>Bruggemar</b>

Clare Lemovitz

Pineland Park Association

Joe Feloney and Jennipher Ray

Maxine Martin

James and Tia McGinnis

#### In Memory of Elaine Dickstein

Alex Saccone

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Jim and Nancy McKillip

Susan Grier

Kim and Linda Lefebyre

Kathy Cockcroft

### In Memory of Shirley Lingstrom

Douglas Wilcock

In memory of Shirley Lindstrom and in honor of her daughter, Nina Gregson, and her 24 years of service to the Brewster Ladies'

### In Memory of Helen Matel

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We are grateful for the individuals and businesses whose generosity make our work possible.

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### **Grants to the Brewster Ladies' Library in FY2022**

In the past year, the Eddy Foundation awarded a grant of \$11,178.80 to the Library to upgrade the Library Auditorium's sound system and to purchase a museum quality cabinet for the storage and preservation of the Library's historic collection.

The Library also received \$18,568.90 in State Aid to Public Libraries from the MBLC.

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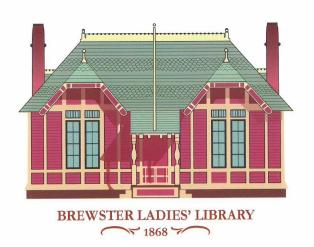
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