

**Portsmouth Athenæum**  
Annual Report 2022



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## Mission

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We, the Proprietors of the Portsmouth Athenæum, associate to promote learning and advance useful knowledge among our constituents and the wider community by facilitating convivial interchange and intellectual discourse; maintaining our historic buildings and library; and collecting and preserving materials relevant to the history and culture of Portsmouth and the Piscataqua region.

## Report of the Executive Director and Keeper

2022 was a year of tremendous progress for the Athenaeum. We had a full programming year for the first time since 2019. The lecture series paving the way for Portsmouth's 400th was at maximum capacity for every talk. Our chamber music series and concerts drew record crowds. The exhibit on George Savary Wasson curated by Lauren and Dean Gallant was one of the most beautiful ever mounted in the newly renovated Randall Gallery. Our very breezy summer picnic was one of the best ever and we capped the year with the return of the holiday gala. We added two new friendly faces to our staff in June Spezzano and Stephanie Hewson.

It was also a year of hard work for your board of Directors, who implemented a totally new governance and committee structure under the bylaws passed in January. Long and thoughtful discussions of space needs and the challenges of growth filled every meeting and that process is ongoing. The brightest of all bright spots is that by increasing our outreach, we brought in 35 new subscribers and we are at an all-time record membership with 527 members on all levels.

We have set a very solid and stable foundation on which to build our future. As Jeff, our treasurer, has said, we have managed our finances very conservatively and built up reserves to guard against any near-term instability.

2023 is going to be a momentous year for Portsmouth and for the Athenaeum as we celebrate the 400th anniversary of the city's founding. The Athenaeum is already deeply involved in the efforts. Sixty of the essays in the new book *A History of Portsmouth in 101 Objects* were contributed by Athenaeum members. Thanks to Proprietors Anne Weidman and Ellen Fineberg, the Athenaeum's superb historic photograph collections will be on display in storefronts throughout town.

It is this year of looking back that is going to inspire us to look forward. Imagine, as we reflect on 400 years of Portsmouth's history, the Athenaeum has been a vital part of this community for more than half of that time! 2023 is also a milestone year for the Athenaeum: it is 200 years since we purchased the grand building at 9 Market Square. It was an audacious move for a fledgling library that was struggling to recruit and retain members. To help finance the purchase of the most impressive commercial building in town, Ten of the then fifty Proprietors bought second shares and recruited forty new members to double the membership in one year. For half a century the Athenaeum only used stacking book boxes so the library could be moved easily if the building had to be sold.

This was hardly the last risky move the Athenaeum dared to take, as it was among the first in Portsmouth to adopt new technologies like central heating, gas lighting, and indoor plumbing. [Electricity] In 1980, President John Maher convinced the board to purchase the Foye building (where this meeting is being held) with a mortgage of 18 ½%. John and board member Joe Sawtelle devised a plan to sell off the lower floors as condominiums with first refusal rights and pay off the mortgage in full. This triggered a Master Plan by Bob Thoresen and Richard Candee

that completely transformed the mission of the Athenaeum and opened it to the public for the first time.

In 2008, Bob Foster gave us two weeks' notice in which to exercise our right of first refusal on the Foye second floor. In that narrow window, Carvel Tefft and Mike Chubrich found a way to make it work. Four years later, Bob announced his intention to sell the ground floor. I, for one, didn't think we could possibly afford it. Tom Watson and Karen Bouffard showed that not only was it a smart move, but the income would be nearly three times the return on investment that we were getting from our stock portfolio. John Shaw framed the capital campaign to fund it and we got it done without ever having to violate principal in our investments. Now, the income from that investment is nearly a quarter of our operating income.

As most of you know, five years ago we drew up plans to nearly double our shelf space to accommodate the rapid increase in the volume of our special collections. Engineers told us that not only could we not add more shelves, but the existing shelves were loaded between 70 and 100% over the design load of the structure.. In 2018 I presented six viable options for solving our problems. Since then, all I have heard from board members, Proprietors, and even staff, is that we can do this one because it is too expensive; we can't do the other because it is too risky; this one is too inconvenient; and all of these are radical changes that will never work. One day the sky is falling and the next the ground is sinking. We have lost time, energy, and spirit. You have just seen the financial report for 2022. I challenge you to look at every financial report for past 22 years and find any evidence that the Athenaeum is anything other than financially rock-solid.

Starting today, I don't want to hear any more about what the Athenaeum can't do, because for more than half of Portsmouth's recorded history the Athenaeum has taken on improbable, even quixotic quests and succeeded. It shouldn't be hard. Just look at our Portsmouth 400 program: two board members, Ellen Fineberg and Anne Weidman, a great idea, a little Moxie, and, boom – fabulous. We already have everything we need to be fabulous; we just need a little more Moxie and a lot less Chicken Little.

Climate scientists tell us that by 2123 Market Square will be the center of a sub-tropical island. By then, the Athenaeum will have been a part of three-fifths of Portsmouth's history. Do we want it to be a shadowbox archeological curiosity filled with the skeletons of what Portsmouth used to be? Or do we want it to be the vibrant centerpiece of a new tropical destination? The answer is very much dependent on what we do now.

Tom Hardiman, Executive Director and Keeper  
Report presented at the 204th Annual Meeting  
January 15, 2023

## Report of the President

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I would like to talk about our off-site storage question, options for storage and the recent decision by the Board to move forward with a decision.

As you know, the lease in the North Hampton storage facility was unexpectedly cancelled in February 2022 and we were asked to move out of the facility by March 1, 2022. We were forced to find 1000 sq ft of storage in a very short period of time.

Athenaeum Board member, Mark McNabb, stepped up immediately and generously offered temporary space at his property, the former Rudi's restaurant. We willingly and gratefully accepted his offer and by March 1, moved part of what we had in storage into Rudi's. Rudi's was a convenient place for some of our items but since it wasn't as secure nor was it sufficiently climate-controlled, we moved the most valuable books and manuscripts back into the Athenaeum. Some of you are familiar with the boxes stacked everywhere as you move through the spaces at the Athenaeum! The valuable manuscripts and books are safe where they are in the Athenaeum, but this short-term solution cannot be sustained.

From that time on, the Board conducted a measured and thoughtful discussion about the next steps for our need for more storage and we listened to you, our members. We discussed the variables:

- Immediate need for off-site storage vs its cost
- Need for the care and preservation of our valuable collection
- Growth and future need
- The critical role that research plays in our mission
- Need for a 5-10 year plan
- Possible changes in the use of our present space
- Defining what we keep and what we don't need to keep
- Need for a period of stability to allow time to discuss these issues as we move forward

The critical immediate need was for environmentally safe and secure off-site storage for the items stored at Rudi's and for the boxes in the Athenaeum.

Over the course of the last 8-9 months and with the valuable help of Karen Bouffard, Mike Chubrich, Mark McNabb and others, the Board discussed criteria:

Our criteria included:

- Cost
- Environmental conditions
- Easy access into the rental space
- Convenience to the Athenaeum
- Sufficient space to satisfy immediate need and to grow
- 3-6 year available lease
- Space to set up tables for work on collections

- Need for a minimum of 1,000 sq ft.

We visited space:

- Around Pease
- Spaces in Portsmouth
- Spaces owned by Mark McNabb around Market Square
- 170 State St., a space owned by the Temple Israel

There were several possibilities. Several were eliminated because of space issues, length of lease, cost and so on. The space at Rudi's was available for only a limited length of time and it wasn't a secure place for many of our resources.

One space, 170 State St., satisfied many of the criteria and rose to the top.

The 170 State St. facility at Temple Israel, satisfied many of the criteria we had set:

- A near-by facility
- Easy access to load in boxes of books
- Environmentally safe
- A stable floor to carry heavy loads
- Space to set up shelving
- Space to set up work tables
- Room to grow
- A reasonable rent, \$14/square foot (just over 2300 sq ft)
- And a secure three-year lease with an option to renew

Temple Israel accepted our proposal for a three-year lease for just over \$38, 000 a year and an agreement that we would set up a Joint Venture Proposal to exempt property taxes. At the December 28 Board meeting, the Board voted unanimously (two members were not able to attend) to move forward with a lease with Temple Israel. Mark McNabb made the motion to move out of Rudi's and to negotiate a lease with the Temple. We are working out the details of the lease and hope to make the move very soon.

I want to repeat that this three-year lease specifies that the lease is ONLY for storage for our resources and for workspace for our collections as needed. There is no other intended use for this space for three-years. I want to reassure you that we have put money aside for this expense and that we can afford the just more than \$38,000 a year. There will be no need to delve into the investment portfolio or other financial resources to pay the rent. If we run short at any time, we would go into the cash account. Many of your Board members already have committed generous pledges for donations in 2023 and are committed to making sure that the Athenaeum remains as financially stable as it is today in spite of the ups and downs in the Stock Market.

So, what is the next step? The Board of Directors and our Executive Director, Tom Hardiman, are committed to studying the issues for storage, use of the space in the Athenaeum building and future growth. We will start immediately. Our plan to start this discussion months ago was delayed for a year because of the many hours spent discussing the immediate and critical storage

issues. The decision to rent 170 State St. will allow time to study the long-term issues facing the Athenaeum and to develop a five/ten year plan for the future. The discussions will include current use of our space, the condominium rental and so on. Once we have a definite action plan for study and discussion, we will share it with all of you so that we can discuss, with you, the many questions that came up during 2022:

- What do we want to be in five years? In ten years?
- How and in what ways does our research mission play into our future?
- Can we grow with the space we have now or should we consider acquiring another building or space?
- What are the limits to our growth?

The answers to these questions are not simple and will take ALL of us discussing the options in good faith and understanding what the issues are. We will launch a rigorous study of the options in Spring 2023 and into 2024. Stay tuned!

During 2023 while we are studying these issues, a Blue Ribbon Committee formed by Portsmouth City Council will meet for the first time in late January and will continue through 2023 to talk about similar storage and archival issues affecting other organizations. The organizations include:

- Portsmouth Athenaeum (Tom Hardiman, Tom Watson, Jeff Keefe)
- Portsmouth Historical Society
- Portsmouth Public Library
- Portsmouth City Council
- Strawberry Banke

Our representatives to the Committee will be Tom Hardiman, Tom Watson, and Jeff Keefe. The Blue Ribbon Committee will spend this year discussing common problems and possible solutions. We will see what comes from their discussions and how their discussions might inform our own in-house conversations.

So besides storage issues, what else went on this year. It was a lot!

What attracts people to the Athenaeum? As Tom mentioned, there are many ways! Our sold-out lecture and chamber music series, our emphasis on local history and our research, our web site and social media platforms, and the always appealing and lively articles in the newspaper by our own Sherry Wood! Thank you, Sherry!

The President of UNH, a musician himself, came to one of the chamber music concerts and is now working with the Performance Committee to bring UNH students to the concerts this year. An exciting partnership in progress!

We encouraged special programs related to the Portsmouth 400 Celebration. “Stepping Through Time”, a tour of downtown Portsmouth by foot and photo and a Handel and Haydn society concert in late April are examples of our contribution to the Portsmouth community.

We cultivated and grew our membership, particularly among the younger generation. There is real interest in the Athenaeum and what goes on inside our doors! Many of our new members are adding great energy and enthusiasm to our working committees and are eager to volunteer. In fact one Subscriber is co-chairing the Social Committee!

We are working to improve the new member experience. The new members tea beautifully organized by the Social Committee on October 13 hosted 13-15 new or interested new members. There were all eager to learn more about the Athenaeum and eager to volunteer! Let's make it a high priority to reach out to our newer members and encourage them to volunteer!

The Building Committee is moving forward with the maintenance of our historic buildings. You see the results everywhere. Thank you, Dick Adams, Ken Wolf and your team!

We refined our Admissions policy to make sure we are consistent in what we are doing.

Building on the new Governance structure that Tom mentioned, we encouraged various committees, such as the Admissions Committee and the Social Committee to plan together to improve the new member experience. Better communication and real attempts to work together are essential to the future and our success.

Did we feel like jugglers with many balls in the air? Yes, we did but the discussions were valuable and worthwhile and we will continue them.

Sally Gayer, President  
Report presented at the 204nd Annual Meeting  
January 15, 2023



## Minutes of the Annual Meeting

PORTSMOUTH ATHENÆUM  
Minutes of the Annual Meeting  
Sunday, January 16, 2022  
3:00 p.m. in the Shaw Research Library

1. **Call to Order:** President Brad Lown called the 203rd meeting of the Proprietors of the Portsmouth Athenæum to order at 3:00 pm. He asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of the 202nd annual meeting. Hearing none, the minutes were approved.
2. **Necrology:** Brad Lown read the names of the Proprietors and former Proprietors who died in 2021. A moment of silence was held to honor those we lost during the year.
3. **Approval of Revised Bylaws:** President Lown described the long process of creating modern bylaws for the organization involving Proprietors, committees, and outside experts. He outlined the significant changes then asked Sally Gayer to describe the process in detail. She thanked Maryellen Burke, Peter Berg, Chuck Doleac, David Ellis, Don Margeson, and Ronan Donohoe for their help in reviewing multiple drafts. Ellie Sanderson made a motion to approve the bylaws, Peter Rice seconded. John Shaw asked if in section 4 there is an inconsistency in the 14-day notice for a special meeting. President Lown said that would have to be addressed in a future meeting to amend the approved draft then called the question. 68 voted for and 2 opposed and the motion carried.
4. Finances:
  - A. **Report of the Treasurer:** Treasurer Jeff Keefe presented the financial summary for 2020, noting that it was a year of growth. He reiterated that the COVID-19 pandemic brought a lingering decrease in rental revenue from the Irish Shop, though it was up 12% from 2020 and will continue to rise in 2022. We also received a second fully-forgiven PPP loan of \$40,900. He noted that Tom Hardiman and Stephanie Tabit keep a frugal eye on expenditures. For the second year in a row our strongest fiscal support came from the Proprietors, with a near record-high response to the 2021 Annual Fund campaign, raising \$114,922, with an additional \$106,084 in unrestricted contributions. As a result, we ended 2021 in a strong cash flow position. Total annual revenue was \$578,821, and total expenses were \$393,422, for a positive net income of \$206,672.
5. **Report of the Investment Committee:** Treasurer Jeff Keefe reported that after a difficult first quarter, the Athenæum investment portfolio had a strong finish, up from a beginning value of \$1.983M to a year end value of \$2.126M. This represents a net gain of \$206,026, net of fees, delivering an investment result of 11.7%, also net of fees. Going forward, the current allocation of the investment portfolio is 60% equities, 40% cash and fixed income. Jeff thanked his fellow committee members, Steve Desmarais, Gail Drobnik, and Lauren Buxton for their time and effort over the year. Jeff summarized, noting that as a direct result of the Proprietors' generosity, we were able to grow our bottom line by \$337,000, a 10% increase.

6. **Approval of the 2023 Assessment:** Richard Candee made a motion to approve the 2023 Assessment, which will remain unchanged at \$250; Peter Rice seconded; motion passed.
7. **Report of the Keeper:** Keeper and Executive Director Tom Hardiman addressed the membership with thanks for the leadership of Brad and Sally and the excellent work of the Governance Committee and staff. He listed a number of serious challenges that the Athenaeum faced in 2022, but noted that we don't have the benefit of hindsight to know if these are really catastrophes or merely pivot points to a better future. "In December of 1802, when fire destroyed everything between the State House in Market Square and the Moffat Ladd house, the New Hampshire Gazette reported: "The whole beauty of the town is gone! is gone!!!" What was rebuilt from the ashes, including our magnificent building at 9 Market Square, now defines the very beauty and appeal of Portsmouth." He stated that the Athenaeum was turning the page to new chapter in its history and the best part of our story is yet to come.
8. **Report of the President:** President Brad Lown addressed the membership noting the difficulty of promoting convivial interchange and intellectual discourse in a time of pandemic when it is difficult to get people together and he looks forward to having more chances to meet together in the coming year. He thanked Tom Hardiman for his helpfulness and institutional memory. He told an anecdote of an accomplished new member, John Chamberlain, who is a great bibliophile and who has given an unprecedented gift to the Athenaeum. He thanked the board for their patience of working through the process of meeting via Zoom sometimes and in person at other times, and commended the good work that had been done.
9. **Report of the Nominating Committee:** Committee Chair Maryellen Burke presented the following slate of 2022 Officers and Directors:

President (to 2024)	Sally Gayer	2 year term
Vice President (to 2024)	Margaret F. Hodges	2 year term
Secretary (to 2023)	Richard G. Adams	1 year term
Treasurer (to 2023)	Jeffrey W. Keefe	1 year term
For Director (to 2025)	Ann Beattie	3 year term
For Director (to 2025)	Susan Lassen	3 year term
For Director (to 2025)	Craig Steidle	3 year term
For Director (to 2024)	Curtis H. Springer	2 year term
For Director (to 2024)	Anne Weidman	2 year term

Maryellen thanked Don Margeson and Ronan Donohoe for their service on the nominating committee. Richard Candee made a motion to accept the slate of 2022 nominees, seconded by Ellen Fineberg; the motion passed unanimously. President Sally Gayer offered thanks to outgoing board members Peter Tarlton, Ellen Fineberg, Sandra Rux, Lynne Crocker, and Steve Roberts.

**10. *Old Business:*** Peter Randall asked why the Building Committee has not replaced the 70 year-old toilet in the Reading Room when two Proprietors have offered to pay for the work. Sally suggested that this should be forwarded to the Building Committee.

**11. *Adjournment:*** There being no further business, Brad Lown made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Curt Springer. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Richard G. Adams  
Secretary

## Program Achievements

2022 was another very active programming year at the Athenaeum, starting with the 204th Annual Meeting of the membership on Sunday, January 16. With Covid-19 still prevalent in the area, the meeting was a hybrid of both live and via zoom.

The first live program of the year was on April 4, when a group from the Newmarket Public Library came for a tour. Other groups that visited throughout the year included:

May 25 - Tour for Leadership Seacoast

May 31-June 1 - Tour for Little Harbor School

June 7 - Tour for New Franklin

June 8 - 10 Dondero School classes

August 3 - Tour for NH Supreme Court

August 5 – The Portsmouth Historic Sites Association, Portsmouth Twilight Tour

August 28 - Tichnor Society

October 21 - NH Council for Social Studies.

We welcomed musician Peter Griggs on Friday, April 8th for our first in-house concert of the year. Griggs entertained us with his acoustic, classical guitar in an eclectic and unique sampling of 500 years of guitar music. That was followed on April 21st with a virtual Athenaeum tea for new members. Current members are encouraged to join and meet the talented new people who have signed on as Proprietors and Subscribers. Proprietor Fred Schubert presented “How the 20th Century reshaped the World: Part 1, 1900-1950” on May 12th. Dr Schubert discussed developments in science and technology and how it altered the character of life in both peace and war.

On May 23rd and May 26th Executive Director and Keeper Tom Hardiman hosted a discussion “How We Can Build the Athenaeum of the Future,” in the John R. Shaw Research Library and via Zoom. It was an informal overview of the many unexpected challenges that the Athenaeum has faced in recent years and how we are addressing those challenges. He also showed options and opportunities for us to build on our mission and envision an Athenaeum that will enhance our service to our members and the wider community for generations to come.

The Athenaeum Lecture Series *Portsmouth, NH: Evolution 1623-2023* began on May 18th with long-time seacoast resident David Maloney, who presented “A Portsmouth Overview.” From the late 1600s, until the early 1800s, Portsmouth was a thriving seaport with trade in fish, lumber, and shipbuilding generating considerable wealth. Starting in the early 1800s, the economy started to decline due to fires, trade embargo, and commercial development moving upriver. By the early 1900s, Portsmouth had become a gritty industrial city with the waterfront in decay and many once-stately homes converted to low-cost rental housing and candidates for demolition. This threat of destruction of the city’s neighborhoods and historical identity motivated residents to create rehabilitation projects that have made Portsmouth a cultural and artistic center as well as a popular destination for visitors from around the world.

The following month on June 15th, the lecture series continued with *A Quest to Thrive: Looking at the Lives of Black Women and Men Over 400 Years in Portsmouth* by Angela Matthews. Ms. Matthews says, “When I think of Portsmouth’s 400-year Black history, I am most impressed by the Middle Passage Africans who carried culture, values, and traditions that have been handed down generationally for centuries and are visible in today's Portsmouth Black communities.” Stories of the individuals she talked about display their agency, resilience and self-determination and their acts of courage in their quest for justice. The names and dates may change, but these stories illustrate the same qualities and character as are found in Black Portsmouth residents today.

After a break for the summer, the lecture series resumed on September 21st with *A Century of Change in Land Use and the Built Environment in Portsmouth* by Nick Cracknell. As a practicing municipal planner, Mr. Cracknell has over 25 years of land use experience and served as the City Planner in Amesbury, MA and Planning Director in Newburyport, MA; he has been Principal Planner in Portsmouth since 2011. Mr. Cracknell shared some of his observations on how Portsmouth’s land use patterns have evolved over the past century, and he discussed how these changes have created both challenges and opportunities in managing new growth.

Oct 19th brought Thomas Hardiman, Jr., with the first of two talks examining the Port City’s architectural heritage. He presented *Architecture I - Imitation and Innovation: Developing a Portsmouth Style of Architecture 1660-1815*. Building on the important work of Richard Candee, James Garvin, Arthur Gerrier and others, this talk showed how the Portsmouth community of craftsmen imported design ideas and structural systems from Europe and adapted them to the local climate and materials. Through this evolution, they created a style of architecture that is truly distinctive to the region.

This year’s series concluded on Nov 16th with *Architecture II - Mid-Century Modest: The Architecture of Portsmouth and the Piscataqua in the Mid-20th Century* by Peter Michaud. An architectural historian and native of New Hampshire, Mr. Michaud examined the architecture of post-war Portsmouth and the Piscataqua region, looking at major buildings in this area as well as the work of the architects who designed some of them. He included Portsmouth architect Lucien O. Geoffrion, who designed such iconic local buildings as Yoken's Restaurant (1946), the clubhouse at the Portsmouth Country Club (1955) and the Pic'n Pay Supermarket (1960) (now Hannaford). The lecture provided a general overview of mid-Century architecture in the region.

Friday, June 3rd saw the opening of the exhibit *Standing Together: Seacoast LGBTQ+ Social and Support Groups* in the Randall Gallery on the third floor of the Portsmouth Athenaeum. The exhibit, which drew from the Athenaeum’s growing LGBTQ+ history archive, was open through July 15th. On June 14th, exhibit curator Tom Kaufhold provided an overview of *Standing Together: Seacoast LGBTQ+ Social and Support Groups* in the Randall Gallery. Tom focused on recent acquisitions to the Seacoast NH LGBT Project collection archived at the Athenaeum and Portsmouth Public Library.

On June 9, Proprietor Thomas “Buddy” Bardenwerper brought a fresh perspective to fiction writing in *Mona Passage: A Novel* for readers interested in underrepresented voices in American fiction. By giving a voice to both the migrants who cross our maritime borders and those young Americans whose unenviable duty it is to stop them, *Mona Passage* challenges the contemporary narratives regarding immigration.

The annual Athenaeum Memorial Concert was held Sunday, June 12th at *St. John's Church*. The concert, honoring Athenaeum Proprietors who passed in 2021, featured acclaimed cellist Sebastian Baverstam. The public was invited to attend this concert presented in three segments of words and music. Proprietor Andrew Moore introduced the obituaries.

Also in June, Athenaeum Archivist Katy Sternberger discussed the history of smallpox inoculation in Portsmouth, using "Henzell's Island Inoculation Ledger, 1782" from the archives. The ledger includes the names of 365 patients who received inoculation between March and May 1782. A 1782 French map shows the smallpox hospital on Henzell's Island, highlighted in the blue box, off the coast of Portsmouth. (Today, Henzell's Island is known as Shapleigh Island and accessed via Route 1B.) Patients quarantined at the hospital for a minimum of twenty-one days after inoculation.

The Chamber Music Concert Series returned for a full season starting on Sunday, August 28th with the Noree Chamber Soloists at the *Kittery Dance Hall*. Subsequent concerts included Sunday, September 18th with the Rasa String Quartet at *St. John's Church*; The Music Haven String Quartet on Sunday, October 2nd at *South Church*; and the series concluded on October 16th with the Asmi Trio at *St. John's Church*.

August 5th was the opening reception for our exhibit on artist George S. Wasson of Kittery Point at 5p.m. in the Randall Gallery. Dave Kaselauskas of Kittery Point was the chief curator of the exhibit, and he has been studying and collecting the works of Wasson for nearly 30 years. Co-curators were Proprietors Wendy Lull and Lauren Gallant, along with Dean Gallant. Lauren wrote about Wasson and the exhibit.

On Thursday, August 25th the Portsmouth Athenaeum hosted an excursion for members to view the restored Wood Island Lifesaving Station. Layered clothing and sensible shoes were suggested. Departure time was 4 p.m. with a return of about 6 p.m.

The 29th Annual Athenaeum Pot-Luck Picnic took place Tuesday, August 30th at *Rye Harbor State Park, 1730 Ocean Boulevard, Rye, NH*, inside the tent (rain or shine) overlooking the sea.

A live New Members Tea took place on Thursday, October 13th. New, prospective, and current members were invited to this in-person tea hosted in the first-floor Reading Room.

We raised our glass on Tuesday, October 25th to Proprietor Sherm Pridham! Strawberry Banke Museum hosted a renaming ceremony of the Shapley-Drisco House to the Shapley-Drisco-Pridham House in honor and celebration of the Pridham Family. Sherm lived in the Puddle Dock

neighborhood, specifically the Shapley-Drisco-Pridham House, during the 1940s and 1950s, where his neighbors were his family.

Wednesday, November 9th Proprietor Elizabeth Howard, host of the Short Fuse Podcast, was in conversation with poet and writer Diane Glancy to talk about Ms. Glancy's book *A Line of Driftwood: The Ada Blackjack Story* (Turtle Point Press, 2021). In September 1921 a young Inupiat woman named Ada Blackjack traveled to Wrangel Island, 200 miles off the Arctic Coast of Siberia, as a cook and seamstress, along with four professional explorers. The expedition did not go as planned and when a rescue ship arrived in 1923 Ada Blackjack was the only survivor. Diane Glancy discovered Blackjack's diary in the Rauner Special Collections Library at Dartmouth College and created a poetic narrative around her story. Elizabeth Howard has also visited the Rauner Special Collections and studied the Ada Blackjack archives. The two will share photographs of the expedition, held in the Dartmouth archives, and reflect on the life of this woman who spent almost two years as a solitary individual in this barren environment.

The Annual Athenaeum Holiday Party took place on Friday, December 2nd and the Annual Proprietors' Show opened the same night. That event was soon followed by an Athenaeum Holiday Concert with the Portsmouth Symphony Orchestra Brass Quintet at South Church on Friday, December 16th.

We hosted or collaborated on a number of virtual lectures and book talks starting with "The Lieutenant Governor John Wentworth House & Five Women Named Sarah" by Sandra Rux in partnership with Portsmouth Public Library on February 22. On March 4, The Providence Athenaeum presented legal scholar Akhil Reed Amar to discuss his book *The Words that Made Us* and explores the biggest constitutional questions early Americans confronted. On March 14 the New York Library Society broadcast author Tom Chaffin on his book: *Odyssey: Young Charles Darwin, The Beagle, and The Voyage that Changed the World*. The Boston Athenaeum had *Female Genius: Eliza Harriot and George Washington at the Dawn of the Constitution* author *Mary S. Bilder in conversation with Karin Wulf* on March 23. The New York Society Library brought *Diamonds and Deadlines: A Tale of Greed, Deceit, & a Female Tycoon in the Gilded Age* Author, *Betsy Prioleau* on March 31. Presented by the Providence Athenaeum, Sara Cedar Miller, author and historian emerita of the Central Park Conservancy, explored one of this country's most iconic landmarks in her book: *EX LIBRIS: Central Park*. Presented by the New York Society Library, we celebrated National Poetry Month with poet and biographer Quincy Troupe. Troupe shared selected poems from over fifty years while in conversation with Willie Perdomo, the New York City Book Award-winning poet and Phillips Exeter Academy teacher on April 28. In the *Founders' Footsteps: Landmarks of the American Revolution* with Adam Van Doren on May 10 was hosted by the New York Society Library. NYSL also hosted Brewster Kahle of the Internet Archive: "Universal Access to All Knowledge," Saturday, June 4. The Boston Athenaeum welcomed Andrea Wulf for *Magnificent Rebels: The First Romantics and the Invention of the Self! On September 14* and "Curators' Choice: Re-Reading Special Collections" September 22. The *Imposter's War* with Author Mark Arsenault Wednesday, September 28. The NYSL featured Paul Laurence Dunbar: *The Life and Times of a Caged Bird* by Gene Andrew Jarrett on November 22.

## Report of the Admissions Committee

The admissions committee met six times in 2022 and unanimously agreed to recommend the following for Subscriber:

**Thomas “Buddy” Bardenwerper** is a published author, a law student and former US Coast Guard officer with an interest in maritime history. He lives in Cambridge with his wife, Alexandra. He is endorsed by Charles Bickford, Sam Reid, and Matthew Miller.

**John P. Bohenko** is the former City Manager of Portsmouth and lives here with his spouse Nancy. He is very interested in history and the local community and is recommended by Daniel Hoefle, Gary Ghigliotti, and Curt Springer.

**Thomas Boulter** is a manager for Eversource and a commercial pilot and flight instructor. He lives in Nottingham with his spouse Deirdre and is interested in doing archival research in the library. He is endorsed by Anne Weidman, Markus Schaff, and Brylye Collins.

**Gregory R. Brackett** is a retired Senior Vice President of Gulf Insurance/ CitiGroup and Events Manager for Strawberry Banke. He is a longtime Friend of the Athenaeum living in Stratham and is endorsed by Elizabeth Farish, Don Margeson, and Rodney Rowland.

**Tom D. Burleigh** is a wealth advisor and financial planner at CMH Wealth Management, who lives in West Newberry with his wife, Mikala and is interested in family, community, outdoor activities, and learning activities. He is endorsed by Anne Weidman, Peter Rice, and Peggy Hodges.

**Robert W. Butler** is the founder of RBF Investment Advisors and lives in Alton Bay with his wife, Sue. He is very interested in the history of New Hampshire and is endorsed by Richard Candee, Peter Randall, and John Shaw.

**Dr. Philip C. Carling** is physician and immunology specialist with a love of antiquarian books and manuscripts. He has been voluntarily creating archival book enclosures for the Athenaeum’s rare books for three years. He lives in Hingham and is endorsed by Peter Cook, Tom Hardiman, and Sally Gayer

**Daniel J. Cassidy** is a Subcontract Program Manager with Sikorsky Aircraft and lives with his wife, Elizabeth in Middletown, CT. He is interested American history, maps, travel, and biking and is recommended by Brad Lown, Sally Strazdens, Stan Davis, and Dr. Ed Rowan.

**C. Sean Clancy** is Assistant City Manager for Economic Development in Portsmouth, where he lives with wife Michaela and pursues his interest in economic and community development and civic engagement. He is endorsed by Stephanie Secord, Anne Weidman, and Tom Watson.



**Dr. (Avnish) Neil Clerk** is an orthopedic surgeon at Exeter Hospital and with degrees from eight prestigious universities. He lives in North Hampton with his wife, Sherri, and is interested in history, preservation, and civic engagement. He is endorsed by Porter Davis, Eric Gregg, and Jason Kroll.

**Bryleye Rose Collins** is the owner of a talent acquisition and coaching business who is also a triathlete and supporter of Women's Rights, Spirituality, and enjoys photography and historical architecture. She lives in Rochester and is recommended by Anne Weidman, Margaret Hodges, and Peter Rice.

**Katherine Colleen Cook** is a Portsmouth City Councilor and self-employed consultant. She is interested in historic preservation, jazz music, visual arts, poetry, and foreign affairs. She lives in Portsmouth with her husband, Dr. Ernest Podrasky and is endorsed by Andrew Bagley, Anne Weidman, and Brian Gibb.

**Duncan A. Edgar** is an Attorney in Portsmouth with a life-long interest in the city's history. He comes recommended by Cathy Hodson, Daniel Hoefle, Sally Gayer, and Stephen Roberts. Kenneth R. Goldman is a retired engineer from the Naval Surface Warfare Center and is interested in local history and photography. He lives in Portsmouth with his wife, Barbara Sadick, and is endorsed by Andrew Bagley, Brian Gibb, and Anne Weidman.

**D. Allan Kerr** is a Revenue Officer with the US Treasury Department and a local historian of note. He lives in Kittery with his wife, Nicole, and is recommended by Tom Hardiman, Stephanie Secord, and Sam Reid.

**Jacob Anthony Lehoux** is a software engineer with Wayfair and is interested in sailing, basketball, scuba diving, and enhancing the prosperity of the Portsmouth community. He lives in Portsmouth with his spouse, Paige Galvin, and is endorsed by Andrew Bagley, Anne Weidman, and Alan Gold.

**John Edward Leland** is an aircraft maintenance technician and President of Leland Aero Service. He is interested in flying, golf, hiking, and history. He lives in Portsmouth with his wife, Linda, and is recommended by Andrew Bagley, Anne Weidman, and Brian Gibb.

**Kathleen B. Logan** is a pharmaceutical sales representative who is keenly interested in historic house research. She lives in Portsmouth and is recommended by Susan Lassen, Edward P. Thompson, and Peter Tarlton.

**Dr. John R. Logan** is an extensively published professor of Sociology at Brown University, currently studying Portsmouth's urban development history. He lives in Portsmouth with his spouse, Gwen Guillet, and is endorsed by Richard Candee, Ellen Fineberg, and James Smith.

**Alyssa M. Murphy** is an architect working and living in Portsmouth with her husband, Brian, and is interested in dance and literature. She is eager to be involved with the Athenaeum's

historical mission of “mutual improvement,” and is recommended by John Mayer, Maryellen Burke, and Anne Weidman.

**Martha A. Netsch** is an executive with the Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains. She is interested in history, hiking, kayaking, reading, and researching the history of the greater Portsmouth area. She lives in Portsmouth with her husband, Matt Madeira, and is endorsed by Steve Roberts, Mark McNabb, and Brad Lown.

**Clare Mary O’Brien** is a lawyer interested in reading, cinema, and history, and who has a long history of community involvement. She lives in Portsmouth with her husband, Charles Doane, and is endorsed by Susan Lassen, Tom Watson, and Jeff Bolster.

**Nancy Elizabeth Pearson** is founder and CEO at Mind the Gap LLC. She is interested in Portsmouth history and wants to share that with others through education and community events. She is recommended by Anne Weidman, Reagan Reudig, and Andrew Bagley.

**David J. Pepson** is retired from the US Department of Energy and lives in Portsmouth with his wife, Maureen. He is intensely interested in Portsmouth history, especially the Warner House, and is endorsed by Curt Springer, Sooky Lassen, and Bob Barth.

**Kristen L. Peterson** is a bank loan officer in Portsmouth who regularly volunteers in the Athenaeum library. She is interested in local history, art, and preservation, and is endorsed by Katherine Kane, Andrew Bagley, and James Smith.

**David B. Reudig** is a retired financial advisor and current President of the New Hampshire Historical Society. He lives in Concord with his wife Mary and is recommended by Robert Chase, Ellen Fineberg, and Reagan Reudig.

**David M. Rheume** is a Production Facilities Manager at PNSY and lives in Portsmouth with his spouse, Beth Moreau. He is very interested in Portsmouth history, Military and PNSY history, Portsmouth history and architecture, and is recommended by Anne Weidman, Andrew Bagley, and Reagan Reudig.

**Peter van Egmond Rossbach** is a renewable energy developer based in New Castle. He is interested in history, opera, and politics and is endorsed by Brad Lown and John Shaw.

**Sharyn P. Rothstein** is a writer and professor with interests in local history, sociology, drama, and poetry. She lives in Kittery with her spouse, Jeff Lesh and is recommended by Andrew Bagley, Anne Weidman, and Larry Yerdon.

**Andrew C. Samonas** is a real estate broker in Portsmouth with interests in local history, and community. She is recommended by Andrew Bagley, Anne Weidman, and Karen Bouffard.

**Markus Arthur Schaaf** is Program Manager at Accenture and is interested in local government, history, culture, Spanish language, and tennis. He lives in Portsmouth with his spouse, Arielle Bean, and is recommended by David Splaine, Anne Weidman, and Sally Gayer.

**Albert E. “Buzz” Scherr** is professor of law at the University of New Hampshire and is interested in colonial history and gardening. He lives in Portsmouth with his wife, Susan, and is endorsed by Tom Watson, John Lyons, and Kim Meyers.

**Scott A. Scott** is a tax assessor with the City of Portsmouth, where he lives with his wife, Alexandra. He is interested in reading, history, science, athletics, and real estate and is endorsed by Anne Weidman, Andrew Bagley, and Stephanie Seacord.

**Louise Williams** is an International Economic Development Consultant with interests in women’s economic participation and development and historic preservation. She is recommended by Thomas Coleman, Irene Bush, and Peter Peirce Rice.

**Tatiana Czaplicki Young** is an attorney with interests in history, music, arts, theater, world and domestic travel. She is recommended by Andrew Bagley, Anne Weidman, and Brian Gibb.

Gary Ghigliotti, Chair  
Admissions Committee

## Report of the Art and Artifacts Committee

Out of an abundance of caution, 2022 was once again a quiet year for the Art and Artifacts Collection Committee. Most of our committee work was done by email, but there were regular work days in the Athenaeum building. Most of the work was centered on the care of the collection, which, of course, is a never-ending project. We also continued to monitor the temperature and humidity in the buildings to aid in the environmental care of the collections.

The major conservation project for the year was that of two small paintings on artist board of local scenes. These paintings, bought on eBay, were by an unidentified artist, but they were framed by Montgomery's Music and Art of Portsmouth. One painting depicts the Thomas Sheafe Coffin house, which stood where the Carey Cottage at Creek Farm now stands. The other shows a woman crossing a small bridge over an unidentified creek. The paintings are currently on exhibit in the Old Library.

One of the year's highlights was the discovery on a beam in the attic of the 1805 building of two very long wooden spears. One spear was marked "590" which identified it as a spear from Tubuai given by John Collings Long in 1827. The other is presumably number 591, which was also listed as a spear from Tubuai. The spears had possibly been stored in the attic when the artifact collections were reorganized in the 1890s and have been there ever since. Because of their length and because of the placement of the elevator shaft, there is currently no easy way to move them out of the attic.

The model of the HMS America was included in an article written by Rob Napier and me. It appeared in A History of Portsmouth NH in 101 Objects, published as part of the celebration of the 400th anniversary of Portsmouth.

We received three gifts this year:

Two crayon photographs of George Bigelow Chase and his wife, Anne Lowndes Chase – Gift of Anne Chase and Robert Healy

A portrait of John Haven. This is a late 19th -century copy of the Gilbert Stuart portrait of Haven. The painting will undergo conservation in 2023. – Gift of Henrietta Trantum

Two silver Haven Medals, awarded to David E. Junkins in 1868 and 1869 – Gift of Kevin Lafond

We have a promised future gift of a watercolor portrait of Bruce Ingmire from his brother.

Next year we will loan three of our South Pacific artifacts given by John Collings Long to the New Bedford Whaling Museum for their exhibit, "Yankee Whaling and the US Navy."

The members of the committee are Elizabeth Aykroyd, Douglas Aykroyd, Alan Bennett, Pat Breslin, Cathy Hodson, Rebecca Mitchell, Tara Vose Raiselis, Steve Roberts, Carolyn Roy, Sandra Rux, Elaine Tefft, Hilda Versluys, and Tom Hardiman, Keeper.

Elizabeth Aykroyd, Chair  
Art and Artifacts Collection Committee

## Report of the Exhibits Committee

The Randall Gallery received a much-needed facelift in the early spring with the removal of the old carpeting and the installation of a wood laminate floor. The first of three exhibitions opened on June 3, 2022, “Standing Together: Seacoast LGBTQ+ Social and Support Groups,” curated by Tom Kaufhold. The exhibition was an outgrowth of the 2019 exhibition at the Athenaeum that Tom also curated entitled “Seacoast LGBT History: 50 Years of Rainbow Reflections.” Since the 2019 exhibition, Tom has worked at the Athenaeum on archiving the materials collected, such as posters, photos, banners, buttons and documents that tell the stories of people on the Seacoast. The 2022 exhibition focused on the local groups that formed, starting in the 1970s, to fight for LGBTQ+ rights. Tom gave a gallery talk on June 16 and the exhibition was on view until July 15.

The second exhibition of the year, “George S. Wasson (1855-1932): marine painter, woodworker, author” opened on August 5th and was on view until November 5th. The exhibition was curated by a group of admirers of Wasson, including Lauren Gallant, a member of the exhibits committee, and her husband Dean Gallant. They became interested in Wasson after they bought his former house in Kittery Point. Dave Kaselauskas, the chief curator of the exhibition, had been studying and collecting the works of Wasson for 30 years. Proprietor Wendy Lull was also a part of the curatorial group.

George Wasson studied painting in Stuttgart, Germany, for 3 years, but his success as a marine painter was due to his love of the sea and sailing. His intimate knowledge of boats, rigging, and how boats acted on the water made his paintings popular with sailors. His short stories and three novels featured the maritime characters of Kittery with their distinctive vocabulary. His last book is considered by many to be the authoritative book on the history of sail in Maine. Wasson also studied carving in the studio of John Haley Bellamy, a neighbor, where he learned to carve eagles, ship models and frames and panels for his own paintings. All aspects of his artistic talents were represented in the exhibition - paintings, carvings, books and sketchbooks.

The final exhibition for the year was the Proprietors Art Show, which opened on December 2, 2020 as part of the annual holiday party. It will close on January 5, 2023. This year the show included paintings, photographs, sculpture, fiber works, jewelry and silverware. We were excited to have new contributors this year, as well as our regulars, whose new works we look forward to seeing each year.

We were fortunate this year to have Stephanie Hewson, Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator, work on our behalf to find volunteers to sit in the Randall Gallery while the exhibitions were open. We would like to thank her for her efforts.

Judy Groppa  
Chair, Exhibits Committee

## Report of the Investment Committee

As Treasurer, I also chair the investment committee. Serving alongside me on that committee are Proprietors Steve Demarais, Gayle Drobnick and Lorne Buxton. I want to thank them all for the time they committed to provide oversight and guidance on the management of the investment portfolio. I want you guys to know how much I really appreciate your support. Thank you!

I'll begin my investment report by taking you back in time 2021. During 2021 the theme in the financial markets was high Inflation, rising interest rates. The S&P 500 was up 27% and the bond market finished down almost (2%).

In 2022 we saw continued high inflation and interest rates rising to the highest level in 15 years. In reaction to these two factors and the threat of a weakening economy, the Barclays Bond Aggregate index finished the year down (14%) and S&P 500 was down (20%). By comparison, during the same period, the Athenaeum investment portfolio was down (12.94%).

Putting that into perspective, we began the year with a portfolio value of \$2,126,009, we took planned portfolio distributions of \$40,000 to partially fund the budget, and we saw a market decline in the portfolio of (\$273,571). We finished the year with a value of \$1,817,438. To add further perspective, this value is slightly below where the portfolio began in 2020.

Going into this year the portfolio allocation is more defensive than it was a year ago. Currently 41% is in equities, 25% fixed income, 24% cash and 10% alternatives. I believe this allocation positions the portfolio to weather any future volatility, and to take advantage of potential opportunities in the markets.

In addition to the investment portfolio, we also have a robust cash reserve of about \$580,000. This cash has been strategically set aside to support cashflow, in the event of a server recession and/or financial crisis. It is also available to provide capital for any short-term spending needs or purchases. With rising rates we've seen an increase in return on debt instruments. As a result, we'll be repositioning much of this cash into short term US Treasury Bills, which are currently paying between 4.4 - 4.5% We expect this strategy will increase annual income by about \$20,000.

When we look at the bottom line of the organization, combining cashflow and the year-end investment portfolio value, the balance sheet declined year over year, from \$3,708,835 to \$3,461,659. This is an annual decline of \$247,176 or 6.7%. This decline was primarily driven by the investment results for the year, but also minimized by our strong cash flow.

Jeffrey Keefe, Treasurer

## Report of the Lecture Committee

The Lecture Committee is the working group responsible for planning and presenting each year a series of lectures under the Athenaeum’s sponsorship. Pursuant to recently adopted amendments to the Athenaeum bylaws, the committee is under the jurisdiction of the Athenaeum’s Standing Committee on Programs, now chaired by Board director Sooky Lassen.

Annually, the committee chooses a theme for the series year, selects lecture topics around that theme, schedules the once-a-month presentation of those lectures, recruits lecture presenters, obtains their biographies and lecture descriptions, arranges publicity for the lectures and, on lecture days, sets up the lecture site – traditionally the Research Library – and assists the presenters with any equipment they use. Aside from lecture attendance, the committee meets in person only two or three times each year, and accomplishes most of its business by email.

After two years in which Covid-19 concerns resulted in the lecture season’s partial curtailment (2020) or full suspension (2021), the year 2022 saw the series’ cautious resumption, with five in-person lectures presented rather than the customary six. Attendance in 2022 was gratifying: typically, it was “standing room only,” and some who attempted same-day reservations had to be disappointed. As in pre-pandemic years, a large proportion of the audience (72 percent) was comprised of Athenaeum members

Our 2022 series opened on May 18 with a lecture by Dave Maloney, who has published a walking guide of historic Portsmouth and operated driving tours of Portsmouth and the surrounding area. Dave took us on such a tour from our seats in the Research Library, the places “visited” being shown in photos from his own collection. He introduced us to historic gravestones and monuments in South Cemetery, then took us to the Wentworth Coolidge mansion and finally to New Castle. All along the way he provided an informative and entertaining narrative about the personalities associated with the sites we saw and the times in which they lived. In June Angela Matthews lectured about the history of Portsmouth’s Black community, going back to the 1600s when local warehouses’ received enslaved people for to be sold. She also told us about some of the leaders of colonial Portsmouth’s Black community: Ona Judge, a fugitive from enslavement in George Washington’s household; Prince Whipple, who with others petitioned the NH Legislature for emancipation of the enslaved; and Dinah Chase Whipple, Prince’s wife, who established a school and a charity to help indigent Black people in Portsmouth.

After the customary Summer hiatus, the series resumed in September with a presentation by Nick Cracknell of Portsmouth’s Planning Department on changes in land use in Portsmouth in the last century and a half, over the course of which farm property gradually gave way to commercial and residential building. In October, Keeper and Executive Director Tom Hardiman spoke on the development, from 1660-1815, of a “Portsmouth Style of Architecture.” He discussed in some detail how the Portsmouth community of craftsmen imported design ideas and structural systems from Europe and adapted them to the local climate and available materials. The series concluded on November 16 with a talk by Peter Michaud, a cultural resource manager



for the federal government, on the architecture of Portsmouth and the Piscataqua area during the mid-twentieth century. He considered the design of major structures in the area and, in particular, the work of local architects who designed iconic buildings still in existence or of recent memory, such as Yoken's Restaurant, the Portsmouth Country Club's clubhouse and the Pic'n Pay Supermarket.

The members of the Lecture Committee are Doug Aykroyd, Pat Bagley, Kathleen Boduch, Greg Brackett, Irene Bush, Ed Caylor, Thomas Hardiman, Jr., Wendy Lull, Don Margeson, John Seavey and Margie Smith. Particular note must be taken of Doug's design of the elegant poster for the 2022 lecture series, of Irene's authorship of the article published in the Summer 2022 edition of the Athenaeum Newsletter announcing the lecture series line-up, and of Ed's technical assistance to lecturers with their audio and other equipment.

The committee thanks Athenaeum staff members James Smith, Photographic Collections Manager, for posting notices of coming lectures in the weekly "Latest News" blog email to Athenaeum members and in the Athenaeum's online events calendar, and Stephanie Hewson, Outreach Coordinator, for issuing press releases on the series to select media. We also thank Sherry Wood, Chair of the Publications Committee and editor of the Athenaeum Newsletter, for overseeing inclusion of the lecture announcement in the newsletter. And finally, our fervent thanks go to Tom Hardiman, who in multiple capacities (including lecturer) has provided the committee with a range of support crucial to carrying out its responsibilities for the lecture program.

Respectfully submitted,  
Don Margeson,

## Report of the Library Committee

### Research Library

During 2022, 2,105 people visited, called, or emailed the Athenæum's Research Library, sixty-seven percent of whom were nonmembers. Reference inquiries accounted for forty-seven percent of all contacts. Online inquiries accounted for fifteen percent of all interactions. We averaged fourteen image order requests, twelve online reference requests, and forty-two in-person reference requests per month this year.

### Digital Access

In 2022, more than 47,500 unique visitors searched our online catalog, an increase of forty-nine percent over the previous year.

### Circulating Library

663 books were checked out in 2022—down just under 100 from 2021. The Athenæum acquired 190 new titles during the year, 119 by purchase and 71 by donation, maintaining a well-curated and cost-effective library of contemporary fiction and nonfiction for our readership.

## Report of the Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee of the Portsmouth Athenaeum submits the following nominations for officers and directors for terms commencing in 2023 for consideration by the Proprietors at the 204th Annual Meeting scheduled for January 15, 2023.

Secretary (to 2024)	Richard G. Adams	1 year term
Treasurer (to 2024)	Jeffrey W. Keefe	1 year term
For Director (to 2026)	Christine Friese	3 year term
For Director (to 2026)	Alan Gold	3 year term
For Director (to 2026)	Donald Margeson	3 year term

All other Officers and Directors will remain the same for 2023. In 2024 the committee expects to nominate Jeffrey W. Keefe as President and Margaret F. Hodges as Secretary.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maryellen Burke, chair  
Nominating Committee

## **Report of the Performance Committee**

This year the Performance Committee of the Athenaeum presented a full program of concerts to consistently enthusiastic audiences. We thus made a strong recovery from the difficulties of the last two years occasioned by the onset of COVID-19. We are grateful to all those friends of the Athenaeum whose contributions supported this outstanding season.

### **Portsmouth Athenaeum Chamber Music Series (PACM)**

Thanks to the support of 53 generous patrons, numerous subscribers and the broader public, we organized four concerts this year. They were:

August 28 Noree Chamber Soloists, Kittery Dance Hall  
September 18 RASA String Quartet, St. John's Church  
October 2 Music Haven String Quartet, South Church  
October 16 ASMI Trio, St. John's Church

The average attendance was 70-80 people per concert. The music was of the highest quality and deeply appreciated by our knowledgeable and engaged audiences. Each performance was followed by a reception for patrons who were afforded an opportunity to meet the musicians.

As has become customary, the concert series was also a significant financial success. The total income received was \$16,380 while expenses amounted to \$15,078. Thus, after all accounts were settled, we transferred an end-of year surplus of \$1,302 to the Athenaeum.

### **ArtsAthenaeum Concerts**

The ArtsAthenaeum program originated many years ago with a memorial concert given each year to honor recently deceased Athenaeum proprietors. We continued this tradition by presenting the annual Memorial Concert on June 12 at St. John's Church. The player was Sebastian Baverstam who gave an engrossing and deeply moving tribute with a selection of pieces played on the cello.

The Athenaeum supports the ArtsAthenaeum concert series primarily as a program for its members and friends. Accordingly, Peter Griggs gave a concert in the Sawtelle Reading Room on April 8. His guitar recital was enjoyed by a full house of Athenaeum supporters.

The third ArtsAthenaeum concert this year was intended as a free gift to the Portsmouth community. This took the form of a Holiday Concert performed by the Portsmouth Symphony Brass Quintet at South Church on December 16. It was a rousing occasion with wonderful seasonal music, and an outreach triumph. Nearly 100 people attended, including familiar faces from our other concerts and many others, families with children among them, from the wider community. Many generous audience members gave a remarkable \$576 in donations to help cover our costs.

The ArtsAthenaeum series is underwritten by a subvention of \$5,000 from Athenaeum funds. This year the expenses of \$3,110 were almost fully covered by gifts and other contributions from generous friends amounting to \$2,914. Thus, the actual cost to the Athenaeum was \$196.

### **The Work of the Committee**

The Performance Committee has met, usually monthly, throughout the year to plan and present this program of concerts. During the first half of the year Dr. William Wieting chaired the committee. Then Andrew Moore took over for the fall. The other members of the committee were President Sally Gayer, Kristin Goodwillie, Sharon Griffin, Linda Posson, Alice and Chris White, and Keeper Tom Hardiman ex officio. Everyone contributed their outstanding talents and considerable efforts to ensure the successful outcome of the concert program. Through its work the Performance Committee not only provides musical programs of extraordinary quality for members and friends of the Athenaeum, it also enriches the cultural life of Portsmouth. It thus makes a substantial contribution to the outreach efforts of the Athenaeum as expressed in its mission.

Respectfully submitted.  
Andrew Moore, Chair

## Report of the Publications Committee

Committee members: Dick Adams, Douglas Aykroyd, Donald Margeson, Peggy Hodges, Kimberly Alexander, Sherry Wood.

The newsletter remains a primary connection point for the Athenaeum membership, focusing on events and community outreach, as well as little-known aspects of our beloved library and museum.

Dick Adams continued his decade-plus tradition of writing Athenaeum Arcana, reminding us of a 1908 Mark Twain visit to Portsmouth, the Athenaeum's evolution into an archival repository and its resulting space needs. Douglas Aykroyd explored Athenaeum mysteries, including a tale of two spears and a pair of discovered paintings. Don Margeson introduced us to President Sally Gayer and a number of new board members, and also profiled volunteer Joan Hammond.

Photographic Collections Manager James Smith's "Scene on Social Media" articles invited us to see his frequent and fascinating Facebook and Instagram posts on Portsmouth history. One of those posts led to an interview of Puddle Dock's Sherman Pridham that Smith conducted with Sherry Wood for the monthly At the Athenaeum column in the Portsmouth Herald.

We were introduced to Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator Stephanie Rohwer Hewson and Assistant Librarian June Seymour Spezzano. We said farewell to former Athenaeum Keeper Jane Molloy Porter (1931-2022) and to Phineas Graphics, which donated its ephemera archives and books to our collections after a long and fruitful association with the Athenaeum.

We also learned of the Athenaeum membership's many contributions to the Portsmouth 400th anniversary book, "A History of Portsmouth NH in 101 Objects." The Athenaeum Chamber Music Series was highlighted, along with the 2022 Lecture Series, "Portsmouth's Evolution: 1623-2023." The Proprietors Show, annual picnic and holiday concert were also featured.

A special volunteer section in the fall 2022 newsletter highlighted the need for more gallery sitters, and appeals from the Social Committee and Lecture Committee for membership. A summer excursion to the Wood Island Life Saving Station helped reveal the Athenaeum's role in the station's successful quest to be designated for the National Register of Historic Places.

Coverage of the exhibits "Standing Together: Seacoast LGBTQ+ Social and Support Groups" and "George S. Wasson, Artist and Author of Kittery Point" drew visitors to the Randall Gallery.

Thanks go to Executive Director Tom Hardiman, Susan K. Hamilton and other newsletter contributors including Lauren Gallant, Ronan Donohoe, Irene Bush of the Program Committee, Chris and Alice White and the Performance Committee, Judy Groppa of the Exhibits Committee, Cindy Knapp of the Social Committee and former Portsmouth Press photographer Jane Tyska.

Special thanks to newsletter designer Tom Lynch, who navigated our transition to a new printer.

Newsletter deadlines are March 15, June 15 and Oct. 1. Contributions and queries may be directed to Editor Sherry Wood at [sixswords@aol.com](mailto:sixswords@aol.com).

Respectfully submitted,  
Publications Committee Chairman Sherry Wood

## **Report of the Social Committee**

Your Social Committee has had a very exciting year!

This past year the Social Committee progressed from meeting via all Zoom meetings in 2021, to meeting in person in August 2022, finally! We met seven times. We also met, via Zoom, for an emergency meeting, seven days prior to the scheduled Annual Picnic, to discuss our options, given the untimely news that the Seacoast Science Center had to cancel our use of their permanent tent site on August 30th.

We welcomed new members, Joan Hammond and Kathleen Logan, to our committee this year. Their energetic involvement has been much appreciated!

Again this year, given that the 2022 Annual Meeting was held via Zoom, no reception was held.

The planned New Member event held on April 21st was held via Zoom. Although only two new members attended, it was a worthwhile event. Obviously, the Zoom meeting arrangement had lost its appeal. However, the 2nd and last New Member Event was held October 13th, in person, and was extremely successful! Over thirty members attended, including at least fifteen new members, plus committee and Board members. Sally Gayer welcomed those attending and by the end of the event several new members had voiced interest in volunteering!

I am sure that most Annual Picnic attendees were as eagerly anticipating this event, as were our committee members. With the committee's gratitude, Director Tom Hardiman worked with Seacoast Science Center Director, Jim Chase, to make this event happen on the scheduled day, albeit at a different location. It was held under the tent, at Rye Harbor State Park. Five days to prepare for a different site proved to be a challenge. However, with White Apron's Bar Service's willingness to change venues and the support of several Athenaeum volunteers, plus the committee, the event was a success! Thank you all, with special thanks to Tom Hardiman for making it possible!

The introduction of changes in the organizational model added a Standing Committee, linking the Social Committee and the Admissions Committee, so as to improve the initial experience for new members and to increase their interest and involvement in a variety of opportunities presented at the Athenaeum. The Social Committee looks forward to being part of that goal!

The final event of the year was our first “Annual Holiday Party” to be held since 2019! It was a vibrant and delightful success. Unfortunately, we had several members who had signed up to attend and could not. On the other hand, we had a long wait-list of members who were happy to attend.



I would like to thank the following members of the Social Committee for their active involvement in making this year's events successful: Douglas Aykroyd, Elizabeth Aykroyd, Jan Dinan, Mark Ankarberg, Curt Springer, Cliff Hodgdon, Joan Hammond, Kathleen Logan, and Tom Hardiman.

We would like to thank the following Wine Stewards, organized by Douglas Aykroyd. Without their willingness to volunteer, the Holiday Party libations would have flowed much more slowly! Thank you to Ed Caylor, Karen Bouffard, Jeff Hopper, Sean Clancy, Curtis Springer, Janet Bagley, Deb Child, Don Margeson, Tom Watson, Gary Ghigliotti, Glen Hammond, Kinley Gregg, Andrew Bagley, Jan Dinan, and Douglas Aykroyd.

One of the exciting changes coming to the Social Committee is the addition of Kathleen Logan as co-chairman. She will work with me as we eagerly plan for this new year. The whole Social Committee is eagerly looking forward to 2023 and to offering quality social events to our membership.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Cynthia (Cindy) Knapp  
Chair, Social Committee

## Report of the Special Collections Committee

The key public purpose of the Athenaeum is to collect, protect, and make available to the public original materials documenting the history of Portsmouth. We encourage institutional deposits, accept gifts of family papers, photographs, and ephemera to that end. As such material has often left this area, we follow the market and purchase such materials when we can afford to bring them back home to this area.

As usual, the Special Collections committee is indebted to J. Dennis Robinson, Kinley Gregg, and Tom Hardiman for following websites for such materials, buying, donating, or transcribing or translating such manuscripts.

Antiquarian book and paper dealers, especially Richard Thorner in Manchester, and DeWolfe and Wood of Alfred, ME have kept an eye out for such papers and again helped build our collections.

Members of the Athenaeum family were again generous donors of photographs, papers, and records. With the help of Peter Randall, we were able to acquire from his family negatives and photographs by the late J.D. Lincoln, a NH Art Association photographer who documented the changing city – especially in the 1970s and 1980s.

In addition to ongoing cataloging of the large Armsden photo collection, James Smith is now starting to do the same for the Lincoln collection. He and Tom Hardiman plan a small exhibition of this new collection as part of the city's 400th celebration next summer-fall.

In the area of conservation, new member Phil Carling is nearly halfway done creating archival enclosures for all of our rare book collections.

In preparation for transfer of several institutional deposit collections our archivist Katy Sternberger has worked out possible costs and agreements for potential collections, as well as undertaken research on our a few of our existing manuscripts.

Richard Candee, Chair  
Special Collections Committee

## Report of the Treasurer

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### Financial Results

I'm pleased to report that the news here is very good. Overall, we ended the year ahead of budget. We exceeded the budget on income and finished under on expenses. As a result, we finished the year with positive cashflow of \$120,246. We had actually budgeted for a net loss last year of (\$31,257). When factoring in that projected loss with the actual gain of \$120,246, we finished the year 31% ahead of budget or \$151,503 ahead.

I'll break that down as follows. Total budgeted income for the year was \$483,653. Total income for the year was \$542,650. We finished the year with income above budget by \$58,997. On the expense side we budgeted for \$514,900. We ended up spending \$422,404. Which was \$92,496 under budget.

This excess played out across many line items in the budget, but there were two categories that I thought were noteworthy. First, on the income side, overall contributions from proprietors, subscribers, and friends were about \$44,000 above budget. So, thank you all for your generous contributions. Your ongoing support is critically important to the financial stability of this organization.

On the expense side, when we got notice about a year ago that we needed to vacate the storage space that we were leasing in North Hampton, Proprietor and board member Mark McNabb generously offered temporary storage in one of his buildings here in town at no cost. That one move of support by Mark saved us about \$27,000 last year. So a BIG, thank you to Mark McNabb!

In summary, from a cash flow perspective we finished the year strong, we have a responsible budget in place for 2023, we are well positioned to ride out any further market volatility in the investment portfolio and we have a robust cash reserve that will begin producing income and be available to confront any emergencies or opportunities that may arise. Overall, I can report that the Portsmouth Athenaeum financial position is very strong!

I'll close by saying that as Treasurer of this fine organization, I recognize the importance of a sound financial position, but there's nothing more valuable to this organization than you, its people. Thank you again for your generous support. It's an honor to serve as your treasurer.

Jeffrey Keefe, Treasurer

Preliminary Financial Summary, January–December 2022

REVENUES

Proprietor Assessments	\$	109,458
Annual Appeal		69,930
Miscellaneous Contributions		72,856
Investment Income		116,012
Other Operating Income		95,877
Gain (Loss) on Sale of Investments		(35,472)
Receipts for Special Purposes		63,519
TOTAL REVENUES (including gifts and grants)	\$	492,180

EXPENSES

Staff & Related Costs	\$	234,015
Collections		24,947
Utilities		17,927
Building, Maintenance & Renovations		51,984
Insurance, Office & Printing		57,532
Depreciation		51,878
Special Purpose Expenditures		35,999
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$	474,282
NET INCOME	\$	17,898

ENDOWMENTS & RESERVE ADDITIONS

Reserve Additions	\$	15,000
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Balance Sheet

ASSETS

Cash (including savings reserves)	\$	601,230
Invested Funds		1,813,876
Accounts Receivable		62
Prepaid Expenses		6,928
Fixed Assets		1,108,861
TOTAL ASSETS	\$	3,530,957

LIABILITIES

Prepaid Proprietor Assessments	\$	65,100
Deferred Income		0
Security Deposit		4,398
Accounts Payable		0
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$	69,498
ASSETS – LIABILITIES =	\$	3,461,459

## Gift Acknowledgements

Annual Appeal	Charles Abizaid
Annual Appeal	Ted Alex
Annual Appeal	Timothy Allison
Annual Appeal	Robert J. Allister
Annual Appeal	Richard Antal
Annual Appeal	Douglas & Elizabeth Aykroyd
Annual Appeal	Mr. Andrew Bagley
Annual Appeal	Ms. Patricia Bagley
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Annual Appeal	Gail Drobnik

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Annual Appeal	John Miles Evans
Annual Appeal	David Ewing
Annual Appeal	James Fender
Annual Appeal	Ellen Fineberg & Vincent Lombardi
Annual Appeal	James Fogarty
Annual Appeal	Jameson S. French
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Annual Appeal	Brian Gibb
Annual Appeal	David D. Gobbi
Annual Appeal	Alan Gold
Annual Appeal	Frank A. Graf
Annual Appeal	Vernon Gray
Annual Appeal	Eric Gregg
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Annual Appeal	Jeffrey Keefe
Annual Appeal	Herbert Kingsbury
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Annual Appeal	Mr. Robert Lambert
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<i>Special Collections Fund: Armsden Collection</i>	Douglas L. Wheeler
<i>Special Collections Fund: Armsden Collection in honor of Marian Gerrish Craig</i>	Matthew Craig
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<i>Warrem Conservation Fund</i>	<b>Tara Raiselis</b>
<i>Warrem Conservation Fund</i>	<b>Matthew Wood</b>

## **Necrology**

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### *In Memoriam*

Frank J. Cilluffo .....	Share 205 (spouse)
Judith E. Day.....	Share 65 (formerly)
Frank L. Dennett .....	Share 39
Frederick S. Gray, Jr. ....	Share 64 (formerly)
Sarah Hamill .....	Share 130 (formerly)
Barbara Hill.....	Share 312
William Dean Howells III.....	Share 377
Marcia Jebb.....	Share 23
D. Bruce Montgomery .....	Share 324 (formerly)
Jane Molloy Porter .....	Share 88
Edmund Tarbell II.....	Share 115
John Udaloy .....	Share 84
Douglas Wheeler.....	Share 380

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