



CAMDEN PUBLIC LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT

2023



INSIDE
Save the date for
Camden on Canvas
July 2024



What a Ride it has Been!



Most people think that working at a library is a great opportunity to kick back and read all the recent bestsellers. Not true! Instead,

our days are filled by helping library members to Read, Connect, and Discover. **Have a look at a typical week's business at the Camden Public Library, at right.**

Some of you might already know that this Annual Report will be the last one from me. I am resigning my position as Executive Director as of May 1 and will move on to my next chapter. After nearly 16 years of service at the Camden Public Library, it's time for my library colleagues to take it from here. But what a ride it has been!

It was truly my honor to both lead and contribute to the tremendous work that the library does on behalf of the greater Camden community. And to be able to bring this library firmly into the 21st-century, and help sustain one of Maine's busiest and best, has brought me a great deal of personal satisfaction.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to guide this very special library through these many years, and during the best and worst of times. It has been a privilege to work for you all and to help bring Five-Star library service to our part of the world. I wish you the very best.

Nikki Maounis
Executive Director

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Nikki Maounis
Executive Director

Ken Gross
*Assistant Director/
History Center*

A WEEK IN LIBRARY LIFE

Open 7 days a week, 56 hours | 15 staff members, equal to 10.5 full-time employees
19,000 items checked out monthly, on average

SUNDAY

- Open 1 to 5 p.m., it's one of our busiest days per hour with heavy use by families
- On average, 220 individuals served
- Occasional afternoon programs

MONDAY

- Open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Monday Morning Book Club
- Tai Chi outdoors
- 317 people served on average with about 200 items checked out



TUESDAY

- Open 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- Yoga in the Amphitheatre (seasonal)
- Book sale donation day
- History Center weekly Zoom hour
- Spanish club meets
- PAWSitive Reading with Angus the Golden Retriever (above)
- Philosophical Society meets
- Evening program, 6:30 - 8 p.m.
- 432 people served on average

WEDNESDAY

- Open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Book Time for Babies - average 33 attend
- Art and Journaling group meets
- Camden Nursing Circle meets
- 403 people served on average



THURSDAY

- Open 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- Story Time for preschoolers
- Tai Chi in the Amphitheater
- Creative Art afternoon
- Songwriter Sessions (above)
- Evening program
- 414 people served on average

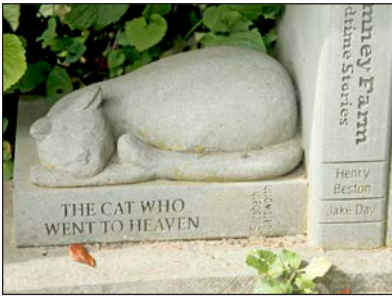
FRIDAY

- Open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Yoga in the Amphitheater (seasonal)
- Story Time for preschoolers
- Explorations Read Aloud on YouTube
- Chess Club
- Walking Tours of Camden, June-Sept.
- 486 people served on average

SATURDAY

- Open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Picker Room Art Gallery reception, monthly
- Occasional afternoon programs
- 664 people served on average

DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Financial Reporting

The library follows procedures that ensure ongoing reviews of financial reporting during the fiscal year. The Finance Committee meets regularly to understand the details of the library's financial status. In addition, annual independent audits and reviews are performed to provide an outside examination of both the library's accounting procedures and the resulting financial reports.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

JULY 2022 - JUNE 2023

| INCOME | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| ANNUAL APPEAL and GRANTS | \$303,836 |
| PROGRAM and BOOK REVENUE | \$119,279 |
| ENDOWMENT INCOME | \$143,085 |
| TOWN of CAMDEN | \$523,000 |
| TOTAL INCOME | \$1,089,200 |

| EXPENSES | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| BOOKS, PROGRAMS, and OPERATING | \$188,272 |
| FACILITY MAINTENANCE and IMPROVEMENTS | \$121,449 |
| PROFESSIONAL and SUPPORT STAFF | \$707,915 |
| AMPHITHEATRE and HARBOR PARK | \$63,876 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | \$1,081,512 |

NET **\$7,688**



The parks draw people of all ages to events including the Camden Shakespeare Festival, live music, and wellness programs.

Historic parks light up with connection and discovery

In 2023, the Camden Amphitheatre and Harbor Park were in constant motion with events for the public to enjoy. They started with Winterfest in January, featuring ice carving, a doggy fashion show, hot food, and a polar plunge. Shakespeare performances throughout the summer numbered 16, and we hosted 16 weddings, May through October.

Other events included engaging performances by the P2P Dance Center, the Midcoast Brass Quintet, Quantum Electronica, and a traveling museum featuring the French and Indian War in Maine. Also on the list were the Maine Outdoor Film Festival, Miss Amy's Story Time and, throughout the

months, there were wellness programs outside in the Amphitheatre, including sound bathing with gongs, yoga, meditation, and tai chi classes. Historic Walking tours were offered on Fridays from June 30 to September 15.

The Camden Amphitheatre and Harbor Park were filled with arts and crafts vendors for the Harbor Arts & Books fairs in July and September/October. A big book sale to raise funds for the library was a major feature of these fairs.

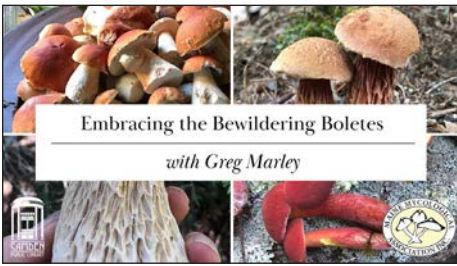
The Amphitheatre and library grounds were a stop on the Camden Garden Club annual garden tour in July. Guests were guided through the

parks, once in the morning and again in the afternoon.

The Bay Chamber Screen Door Festival, held for five days in August, featured three to five concerts a day and was well attended.

Special events also included a volunteer clean-up day in April; the Stewardship Educational Alliance's Environmental Fair (S.E.A.) in June; the Camden Rotary Club Music by the Sea Fourth of July Concerts; Camden on Canvas in July; the 16th Annual Children's Book Fair By the Sea on the South Lawn; and Christmas by Sea in early December.

- Parks Director Dave Jackson



Greg Marley's mushroom talk drew 80 people in-person, nearly 300 on Zoom, and was 2023's most watched CPL YouTube program with 1,575-plus views.

Other Popular Programs

1

"A Feast of Poets," part of the first Camden Festival of Poetry (May)

2

Songwriters Coffeehouse (June)

3



Midcoast Women: "A Mother's Story: No Conceivable Way Out" (October)

4

"Growing up in Lincolnville and Camden in the '50s and '60s" with Rosey Gerry (October)

5



Finding Our Voices: "Men Talking: Growing Up With Abusive Fathers and Breaking the Cycle" (November) set a new 2023 in-person attendance record

Uniting through the power of words

Programs help initiate intriguing, important conversations



2023 Library outreach stretches to **199,064** Underground event newsletters circulated



2023 Library Visits
191,425 - Up 15% from 2022

In-Person Program Attendance
20,638 - Up 6% from 2022

Top Fiction, Adults

1. **A World of Curiosities**, Louise Penny
2. **Demon Copperhead**, Barbara Kingsolver
3. **Lessons in Chemistry**, Bonnie Garmus
4. **Horse**, Geraldine Brooks
5. **The Covenant of Water**, Abraham Verghese

Top Non-Fiction, Adults

1. **Spare**, Prince Harry
2. **The Extraordinary Life of an Ordinary Man**, Paul Newman
3. **The Wager**, David Grann
4. **Enough**, Cassidy Hutchinson
5. **Poverty, By America**, Matthew Desmond

Ranking among Maine's most social libraries



YouTube Subscribers

1. **Camden Public Library**
2. **Portland Public Library**
3. **Rockland Public Library**



Instagram Followers

1. **Portland Public Library**
2. **Bangor Public Library**
3. **Camden Public Library**

These social media rankings do not include Miss Amy's separate children's-specific channels, YouTube's @MissAmyHand and Instagram's @miss_amy_h.

PROGRAMS and SERVICES



(Left) Created by donors, the Reading Tree in honor of Bonnie Veitch White is a welcoming nook for a story. (Right) A new monarch takes flight.

Youth
in-person
attendance
was up
21%
in 2023



Most Checked Out Youth Books

- **Picture Book**
Big Truck Little Island, Chris Van Dusen
- **Beginning Reader**
Waiting is Not Easy! An Elephant & Piggie Book, Mo Willems
- **Juvenile - Fiction**
Wings of Fire: Book 2, The Lost Heir
Tui T. Sutherland
- **Juvenile - Non-Fiction**
The LEGO Ideas Book: Unlock Your Imagination, Daniel Lipkowitz
- **Young Adult**
Queen of Shadows, Sarah J. Maas

Growing new readers

2023 brought increased numbers for in-person children's programs as families with young ones continue to meet at the library to read, play, and connect with others. Our online presence also makes it possible for patrons, young and old, to connect with books and crafts from home. This resource is great for parents, grandparents, teachers, and caregivers. Stuck at home? Want to know what's new? Need an idea for a rainy day? Our programs grow with your children.

2023
Young-
adult virtual
attendance rose
700%
to 41,839

In 2023, we were fortunate to be the recipients of the beautiful Reading Tree in honor of Bonnie Veitch White in the Children's Room. I invite you to stop by to see it.

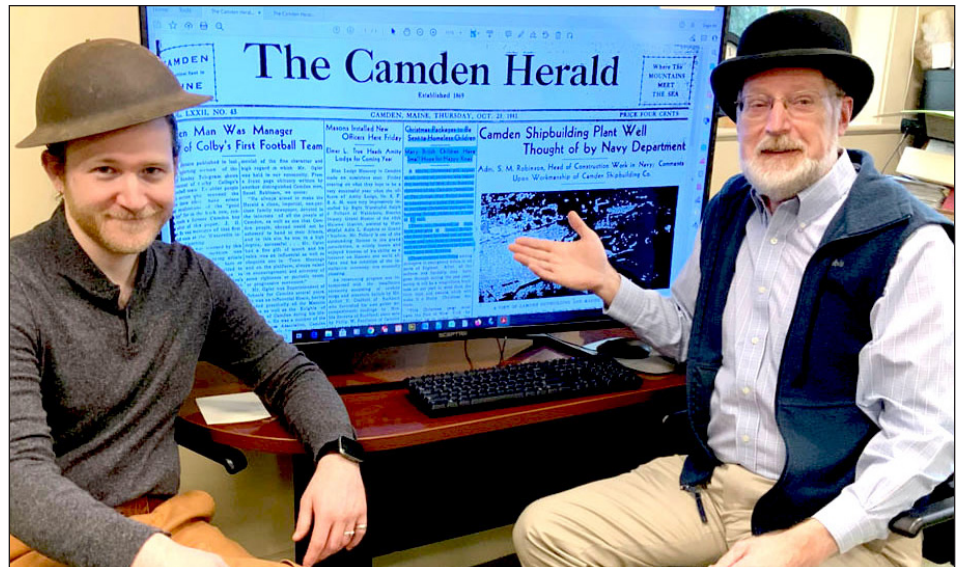
- Miss Amy Hand



Popular topics in 2023 included Hansen Gregory and the donut.

Notable Research Requests

- Oral histories
- History of the Congregational Church
- **The "Hole in the Donut" story**
- Ballard Park, Rockport
- Simontons Corner quarries
- "Disselden" built by Cyrus Porter Brown in 1900
- Ducktrap sawmill
- Hartstone Inn
- Sarah "Little Fawn" Richards
- Lloyd Thomas, carver and artist
- Carmen and Harry Pettapiece, brothers and doctors
- Prof. Alvin R. Dunton, penmanship master
- The Round Table Laboratory
- 1969 commemorative coin
- The bell at the Public Landing
- Bay View House



Ken Gross retires after 20 years

Ken Gross (right) began his retirement on March 1, 2024. Ken's career at the Camden Public Library has spanned 20 years, including several years as director of the Walsh History Center. "I finally had enough years behind me that I could start throwing the decades around," Ken said. "It has been a delight to work as a steward and researcher in the Walsh History Center, and I hope to continue with some pet projects in the future."

Wyatt Porter (left) has been promoted as the next steward in the History Center. Wyatt has a background in Maine history and is a native of Maine with great enthusiasm for our local history.

History Month examines Megunticook

Each year for Discover History Month, the Walsh History Center curates an exhibit in the library's Jean Picker Room. This year's theme was "A Visual History of the Megunticook River." The display included a collection of photographs, prints, maps, and other resources to tell a visual history of the Megunticook River.

The display and accompanying talk featured a brief introduction to the glacial

history of this region, which created the natural features of a steep, short, powerful river. The river was the powerhouse for Camden's early industry, and the exhibit

portrayed each of the historic mills. The images on display were drawn from the vintage maps of Camden of 1856 and 1875, as well as the extraordinarily detailed Sanborn Insurance Maps from 1888 to 1923.

Watch the Megunticook River talk on the CPL Programs YouTube Channel

- Ken Gross

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 Jim and Catherine Kinsella



In 2023, 57 volunteers – including many Millay Society members – donated 1,864 hours of their time for the library. This work included a spring clean-up day in the parks and raising much needed book-sale funds of nearly \$39,000.

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Held in January with support from lead sponsor First National Bank, Camden Winterfest features ice carving, a doggy fashion show, and a polar plunge.

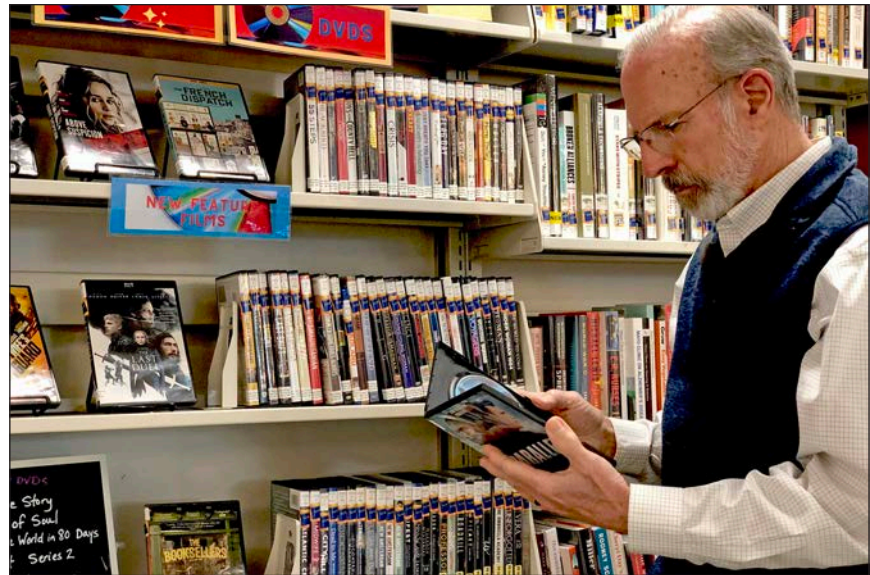
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2023's most circulated DVDs were 1) Amsterdam, 2) The Fabelmans, 3) The Banshees of Inisherin, 4) Empire of Light, and 5) Tár. You can also stream films on Kanopy with your library card.

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*In Memoriam

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The 2023 Summer and Fall Harbor Arts & Books fairs, sponsored by the Reny Charitable Foundation, brought thousands of art enthusiasts to downtown Camden.

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ANNUAL BUSINESS SUPPORT

See Campaign for the Future sponsors, p. 15

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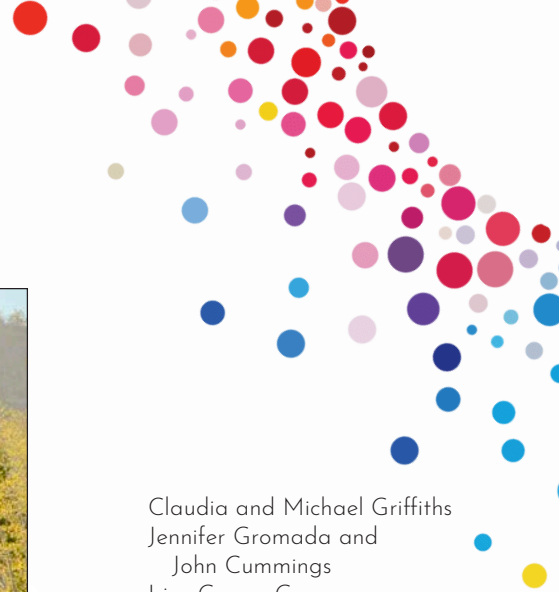
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JULY 19-21, 2024

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Sunday, July 21
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