

Portsmouth Athenaeum
205th Annual Meeting

THE PORTSMOUTH ATHENÆUM

205th Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 14, 2024

3 p.m.

In the Shaw Research Library and Via Zoom platform

Agenda

- Welcome by the President
 - Approval of Minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting
 - Necrology 2023
- Finances
 - Report of the Treasurer
 - Report from the Finance Committee
 - Approval of 2025 Assessment
- Reports on the Year
 - Report of the Keeper
 - Report of the President
- Report of the Nominating Committee
- Election of Officers and Directors
- Recognition of outgoing Directors
- Special Recognition of David Sanderson's 60th year as a Proprietor
- Other Business
- Adjournment

Please note that Subscribers, spouses, and partners are welcome at the Annual Meeting, but only Proprietors may vote. The minutes, financial report, nominating report, and other annual reports for 2024 will be available at <https://portsmouthathenaeum.org/about-us/> by January 12.

THE PORTSMOUTH ATHENAEUM

Minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 15, 2023, at 3:00 pm

1. **Call to Order:** President Sally Gayer called the 204th meeting of the Proprietors of the Portsmouth Athenaeum to order at 3:00 pm. She asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of the 203rd annual meeting. Hearing none, Peter Rice moved the minutes be approved and the motion carried unanimously.
2. **Necrology:** Brad Lown read the names of the Proprietors and former Proprietors who died in 2022. A moment of silence was held to honor those we lost during the year.
3. **Finances:**
Report of the Treasurer: Treasurer Jeff Keefe presented the financial summary for 2022, noting that net income was 31% over budget for the year. We brought in \$542,650, versus a budget of \$483,653, and spent \$422,404 against a budget of \$514,910, leaving a net income of \$120,246.
4. **Report of the Investment Committee:** Treasurer Jeff Keefe reported that the Athenaeum investment portfolio had a tough year, down from a beginning value of \$2.126M to a year end value of \$1,817,438M. The portfolio did out perform the benchmarks, down 12.94%, when the Barclay's Bond Index was -14% and the S&P -2%. Going forward, the current allocation of the investment portfolio is 41% equities, 59% cash and fixed income. Jeff thanked his fellow committee members, Steve Desmarais, Gail Drobynyk, and Lorne Buxton for their time and effort over the year.
5. **Approval of the 2023 Assessment:** Nancy Starks-Cheney made a motion to approve the 2023 Assessment, which will remain unchanged at \$250; Richard Candee seconded; motion passed.
6. **Report of the Keeper:** Keeper and Executive Director Tom Hardiman addressed the membership with thanks for the leadership of Sally, the board, and the staff to make 2022 a remarkably successful year. He noted that despite the downturn in the invested funds, the Athenaeum finished with an operating surplus, the latest of many in recent years. He cited numerous bold actions the Athenaeum had undertaken in the past, including the purchase of 9 Market Square in 1805 and the purchase of the Foye building in 1981 with a mortgage of 18 ½ %. He said we should not shy away from bold moves now: "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."
7. **Report of the President:** President Sally Gayer addressed the membership noting the good work done by the board over the past year to address the organization's most urgent need: storage space for our rapidly growing collections. She recounted the scope of the problem and efforts to mitigate the issue to date. She outlined the primary issues:

- 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;
- The 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; and
- Need for a period of stability to allow time to discuss these issues as we move forward.

She remarked that the space available at 170 State Street will give us the breathing room to do more detailed planning for our future. She thanked Brad Lown and Mike Chubrich for months of hard work negotiating the terms of the lease for the space.

8. Report of the Nominating Committee: Committee Chair Maryellen Burke presented the following slate of 2022 Officers and Directors:

President (to 2024)	2 year term	Sally Gayer
Vice President (to 2024)	2 year term	Margaret F. Hodges
Secretary (to 2024)	1 year term	Richard G. Adams
Treasurer (to 2024)	1 year term	Jeffrey W. Keefe
For Director (to 2026)	3 year term	Christine Frieze
For Director (to 2026)	3 year term	Alan Gold
For Director (to 2026)	3 year term	Don Margeson

Maryellen thanked Don Margeson and Ronan Donohoe for their service on the nominating committee. Richard Candee made a motion to accept the slate of 2023 nominees, seconded by Andrew Bagley; the motion passed unanimously. President Sally Gayer offered thanks to outgoing board members Ed Caylor, Jan Dinan, and Mark McNabb.

9. Other Business: Michael Chubrich made a motion that the Proprietors vote on whether to sign a lease for offsite storage at 170 State Street if it is not tax exempt. Richard Candee seconded. Andrew Bagley said he didn't think the Proprietors should tie the board's hands in this matter. Curt Springer asked if it could be phrased as a non-binding suggestion. Mike restated his motion as: the lease to 170 State Street be presented to the City within 21 days to determine if it is tax exempt and the board may proceed regardless of the outcome. Two Proprietors in the room and two on Zoom voted in favor; 25 in the room and 13 on Zoom voted against. 23 abstained.

10. Adjournment: There being no further business, Richard Grossman made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Richard Candee. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard G. Adams
Secretary

In Memoriam 2022

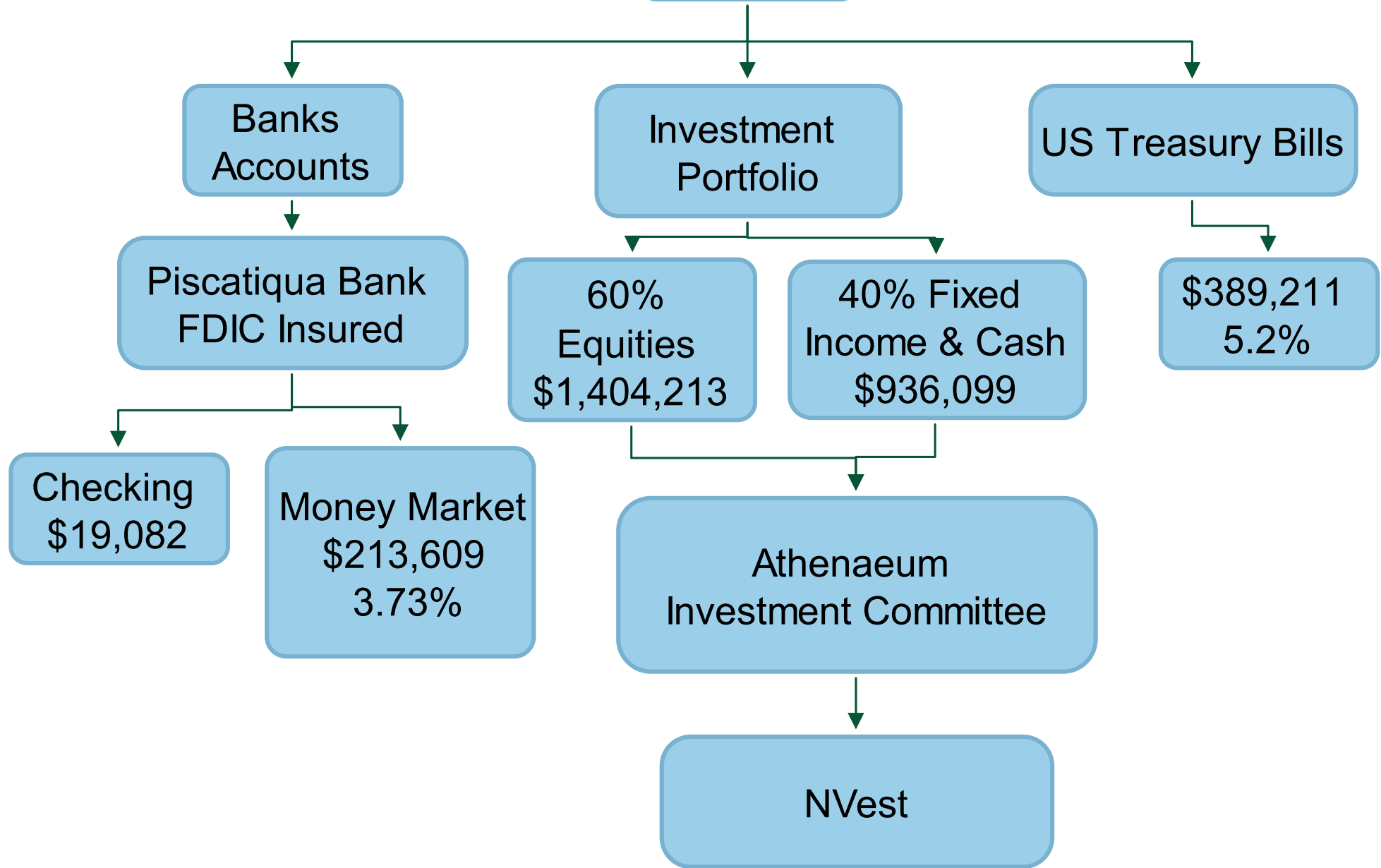
Robert L. Barth, M.D.	Share 260
David Borden	Share 210
William Kelly Davis	Share 140
Charles Eldredge	Share 34
Sarah Paine Ford	Share 99
Robert Stewart	Share 290
Geoffrey Clark	Spouse share 19
Paul Dubois	Spouse of Subscriber Sharon Griffin
John N. Welch	Formerly Share 262

Portsmouth Athenaeum 2023 Preliminary Financial Summary

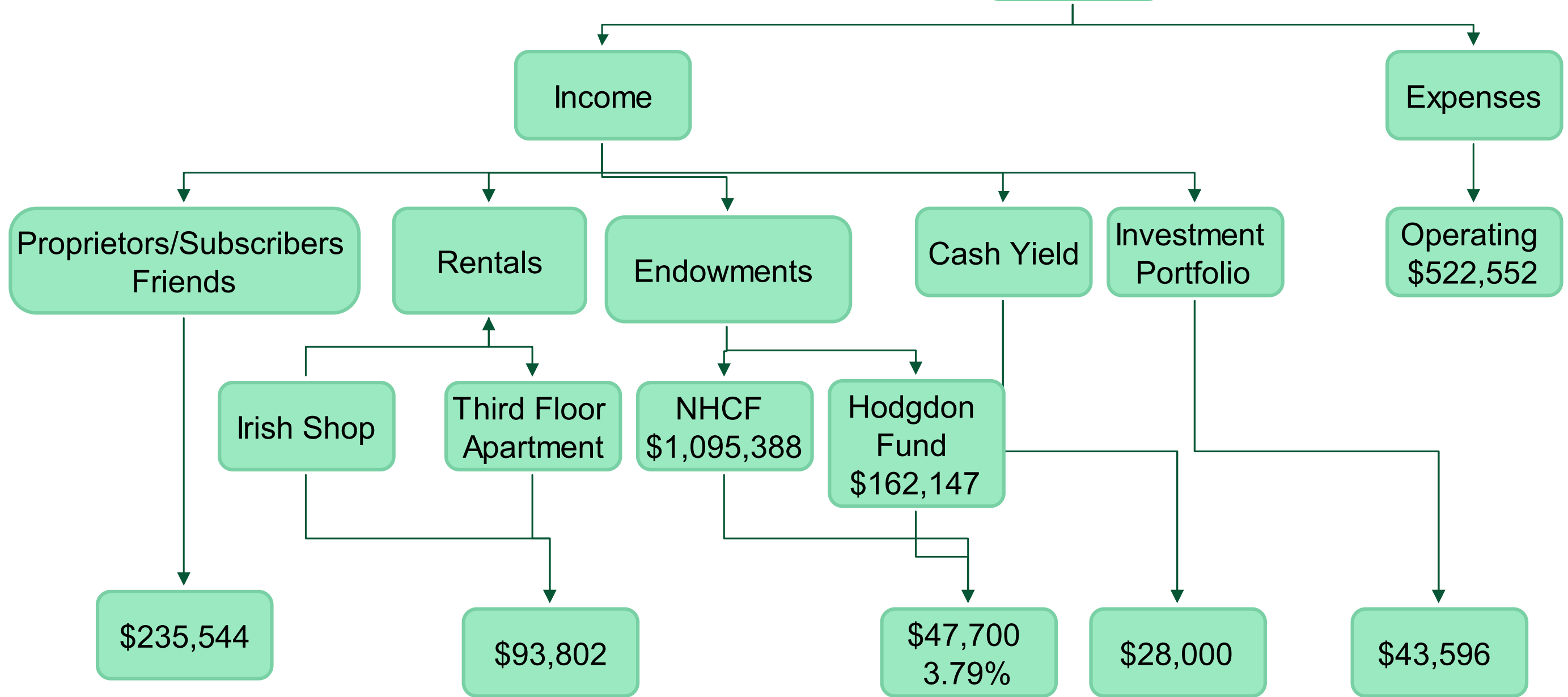
REVENUE:	2023 Preliminary	2022 Actual
Proprietor Assessments	\$ 115,710	\$ 109,208
Annual Appeal	\$ 71,825	\$ 69,930
Miscellaneous Contributions	\$ 91,499	\$ 72,856
Investment Income	\$ 133,500	\$ 116,012
Other Operating Income	\$ 98,231	\$ 95,877
Gain (Loss) on Sale of Investments	\$ 11,342	\$ (31,474)
Receipts for Special Purposes	\$ 86,544	\$ 63,519
(including gifts and grants)	\$ 608,651	\$ 495,928
EXPENDITURES:		
Staff & Related Costs	\$ 255,633	\$ 233,975
Collections	\$ 20,646	\$ 26,837
Utilities	\$ 63,218	\$ 17,927
Building, Maintenance & Renovations	\$ 51,163	\$ 51,984
Insurance, Office, Printing	\$ 55,881	\$ 57,192
Depreciation	\$ 52,681	\$ 52,240
Special Purpose Expenditures	\$ 74,806	\$ 35,999
	\$ 574,028	\$ 476,154
NET SURPLUS	\$ 34,623	\$ 19,774
ENDOWMENTS & RESERVE ADDITIONS:		
Reserve Additions	\$ 5,908	\$ 14,500
Balance Sheet		
ASSETS:		
Cash, including Savings Reserves	\$ 626,989	\$ 598,830
Invested Funds	\$ 1,993,870	\$ 1,813,876
Accounts Receivable	\$ 480	\$ 139
Security Deposit for Storage Rental	\$ 3,187	\$ -
Prepaid Expenses	\$ 6,915	\$ 6,928
Fixed Assets	\$ 1,103,120	\$ 1,108,499
	\$ 3,734,561	\$ 3,528,272
LIABILITIES:		
Prepaid Proprietor/Subscriber Assessments	\$ 75,750	\$ 65,100
Deferred Income	\$ 1,700	\$ -
Security Deposit	\$ 4,889	\$ 4,398
Accounts Payable	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ 82,339	\$ 69,498
NET ASSETS	\$ 3,652,222	\$ 3,458,774

Portsmouth Athenaeum Financial Strategy

Assets



Cashflow



***Vision, Mission and Core Values
January 14, 2024
Annual Meeting***

Vision:

The Portsmouth Athenaeum is a welcoming collaborative of curious minds dedicated to enriching the lives of its members and the broader community through spirited dialogue and cultural engagement.

Mission:

The Portsmouth Athenaeum is a membership library that welcomes all who seek knowledge to experience culture and share in the history of the Piscataqua region so that together we may find meaning in the past to illuminate the present and the future.

Core Values:

Discourse: Encourage convivial interchange among members and the wider community.

Learning: Challenge ourselves to strive for excellence and to continued learning.

Preservation: Treasure, preserve and share history of the Seacoast.

Service: Be of value to our members and the wider community.

Stewardship: Honor our membership and institution by being financially and ethically responsible.

The Nominating Committee of the Portsmouth Athenaeum submits the following nominations for officers and directors for terms commencing 2024:

President (to 2026) 2 year term
Jeff Keefe (who is the current Treasurer)

Vice-President (to 2026) 2 year term
Jan Dinan

Immediate past Pres (to 2026) 2 year term
Sally Gayer

Secretary (to 2025) 1 year term
Peggy Hodges

Treasurer (to 2025) 1 year term
Craig Steidle (who is a current board member)

Director (to 2025) Fill an uncompleted term
Elizabeth Farish

Director (to 2027) 2nd three year term
Curt Springer

Director (to 2027) 2nd three year term
Anne Weidman

Director (to 2027) 1st three year term
Michael LaBrie

Jan Dinan -

Jan Dinan recently served on the Atheneum Board of Directors for 6 years and has been an active member of the Social Committee, since becoming a Proprietor.

She and her husband, Peter, moved to Portsmouth 13 years ago from Nashua, NH and restored the Captain John Loughton House on Court Street, after purchasing it from Strawberry Banke. Jan is a long standing Board member of the Gundalow Company and currently is its Board Secretary. She is passionate about preserving and sharing history in an effort to make meaningful decisions for the future.

Elizabeth Farish-

Since graduating from George Mason University with an undergraduate degree in history, Elizabeth Farish has been dedicated to museums in the Piscataqua

Region. After nearly a decade of working for independent historic house museums in Portsmouth and as a Regional Manager for Maine and New Hampshire for Historic New England (formerly SPNEA), Farish returned to school at the Savannah College of Art and Design. She received a Master of Arts in Historic Preservation. Returning to Portsmouth, she accepted the position of Chief Curator at Strawberry Banke Museum. Farish serves on the board of the Piscataqua Decorative Arts Society and the Association of New Hampshire Historical Societies.

Michael LaBrie-

Michael LaBrie likes to say that he was born in City Hall (the former Portsmouth Hospital.) He was graduated from PHS in 1980 and from Saint Anselm College in 1985 with degrees in Political Science, French and Soviet Studies.

Michael has worked as a professional photographer through high school to the present. He is a self taught artist in graphic and fine arts, a gallerist and a dealer in fine art, as well as an avid collector. He is involved in commercial real estate ownership, development and management, since the early 90s, as a partner in The Labrie Group of hospitality properties, including Jimmy's Jazz & Blues Club, The River House, and The Atlantic Grill. He enjoys the renovation and repurposing of historic properties.

Respectfully submitted,

January 14, 2024

Nominating Committee Members: Anne Weidman, Elizabeth Farish, Andrew Bagley, Sally Gayer, Peter Lamb/chair

Report of the Admissions Committee 2023

The admissions committee met 10 times in 2023 and unanimously recommends the following to be approved for share transfer:

The committee voted unanimously to approve the transfer of share 115 from the estate of Edmund Tarbell II to his son-in-law, **Andrius Keturakis**. Andy is the Director of Research and Development for IDEXX Laboratories. He is an avid sailor and is interested in maritime history and Athenaeum history. He lives in New Castle with his wife, Julie Tarbell Keturakis, and is endorsed by Charles Tarbell, Tom Hardiman, and Donald Margeson

Blanton Roy Young, “Roy,” is the son of Proprietor George M. Young (share 178) and his wife, Pat. George has been a Proprietor since 1980. Roy is an attorney with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. He lives in Durham with his wife and two children and is interested in history, especially governmental history. He is endorsed by Bill Wieting, Ronan Donohoe, and Jon Russ.

The committee also unanimously recommends the following 31 to be approved as Subscribers:

Ceal A. Anderson is retired as Operations and Supply Chain Manager for Nike Inc. and is greatly interested in community service, sports, and travel. She lives in Portsmouth with spouse Colleen Bean and is endorsed by David Splaine, Marcus Schaff, and Brylyee Collins.

Stephen Clough Barndollar is the retired owner and President of Seatrade International and is the father of Proprietor Gil Barndollar. Stephen lives in Portsmouth with his wife Karin and is recommended by Sooky Lassen, Jameson French, and Betty Tamposi.

Stephen C. Buczko is an Inspector with the Mass Water Authority and has a lifelong interest in Maritime History, particularly navigational instruments. He lives in the South End of Portsmouth with his wife Nancy and is endorsed by Sooky Lassen, Clare O’Brien, and Richard G. Adams.

Jeffrey A. Carlisle is a Medical System Designer, Founder and CEO of Pneuma Systems Corp. He lives in Portsmouth and is recommended by Anne Weidman, Lawrence Gray, and Andrew Samonas.

Anne Catell is a retired special education teacher interested in sailing, tennis, and cooking. She lives in Portsmouth with spouse George Samuels and is endorsed by Sooky Lassen, Linda Posson, and Kathy Logan

Peter Badgley Coddington is the company owner of PaRaBaL cyber security and is interested in reading and writing and is eager to use the library’s resources. He lives in Portsmouth with his wife Lisa and is recommended by Curt Springer, Jay Gingrich, and Linda Cheatham.

Richard Thomas DiPentima is an Epidemiologist with the Manchester Health Department and is interested in health care, politics, boating, travel, and food. He lives in Portsmouth with his spouse Catherine and is recommended by Andrew Bagley, Lou Salome, and Peter Coddington.

David Phillip Falk is retired Executive V.P. of Pinnacle West Capital Corp and is interested in military history, biography, and business, and has lectured on legal ethics. He lives in

Portsmouth with his wife Sally and is recommended by Sooky Lassen, Sally Gayer, and Donald Margeson.

Will Parker Feld is 18 years old! He went to Berwick Academy and is in his final year at St. John's prep. He has a strong list of academic awards and has been accepted by Dartmouth. He lives in Portsmouth. He likes military and maritime history. He is endorsed by his father, Tom Hardiman, and David Mulhern.

Dr. Lawrence Gray is a plastic surgeon and is greatly interested in history, travel, and 3rd world surgery trips, and is very involved with Rotary. He lives in New Castle with spouse Ruth Gray and is endorsed by Stephen Demarais, Jim Munton, and Jack Nelson

Carol Gruen is 65 years old. She lives on Middle Street, near Aldrich Road. She is a realtor with previous experience in financial planning and as a financial analyst. She is a member of several local non-profit organizations. She is interested in historic architecture and preserving historic artifacts. She is recommended by Sooky Lassen, Peter Tarlton, and Eleonore Sanderson

David Higgins is a portfolio manager with Wells Fargo and is interested in the cultural events and history of Portsmouth. He lives in Portsmouth with his spouse Julia and is recommended by Anne Weidman, Susan Hamilton, and John Leland.

Anna Howard is a Senior Manager of Academic Initiatives and is very involved at South Church and is interested in social justice, history, music, and cinema. She lives in Portsmouth with her spouse Steven and is recommended by Anne Weidman, Irene Bush, and Sean Clancy.

Mark W. Hubbert is a retired executive from Wells Fargo Bank and is interested in historic preservation and decorative arts. He lives in Portsmouth and is an active volunteer for the Athenaeum. He is endorsed by Ed Caylor, Tom Hardiman, and Mary Beth Herbert.

Thomas F. Irwin is a is the V.P. of the Conservation Law Foundation of N.H. and is interested in music and all sorts of outdoor activities. He lives in Portsmouth with his wife, Lauren Simon and is endorsed by Sooky Lassen, Sally Gayer, and Andrew Moore.

Clare B. Kittredge is a professional writer and journalist working for the Boston Globe and other publications.. She lives in Portsmouth with her spouse Ted Jankowski and is recommended by Erica Dodge, Don Margeson, and Hollis Brodrick.

Dennis Neil Kleinman is an educational media producer who has produced features for National Geographic, the History Channel, and other outlets. He is very interested in history and music. He lives in New Castle with his spouse Darcy and is recommended by Sooky Lassen, Kate Murray, and Sally Gayer.

Paula F. Lewinski is a professional grant writer and volunteers in our photographic archives. She lives in Portsmouth with her spouse Joseph and is recommended by Anne Weidman, Rob Stevens, Andrew Bagley, Tom Hardiman, and Susan Kindstedt.

Katherine Maggio is an entrepreneur owner of Friendly Pets and sales manager of Central Garden and Pet and has a background in both business and history. She lives in Barrington with her husband Craig and is endorsed by Deb Child, Brylye Collins, and Marcus Shaff.

Robin Lurie-Meyerkopf is the educator and walking tour manager at the Portsmouth Historical Society and has coordinated 3rd grade school tours at the Athenaeum for many years. She lives in Portsmouth with spouse Richard Meyerkopf and is endorsed by Sooky Lassen, Ellen Fineberg, and John Seavey.

William Henry “Ledge” Mitchell is an investment counselor and Lieutenant in the USNR and is a history buff also interested in golf, fly fishing, fly tying, and oil painting. He lives in Newfields with spouse Jacalyn and is endorsed by Gary Ghigliotti, Sam Reid, and Jim Forgarty

John Richard Moore is a retired electrical engineer in the defense industry and is interested in historic preservation and decorative arts. He lives in Dover with his wife, Elinor Fong and is endorsed by Sally Gayer, Kristin Goodwillie, and Andrew Moore.

Melissa R. Paly is a Waterkeeper and Environmental Advocate with the Conservation Law Foundation and is interested in helping the Athenaeum strengthen community connections. She lives in Kittery Point with her spouse David Batchelder and is recommended by Sooky Lassen, Maryellen Burke, Andrew Moore, and Tom Hardiman.

Steffen Ronald Poltak is a forensic anthropologist and illustrator, and is interested in ancient history, science, art, and anthropology. He lives in Portsmouth with his spouse Emma Phillips and is recommended by Sooky Lassen, Mary Beth Herbert and Andrew Bagley.

Lara Sanders Prescott is a NYT best-selling novelist interested in history, reading, family, and travel. She lives in Portsmouth with her husband Matthew and is recommended by Robert Lambert, Gary Ghigliotti, and Kimberly Meyer

John Joseph Roese is the President and Chief Technology Officer of Dell Technologies and is interested in history, global travel, animal welfare, and social justice. He lives in Portsmouth with his spouse James Copeland and is recommended by Sooky Lassen, Martin Hanssman, and Judy Nerbonne

Diane L. Schaefer is retired from work at the UNH Foundation, NH Public TV and Radio, the Forest Society, and the Seacoast Mental Health Center and is interested in Portsmouth history and Athenaeum events. He lives in Portsmouth with her spouse James Copeland and is recommended by Sooky Lassen, Charles Bickford, Jamey French, and Peter Rice.

Nathania Sitiwatjana 33 years old and lives in Dover. She is employed in business and commercial lending. She works with organizations that focus on women in business and opportunities for children. She has a variety of interests and looks forward to being a volunteer for the Athenaeum. She is recommended by Anne Wiedman, Brylye Collins, and Andrew Bagley.

Sandra L. Smith-Wiese is a nurse practitioner in Internal Medicine at Dartmouth and is interested in music, history, quilting, antiques, and gardening. She lives in Portsmouth with her husband Frederick and is endorsed by Martin Hanssmann, Sooky Lassen, and Mary Beth Herbert.

Talia B. Sperduto is a NH and ME real estate broker and publisher of a monthly newsletter on local historic properties. She lives in Portsmouth and is endorsed by Sooky Lassen, Charles Bickford, and Kathy Logan.

Charlie Wu lives on Porter Street, in the center of town. He is 66 years old. He graduated Harvard and added an MBA from Harvard, too. He has recently moved from Boston to live in Portsmouth full-time. He is a board member of Strawberry Banke and is involved in other civic interests. Charlie is endorsed by Susan Noerdlinger, Chris White, and Steve Roberts

Ed Caylor, Chair

Report of the Art and Artifacts Collection Committee 2023

This was again a quiet year for the Art and Artifacts Collection Committee. Most of our committee work was done by email, with only one in-person meeting, but members were quick to respond to any emailed questions. 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.

With the help of a grant from the Thaxter Foundation we were able to clean and repair the portrait of John Haven. It is a fine late-nineteenth-century copy of the original painting by Gilbert Stuart. In 2024 we hope to have a new frame for it.

In August we loaned three of our South Pacific artifacts given by John Collings Long to the New Bedford Whaling Museum for an exhibit, which will end in September of this year. We also lent a print of Daniel Webster and a bowl painted by Celia Thaxter to the Portsmouth Historical Society for their summer exhibits.

We acquired several objects in 2023:

- Drawing of B.P. Shillaber – Athenaeum Purchase
- Watercolor portrait of Bruce Ingmire - Gift, Lance Ingmire
- Walking Stick of Daniel Marcy - Gift, H.B. Gordon
- Keys from the Naval Prison – Gift, Caryl Sawtelle
- Plaque of the HMS Minerva – Gift, Portsmouth 400th Committee
- Various Fire Parades ribbons and badges, a Kearsarge souvenir pin, a tally (hatband) of the USS Bonita, and two US Navy cap badges – Gift, Gayle Sawtelle
- Three prints of Portsmouth – Gift, Gayle Sawtelle
- Two fire buckets belonging to Alfred Woodward Haven – Gift, Henrietta Trantum

The portrait of Bruce Ingmire is hanging in the Reference Library, and Daniel Marcy's walking stick is on exhibit in the case in the Old Library.

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

Elizabeth Aykroyd
Chair

Report of the Exhibits Committee 2023

The Randall Gallery hosted three exhibitions this past year. The first, entitled *The Wentworth Takeover: How One Family Dominated Portsmouth and New Hampshire 1715-1775*, opened on April 14, 2023. This exhibition was chosen to coincide with the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the founding of Portsmouth. Sandra Rux was the curator and she spent five years doing the research on Lieutenant Governor John Wentworth, his wife and fourteen children. Sandra gave a gallery tour on April 15th and an evening lecture on June 21st, entitled *Before Live Free or Die: The Wentworth Oligarchy 1715-1775*. John Rule gave a gallery talk on June 24th entitled *Benning Wentworth's Towns in Vermont and New Hampshire*. The exhibition closed on July 15th and the major explanatory panels were lent to the Wentworth-Coolidge Visitors' Center for the summer season.

The second exhibition of the year opened on August 4th. James Smith, the Athenaeum's Photographic Collections Manager, curated the exhibition entitled *Peace, Love & Portsmouth: Celebrating the City's Cultural Renaissance through the Lens of J.D. Lincoln*. James wanted everyone to see the exhibition as a celebration, of Portsmouth and of Lincoln's photographs of the 1970s. Lincoln's photographs during that important decade captured the changes taking place in Portsmouth, which led to the Portsmouth of today. Cultural events were established, such as the Prescott Park Arts Festival, Market Square Day and restaurants like the Blue Strawberry opened. Hundreds of Lincoln's negatives and images were scanned to create the multimedia exhibit. Lincoln's photographs and negatives were donated to the Athenaeum through the efforts of Peter E. Randall, who published Lincoln's *People of Portsmouth*. The exhibition closed in November.

The final exhibition of the year was the Proprietors' Art Show, an annual exhibition that opens at the Athenaeum's Christmas Party, held this year on December 8th. It will close at the Annual Meeting in January. This year the show included paintings, photographs, sculpture, fiber works, furniture, as well as books and articles written by our members. Our thanks to Joan and Frank Graf for hanging the show, and Nancy Hammond for doing the labels. Thanks to Librarian Robin Silva for organizing the books and articles for the exhibition, as well as for her support throughout the year as we research topics for exhibitions.

Our thanks to Stephanie Hewson, Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator, for organizing the Gallery Sitters for each exhibition.

Committee Members: Ceal Anderson, Elizabeth Aykroyd, Linda Cheatham, Ronan Donahoe, Lauren Gallant, Joan Graf, Elaine Tefft, Sherry Wood, Sooky Lassen, Ellen Fineberg, John Mayer, Barbara van Buskirk, Mary-Jo Monusky, Mara Witzling, Tom Hardiman, Keeper. We have several new members joining the committee in 2024.

Judy Groppa
Chair, Exhibits Committee

Report of the Performance Committee 2023

The mission of the Performance Committee of the Athenaeum is to provide musical concerts of outstanding quality for its members and the wider public. This year our program achieved a new level and an impressive degree of community outreach. We are pleased to thank all those friends of the Athenaeum whose contributions supported this outstanding season.

ArtsAthenaeum Concerts

We began the season with a new partnership between the Portsmouth Athenaeum and the Handel + Haydn Society of Boston. On 27 April at St. John's Church a quartet of their star players presented a concert of music by Bach, Handel and Vivaldi to an enthusiastic audience of 150. This was by far the largest audience we have ever welcomed to an Athenaeum concert. We hope to repeat this highly successful venture in the future.

As has become customary, we continued our season with a Memorial Concert for proprietors of the Athenaeum who had died during 2022. The event took place on 12 May in the intimate setting of the Sawtelle Room at the Athenaeum itself. Dr. William Wieting read the life stories and Michael Blair, tenor and Jim Prendergast, guitar, provided appropriately elegiac musical tributes.

The final ArtsAthenaeum event of the year was a Holiday concert at South Church given by the Portsmouth Brass Quintet. This was billed as a gift from the Athenaeum to the Portsmouth community. The event was suitably high spirited and joyful, as befitted the season. Over 100 members of the public attended, an increase on last year, and the audience included many young families who were introduced to the Athenaeum for the first time.

Financially, the three concerts were a great success. Members of the Athenaeum and of the general public contributed over \$7,000 in gifts to underwrite the costs of these concerts, well in excess of the expenses of \$5,662. Thus, at the end of the year we were able to contribute \$1,352 to the Athenaeum's budget. Furthermore, for the first time ever we did not need to draw on the annual subvention of \$5,000 that the Athenaeum has provided for these concerts.

Portsmouth Athenaeum Chamber Music Series (PACM)

Thanks to the support of 55 generous patrons, numerous subscribers and the broader public, we organized four concerts this year. They were:

August 27 Balourdet Quartet, Kittery Dance Hall
September 24 Noree Chamber Soloists, St. John's Church
October 8 RASA String Quartet, St John's Church
October 29 ASMI Trio, St. John's Church

The musicians came mainly from Boston and New York and the quality of their playing was spellbinding. Our enthusiastic and engaged audiences, averaging 70-80 per concert, deeply appreciated these performances. Patrons had an opportunity to meet the musicians at a reception afterwards held at the Athenaeum.

The concert series once again was a significant financial success. The total income received was \$18,267, well in excess of expenses of \$15,492. Thus, after all accounts were settled, we transferred an end-of year surplus of \$2,774 to the Athenaeum.

Taken together, the two concert series have thus contributed a total of \$4,126 to the Athenaeum's finances.

The Work of the Committee

The Performance Committee has met nearly every month throughout the year to organize these concerts. We decided to expand our numbers to enable us to mount the growing number of concerts presented each year, and to address the increasing paperwork requested by the venues that agree to host us. Thus, we welcomed Susan Noerdlinger, John Moore and Dan Pettengill to the committee while saying farewell to Linda Posson who has stepped down. The other members of the committee were President Sally Gayer, Kristin Goodwillie, Sharon Griffin, Bruce MacIntyre, Andrew Moore, Alice and Chris White, Dr. William Wieting, and Sooky Lassen and Keeper Tom Hardiman both *ex officio*. The committee members work in a spirit of harmony and goodwill to accomplish the myriad tasks that the comprehensive program outlined here requires. In so doing, we aim to enrich the lives of Athenaeum members and friends and to contribute significantly to the cultural life of Portsmouth and the Seacoast.

Respectfully submitted.

Andrew Moore
Chair

Report of the Publications Committee 2023

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

The Athenaeum newsletter, edited by committee Chairman Sherry Wood, enjoyed strong participation and readership levels in 2023. A total of 16 authors penned 34 articles and contributed 26 images to enliven its pages. Designer Tom Lynch pulled it all together with creative and eye-pleasing packaging.

Thanks go to: Dick Adams, Douglas Aykroyd, Elizabeth Aykroyd, Irene Bush, Sally Gayer, Judy Groppa, Tom Hardiman, Stephanie Hewson, Peggy Hodges, Tom Lynch, Ben Menard, Don Margeson, Linda Posson, Robin Silva, James Smith, Chris White and Sherry Wood.

There were also 12 monthly At the Athenaeum columns in the Portsmouth Herald, ranging in subject from memories of Portsmouth's The Acres neighborhood to the city's first Market Square Day, an exhibit on Portsmouth's metamorphosis in the 1970s, and the Athenaeum's breathtaking architecture and 1861 renovation. Those authors include Dick Adams, Roland Goodbody, Tom Hardiman and Sherry Wood.

The impact of all of these articles was greatly enhanced by Athenaeum Photographic Collections Manager James Smith's assistance in curating and supplying images.

Newsletter deadlines are March 15, June 15, and Oct. 1. Contributions and queries may be directed to Sherry Wood at sixswords@aol.com.

Respectfully submitted,
Publications Committee Chairman Sherry Wood

Portsmouth Athenaeum - Library Vital Statistics - 2023

Cataloging

Books Processed	211	11.05% change from prior year
Books Purchased	117	-1.68% change from prior year
Books Donated	94	32.39% change from prior year

Library Usage

In-person Reserachers	738	45.28% change from prior year
Phone/Online Researchers	449	-4.87% change from prior year
Reading Room Tours	683	56.65% change from prior year
Loans	709	6.94% change from prior year
Gallery Visitors	923	152.19% change from prior year

Online Catalog

Fruitful Searches	61,203	28.59% change from prior year
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Website

Total Views	48,247
Unique Visitors	20,583

Social Media

Facebook Reach	65,609	17.50% change from prior year
Facebook Visits	5,396	44.40% change from prior year
Total Facebook Followers	2,386	
Instagram Reach	15,340	-46.40% change from prior year
Instagram Profile Visits	1,203	-23.00% change from prior year
Total Instagram Followers	2,763	

Weekly Email Blast

Subscribers	924
Average Open Rate	64.89%

Portsmouth Athenaeum - Reference Statistics - 2023

Reference Sheets (in-person & phone) - January to December 2023

Nonmembers	2021	70.0%
Members	868	30.0%
Total interactions	2889	

Gallery visitors	923	43.8%
Building visitors	448	21.2%
In-person reference	738	35.0%
Total in-person interactions	2109	

Phone reference	140	17.9%
Other phone interactions	640	82.1%
Total phone interactions	780	

Asana (online) - January to December 2023

Research + Feedback + Donation	158	51.1%
Images	151	48.9%
Total online interactions	309	

All interactions (in-person + phone + online) - January to December 2023

In-person	2109	65.9%
Phone	780	24.4%
Online	309	9.7%
Total all interactions	3198	

Reference-related interactions - January to December 2023

In-person reference	738	62.2%
Phone reference	140	11.8%
Online reference	309	26.0%
Total reference	1187	

37.1% of all interactions

Special Collections Report for 2023.

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. The committee is indebted to J. Dennis Robinson, Kinley Gregg, and Tom Hardiman for following websites for finding, buying, donating, or transcribing or translating such manuscripts.

We are also indebted to the excellent staff that find, catalog, process, and digitize images of the collection for the Athenaeum online catalog. James Smith has been outstanding in his continuing work to put large numbers of the huge Douglas Armsden photograph collections (and many others) on line for digital access.

While Special Collections does not include the general library collection, we owe an equally large debt to Librarian Robin Silva. The depth and usefulness of our digital catalog is unequalled by many other larger (and better funded) research libraries, and is a result of Robin's skill, hard work and wisdom!

Archivists Susan Kindstedt and Katy Sternberger have processed some 27 gifts to the manuscript collections this past year. The largest and most significant was from Gayle Sawtelle, eight major additions to the Sawtelle family's gifts of seafaring papers and other maritime materials of local importance made several years ago. Kinley Gregg has also continued to buy, donate, and transcribe a number of useful mid-19th century letters to or from several Portsmouth families and local characters. One standout is the diary of South End grocer John Harrat, covering the years 1837 to 1861.

Printed books and ephemera is another important category of our Special Collections. Tom Hardiman keeps an eye out for useful additions from dealers and collectors, as does Dennis Robinson on e-bay and other online sources. This year we added *The Gentleman's and Builder's Repository* (London 1738) for its importance to both the John Wentworth and Wentworth-Coolidge houses. It joins a number of design source books that Tom and I have continued to add to the rare books collection.

Among the many ads and other ephemera purchased this year, I have a special love for the small trade card for local 19th century inventor and manufacturer David Urch's "Marine Bicycle" and its special West Coast agent in California!

Among many significant additions to our photographic collections that we bought online are new images by early Portsmouth photographers Carl Meinerth, the well-known Davis Brothers, and even many more new post cards of the city and environs.

Of special interest is the historic photograph collection of Clyde Williamson, from his daughter Cindy, including a number of important images not before in our historic photos of the city, as well as images of their building and some business records of Eagle Photo.

James Smith keeps attracting new additions by gift or purchase, like the 26 slides of the Exchange Shopping Center at Pease AFB in 1981; a watercolor portrait and 8 x 10 photo of donor Bruce Ingmire with many of his newspaper columns; additions from Marguerite Mathews and Greg Gathers to our Pontine Movement Theatre collection (MS 116), or the 53 costume designs for Theatre by the Sea that designer Kathie Krause Iannicelli gave us along with photos of 2 plays and a collage for the set design of *Othello*.

The Special Collections committee thanks the *dozens* of Athenaeum Proprietors and others who made gifts this past year, and we hope you (and others) will continue to do the same this next year and thereafter. The Portsmouth Athenaeum's collections of papers, photographs, and other documentary sources have made the Athenaeum the major source of research on Portsmouth and its history.

Richard Candee, Chair, Special Collections Committee

Report of the Social Committee 2023

This past year has been a busy year for your Athenaeum Social Committee. In many ways, it's been more exciting than last year.

It was a year of rapid growth in the size of this committee, which is very much appreciated. We started with 10 members as of January 1st and grew to 17 members by November 2023!

Our new members brought new energy and ideas to the group's hard-working core, as well as the physical presence to enhance the efficient management of each scheduled event.

Please join us in welcoming the following new members: Talia Sperduto, Katie Maggio, Andrew Bagley, Janet Bagley, Michael Harvell, Sandra Smith-Wiese, and Mary Beth Herbert.

The committee met 7 times, in 2023, for official meetings, plus the event sub-committees met as needed, unofficially.

With Kathleen Logan as Co-Chair, we have been able to share responsibilities and refresh our approach to those social events we plan. Kathleen initiated a "Template" system for each event, which includes all the necessary details to organize and plan for the Annual Meeting Reception, two New Member Events, The Annual Picnic and The Holiday Party. Talia Sperduto has stepped up to assist with that process.

Each of the two New Member "Teas" were successful, although somewhat under attended by new members. The goal of these Teas is to introduce new members to a group of members with a variety of backgrounds and interests, with the intent of encouraging active interest and participation in the works of the Athenaeum. Our members are the "life-blood" and future of the organization!

The Annual Summer Picnic was held on August 29, 2023, at the Seacoast Science Center, where we tried something new. Due to the Seacoast Science Center being run by the State, all events held there must have a recognized certified Bar Service to serve any alcohol. We met with Mellissa Walls, a recognized certified Bar Tender and owner of Maeve's Cocktail Truck. She volunteered to serve all the beverages bought by the Athenaeum, via her Bar Truck which was set up adjacent to the tent. This was at a considerable savings over the cost of the "Bar Services" in the past. Doug set up a **tip jar** to provide appropriate gratuity for Mellissa for her time spent with us, that evening. It seems the picnic attendees were very satisfied, as was Mellissa, with this arrangement, and she has agreed to provide her services, again, this summer, 2024.

It should be noted that we had the largest attendance ever at this picnic. The number exceeded 140 members, and the potluck options were plentiful!

The Annual Holiday Party was held on December 8, 2023, and the new Social Committee members exceeded all expectations in their presentation of Hors D'oeuvres! They also showed artistry in decorating the building for the event. The White Apron catered for the event with passed platters of delectable options. The member feedback continues to be much in favor of the White Apron.

FYI, there is a new initiative from the Social Committee. A small subcommittee consisting of Andrew Bagley and Talia Sperduto have launched an informal drop-in social meeting, named the "Franklin Club". It is scheduled for the 1st Wednesday of each month, at 5:30. The name comes from Ben Franklin, who formed similar clubs wherein community members came together to share ideas and "enlighten" each other. This is meant to be very casual, chatting about local goings on and with snacks, beer and wine.

I would like to thank the following members of the Social Committee for their active involvement in making this year's events successful: Doug Aykroyd, Elizabeth Aykroyd, Jan Dinan, Mark Ankarberg, Curt Springer, Cliff Hodgdon, Joan Hammond, Talia Sperduto, Katie Maggio, Andrew Bagley, Janet Bagley, Michael Harvell, Sandra Smith-Wiese, and Mary Beth Herbert, Kathleen Logan, and Tom Hardiman.

Where would the Social Committee be without Wine Stewards? Thank you, Doug Aykroyd, for organizing and providing our events with wine and beverage services!

Special thanks to the following members who served as Wine Stewards: Ed Caylor, Deb Child, Pat Breslin, Frank Breslin, Andrew Bagley, Janet Bagley, Mike Harvell, Mellissa Walls, Curt Springer, Kinley Gregg, Don Margeson, Mark Ankarberg, Jeff Hopper and Doug Aykroyd.

Cindy Knapp
Co-Chair Social Committee

