

# Greenwich Library **bror** Annual Report 2023

"Libraries allow children to ask questions about the world and find the answers. And the wonderful thing is that once a child learns to use a library, the doors to learning are always open."

– Laura Bush, Former First Lady of the United States Dear Community Member,

The Greenwich Library has proudly served the Greenwich Community since its founding in 1877. Its essential mission has been and continues to be to further the education, knowledge, and culture of the community. Led by the Library's dedicated staff, Friends, and Board of Trustees, we continue to offer the range of resources that allows us to deliver on that mission.

Our numbers illustrate our impact. In the fiscal year 2022-2023, the Greenwich Library system saw 457,667 in-person visits, representing an increase of nearly 30% over the prior year. That means that, on average, more than 1,300 people visited a library in the Greenwich Library system each day, participating in a wide range of library offerings.

Among them:

**The collection:** Your Library's collection is one of the most robust in the state, featuring nearly 300,000 physical books and media and over 84,000 e-Books and downloadable audio books.

**Reference:** Library staff fielded 66,036 reference questions and queries in the past fiscal year. Greenwich Library's team of reference librarians supported the community by offering book recommendations, assisting with genealogical research, providing technology support, and much more.

**Dynamic programming:** 59,682 patrons participated in 1,722 Library programs, in person or virtually. Greenwich Library's programs ranged from our Signature Series, featuring wellknown speakers such as CNN's Fareed Zakaria, to Peterson music concerts featuring groups such as Jane Bunnett and Maqueque, to Friends-sponsored events such as performances by the Martha Graham Dance Company and the Connecticut Gay Men's Chorus.

Greenwich Library, its staff, trustees, and Friends, are all proud of their institution and the positive impact it continues to have on the building of a better and more connected community.

Joeth Williams

Joseph Williams, Library Director

Jeggy Edersh Kall

Peggy Edersheim Kalb, President, Board of Trustees



# Your Place for Authors

Xochitl Gonzalez book signing.

"I look forward to meeting up to play Dungeons & Dragons. It's a fun way to meet new people, too."

 Library Patron and gamer



Your Place for Games

# Your Place to Find Great Staff



"For years, I've counted on the amazing staff to steer me to interesting and new ideas."

 Longtime Patron and book lover

# Your Place for World Affairs



Fareed Zakaria in the Berkley Theater.

# Your Place to Enjoy the Arts



"The quality of the acoustics in the new Berkley Theater is incredible."

 Library Patron and performing arts lover



Your Place to Work

"When it's crunch time, my friends and I study here. We always get our work done at the Library."

– High School Junior and study buddy



Our community depends on Greenwich Library. And, we depend on you. All Greenwich Library programs, classes, and lectures are funded entirely by charitable donations from people like you.

Thank you for your support.

Fiscal year 2022-2023 saw the implementation of a new strategic plan, a transition of Library leadership, and the rollout of the Library's fine-free policy and announcement.

Building on the previous year's focus on reestablishing in-person programming and resuming services after the height of the COVID pandemic, Greenwich Library, along with its Cos Cob and Byram Shubert branches, continued to reaffirm its place as a cultural and intellectual center for the community. From the circulation of materials to reference assistance to website visits to program attendance, almost all key metrics at the Library increased throughout the fiscal year. Notable highlights include:

- The Library announced it was officially fine free, extending and making permanent an internal policy that had been implemented during the pandemic.
- Systemwide checkouts increased by 3% (from 890,902 in '21-'22 to 921,175 in '22-'23), and eBook checkouts accounted for 19% of all systemwide circulation.
- Programming attendance—including in-person and online programs—skyrocketed by 47%.
- The Rain Garden—once the home of Greenwich Library's famed pin oak tree—opened after a major year-long design and landscaping project with the support of the Greenwich Garden Club.
- The Library initiated a diversity audit to ensure the collection reflects the diverse backgrounds and interests of the Greenwich community and completed several collection-related initiatives.
- The Trustees continued planning a renovation and expansion of the Cos Cob Branch Library with a community survey conducted and plans to start work in the Fall of 2024.
- The Library upgraded the network infrastructure at the branch libraries in Byram and Cos Cob to parallel the Main Library infrastructure.

# Statistics and Highlights

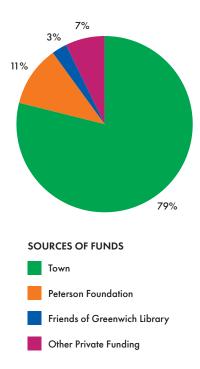
This fiscal year was the first in the post-COVID era where the Library was fully open and operational, without restrictions.

From July 2022 to June 2023 the Library system saw 457,667 visits, which amounts to an average of more than 1,300 visits per day. This represents a 42% increase in visits from the 322,077 visits of the prior year.

The trend line for visits is still rising, and it is approaching parity with the Library's pre-pandemic levels.

Circulation numbers recovered and ran steadily at a little over 680,000 physical items borrowed per year, which falls in line with the year prior. The same holds true for eBooks, which largely stabilized in circulation. The largest growth area for materials was downloadable audiobooks, of which our available collection is one of the best for a public library.

- Total circulation increased 3% from 890,902 (2021-2022) to 921,175 (2022-2023), including a 1% jump in physical book checkouts.
- Circulation of digital materials increased in all areas:
  - eBook circulation increased 5% The most-borrowed eBooks of the year were Lessons In Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus, Book Lovers by Emily Henry, and Olga Dies Dreaming by Xochitl Gonzalez.
  - eAudiobook checkouts increased 14% The most-borrowed eAudiobooks of the year were The Paris Apartment by Lucy Foley, Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus, and The Last Thing He Told Me by Laura Dave.
  - Patron use of streaming video increased by 15%
- The total number of programs offered increased by 31% (from 1,317 to 1,722), and attendance was up an incredible 47% (from 40,703 to 59,682).
- Total virtual program attendance decreased year-over-year by 62% as in-person programming was restored. This decline was due to the decrease in the number of virtual programs from 444 to 191 (-57%) as focus shifted to in-person programming.



Greenwich Library has a long history of public-private partnership. The annual operating budget is funded by the Town of Greenwich, while the Board of Trustees Development Office and the Friends of Greenwich Library raise private funds to support Library programs and initiatives. The Friends of Byram Shubert Library and the Friends of Cos Cob Library provide additional program funding.

A long-standing private endowment comes from the Clementine L. Peterson Foundation. The Foundation was established under the will of Clementine L. Peterson in memory of her son, Jonathan, and her husband, J. Whitney Peterson. Peterson Foundation Trustees exclusively govern the investment plan and distribution of funds. The annual distribution is used for operating and staffing costs of the Peterson wing, as well as for enhancing business and music collections and services.



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Ms. Alexis Abram and Mr. Lorenzo Paloscia Mrs. Maxine K. Armstrong Ms. Leslee Asch Mr. and Mrs. Hank Ashforth Mr. Seung Bak and Ms. Huijun Wen Mr. Paul Barbian and Ms. Fi Fi Sheridan Ms. Evelyn Lorentzen Bell Mr. and Mrs. Louis Berrick Ms. Harlowe Besset Mr. and Mrs. John Blankley Mr. and Mrs. Jason Block Mr. Ken Bloom and Ms. Abby Meiselman Ms. Janet Bodey Mr. and Mrs. Kevin J. Brogan Ms. Rosario Brooks Ms. Siobhan Burns and Mr. Ralph Sutton Mr. and Mrs. Benn Calhoun Ms. Lynda Cesiro Ms. Hong Chen Dr. Joonun Choi Mr. and Mrs. Larry Codraro Mrs. Constance Cowen Ms. Trevor Crow Ms. Jennifer Crowhurst Ms. Silvia Cruz-Pierce Mr. and Mrs. Jules Davis Mr. and Mrs. Louis DeBergalis Mr. and Mrs. Mark De Riemer Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Deschapelles Ms. Grace Djuranovic Ms. Angela Smith Domzal Ms. Mary Kate Donato

Ms. Andrea Douglas Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Duffy Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Elmlinger Mrs. Kathy Epstein Ms. Patricia Fahey Mr. and Mrs. William Farrell Mr. and Mrs. William Fitzgerald Ms. Patricia Franklin and Mr. Alan Rivera Mr. and Mrs. Michael Freitag Ms. Ellen Fullerton Ms. Gail Gallagher Ms. Jennifer Garcia-Alonso Ms. Lynn Garelick Ms. Carol Gellos Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Gendell Ms. Rebecca Gillan Ms. Francine Gingras Ms. Laura Gordon Dr. Julia Gray and Dr. Paul Marantz Mrs. Nicole Hadley Ms. Karin Hansen Mr. Thomas Heagney Ms. Laurie Heiss Ms. Nancy Heller Mrs. Jane Hentemann Mr. and Mrs. Paul Herman Mr. and Mrs. Mark Holton Ms. Julie Honig Mr. and Mrs. Mark Horgan Mr. Kenneth Irvine Mrs. Dana Jack Mr. and Mrs. Martin Jacobson Mr. and Mrs. Munir Javeri Mrs. Vivian Jonokuchi

Ms. Vinita Juneja Ms. Peggy Edersheim Kalb and Mr. Scott Kalb Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Keegan Ms. Christine Kessler Mrs. Renee Ketcham Ms. Rebecca Kim Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kirkpatrick Mrs. M.E. Kjaernested Mrs. Jenning Kohlberger Ms. Sarah Kreitman Ms. Ana Laborde Mrs. Francene Langford Mr. and Mrs. Tracy Lavery Ms. Hilary Martin Lea Mrs. Mary Ellen LeBien Ms. Catherine Lee Ms. Carole Lewis Mr. and Mrs. Rob Liflander Mr. and Mrs. Warren Lilien Mr. and Mrs. James Lindstrom Dr. Zachary Linhart Ms. Bey-Shan Liu and Mr. Eric Liu Mr. and Mrs. Phil Lochner Mr. and Mrs. James Lockhart Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Lunt Mr. David Lynn Mr. and Mrs. James MacPherson Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Mark Mr. and Mrs. Brad Markowitz Dr. Ruth Martin Mr. and Mrs. Christopher **McCormack** Mr. and Mrs. John McNally Ms. Deborah Michals

Ms. Marsha Scott Mifflin Ms. Jaira Miller Ms. Malaine Miller Mr. Bennett Mosse Ms. Elzbieta Mroz Mr. and Mrs. Michael Nelson Mrs. Barbara Netter Mr. and Mrs. Tyler Newton Mr. and Mrs. John Nicholson Ms. Jill Oberlander and Mr. Larry Penn Mrs. Martha Palmer Mr. and Mrs. Chintan Panchal Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Parker Ms. Jill Patricio Ms. Wendy Pei and Mr. Carl Fung Ms. Laura Petit Ms. Caroline Phillips Mr. and Mrs. Barnet Phillips, IV Ms. Cintia Pierry Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Pitts Mr. Rodrigo Placido and Ms. Carolina Paschoal Ms. Katherine Plavan Ms. Valentina Poghosyan Ms. Caren Polner Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Purcell Ms. Ann Ramirez Mrs. Kathleen Renick Mr. and Mrs. John Rogan Mr. and Mrs. John Rosenberg Ms. Karen Free Royce Ms. Wesley Royce and Mr. Patrick Conlisk

Mr. Richard Schulze Mr. and Mrs. Peter Schwartzstein Mr. and Mrs. Mark Schwarzman Mr. and Mrs. Scott Seaton Ms. Juliana Serrao Ms. Sonal Seth and Mr. Nityanand Bhat Mr. Ronen Shapiro Ms. Maureen Sheehan Ms. Jane Snowdon Ms. Emilce Song Mrs. Valerie Stauffer Ms. Katharine Steffens Ms. Carolyn Surgent and Mr. Jacques Friedman Ms. Patricia Swasey Ms. Sophia Tawil and Mr. Frederick Wesner Ms. Stephanie Teitelbaum Mr. and Mrs. Sudip Thakor Ms. Sylvia Thomas Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Torelli Ms. Susanna Trudeau Mr. and Mrs. David Walker Mr. and Mrs. Tyler Webb Ms. Nancy Voye Weissler Mr. and Mrs. David West Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Wiener Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan Winer Mr. Robert Wolterstorff Mrs. Jill Woolworth Reverend Marek Zabriskie

Mrs. Rachel Rubin

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# The Elizabeth Anderson Milbank Society

Established in 2010 to ensure that Greenwich Library can respond to our community's constantly evolving expectations with the collection, programs, facilities and resources needed to continue providing superior services to children, teens and adults.

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+ Deceased

Every effort has been made to assure the accuracy of this list. Omissions or discrepancies should be brought to the attention of the Trustees' Office by calling (203) 622-7889 or emailing jronan@greenwichlibrary.org.

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John Yoke, Manager Jeffrey Callahan Chris Rognalsen Catherine Tynes Patrick Wall

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