





The same generation that founded the American republic - in fact, some of the very same people - also founded our ancestor library, the Providence Library Company, whose values the Providence Athenæum has inherited. Among those are the Enlightenment's insistence upon individualism, humanism, skepticism, and reasoned inquiry. Like our founders before us, the Athenæum's contemporary community believes that we may only sustain our national culture insofar as we remain regularly engaged with the humanities and sciences.

At a time when books and libraries have become increasingly digital, the Athenæum - while embracing technology in its mission - remains devoted to a sense of place, the physical culture of books, and the face-to-face exchange of ideas.

These may appear to be quaint values in the 21st century, but if they are, there's no evidence of that at the Athenæum, which has enjoyed its most successful year in modern memory. Our membership has continued to grow, our exhibits and programs are drawing record numbers of attendees, and we ended the fiscal year with a healthy operating surplus.

We are grateful to you, and to all of Providence, for supporting this institution and for sharing its values.

Matt Burriesci Executive Director

R. Tripp Evans Board President

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2018-2019 AYEAR TO REMEMBER

56,969

Patrons & visitors served by the library

7,034
Visitors to the Children's Library

1,892

Total members*

56

Open hours per week 22%

Increase in program attendance

Programs

125 adult events 8,440 adult event attendees 144 children's events 2,664 children's event attendees 67 tours of building & collections

Library Services

176,849 items in collection1,504 acquisitions22,662 items circulated173 reference questions63 research appointments



Programs

More than 11,000 people joined the library at over 250 events for adults and children in FY 19. In order to accommodate such demand, the library moved two major events offsite to the nearby First Unitarian Church: *Hamilton* producer and Artistic Director of the Public's Theater Oskar Eustis and bestselling author Meg Wolitzer. Over 1,000 people attended those events alone, which were completely free of charge and open to the public.

Other notable speakers included Pulitzer Prize-winning scholar Stephen Greenblatt, National Book Award-winner Terrance Hayes, Grammy Award-winning artist Bill Harley, *New York Times* journalist and author Dan Barry, and renowned scholar Arnold Weinstein.

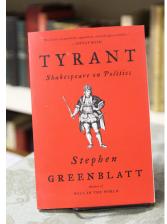
The Children's Library was bustling, featuring story times, animal experiences, music, movies, and special events. Over 2,500 children and families attended the library's programs.

The Athenæum continued to bring the world to Providence and Providence to the world, recording and distributing the majority of our adult programs and partnering with multiple local and national cultural organizations, including the Smithsonian Institution, the Modern Language Association, the New York Public Library, Yale University's Beinecke Library, the RISD Museum, The Public's Radio, the Providence Children's Film Festival, the Heifetz International Music Institute, School One, and the Audubon Society of Rhode Island.

LEFT: Oskar Eustis, Artistic Director of the Public Theater and Hamilton producer

FOLLOWING (L-R): Little Pumpkins' Party; Stephen Greenblatt's *Tyrant*; School One students present at Gothic POE-try Night; Community MusicWork musicians perform at A Midnight Dreary; Goat Hill Writers present Catharine Murray, Nisha Sharma, and A. K. Small; Dave Marchetti's Animal Experiences; Author Meg Wolitzer; Oskar Eustis; A Midnight Dreary













Highlights

- Hamilton producer
 Oskar Eustis
- A Midnight Dreary
 Poe-themed fundraiser
- Bestselling author Meg Wolitzer
- Dave Marchetti's Animal Experiences









Collections

The Athenæum produced four large-scale exhibits this year, which attracted more visitors, students, and scholars to the Special Collections than ever before. *Ravenous: The Enduring Legacy of Poe* proved to be our most successful exhibition to date, and featured items from the Athenæum's collections and the extraordinary holdings of renowned bibliophile Susan Jaffe Tane. The exhibit was complemented by a series of programs for children and adults, and was supported by Christie's and the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities.

Through the Hayden Special Collections Development Fund, the library acquired a beautiful, limited-edition folio of Poe's *The Raven*, with lithographs by contemporary artist James Reed. A magnificent pocket globe (c. 1830) was also added to the collection, in conjunction with the *Voyages: Mapping the World* exhibition. Additionally, the institution conserved six books from the Providence Library Company's collection, five of which were originally owned by Moses Brown.

The Athenæum welcomed many school groups for building and collection tours, and the twice-weekly public staffled tours proved increasingly popular. We also uploaded an initial batch of finding aids to the Rhode Island Archival and Manuscript Collections Online (RIAMCO) database, ensuring that scholars from around the world will have a better understanding of the Athenæum's archival holdings.

LEFT: Voyages: Mapping the World exhibition

FOLLOWING (L-R): Ravenous exhibition; Voyages exhibition poster; early 19th-century pocket globe; author Meg Wolitzer in the Philbrick Rare Book Room; a detail from Ravenous exhibition; fore-edge painting; Voyages exhibition

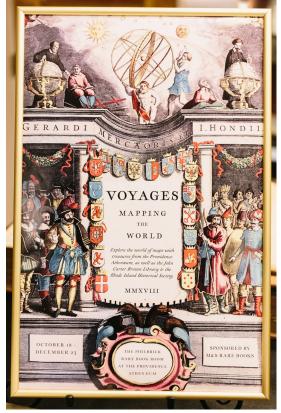


Exhibitions

- 251 Benefit Street July - September 2018
- Voyages: Mapping the World
 October December 2018
- Raven-ous: The Enduring Legacy of Poe
 February – May 2019
- Providence Unveiled: Stories from the Archives
 June – September 2019



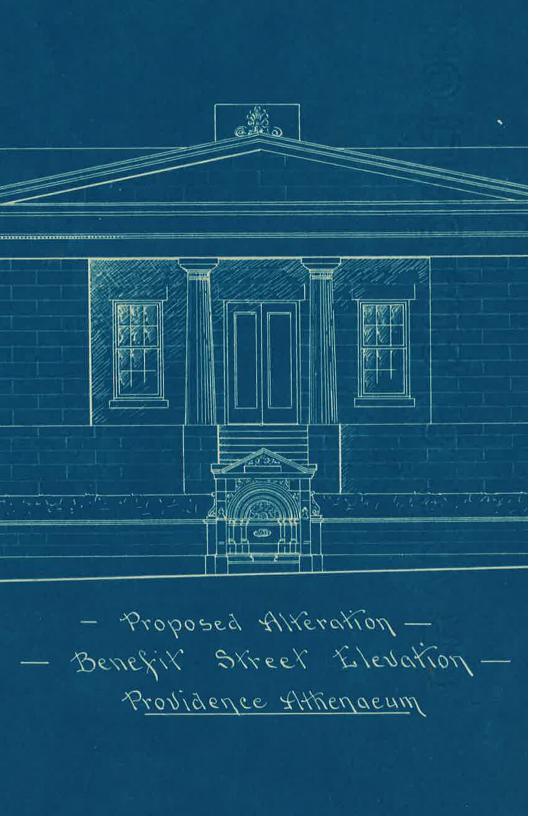












Buildings & Grounds

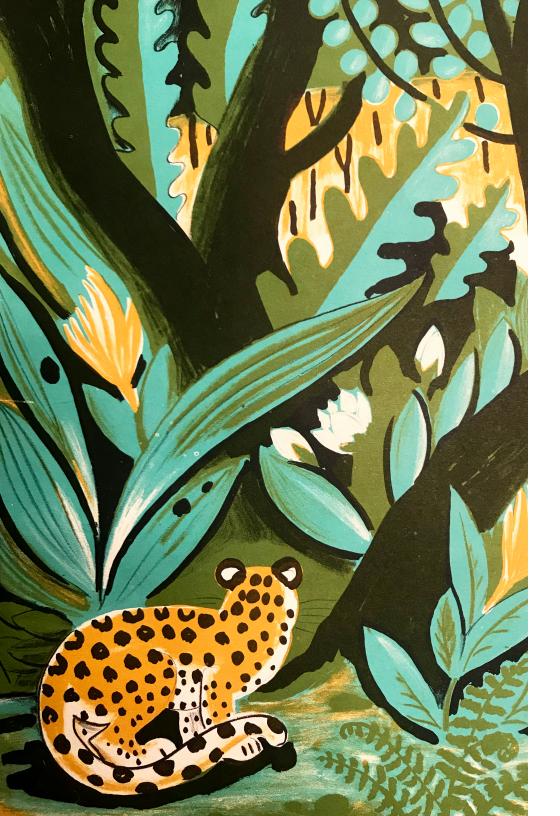
The Athenæum continued to make progress on investigations made possible by a grant from the National Endowment of the Humanities, and began to plan seriously for the long-term health and improvements of our beloved and historic home.

Initial work began on replacing the aging roofing system and skylights over the Strickland and Isham Wings of the building, along with making substantial repairs to the failing skylight system as well. This work is scheduled to be completed in FY20. By November of 2019, the entire roofing system will be new, and will be secure (and warrantied) for a generation.

Early in the year, significant improvements were also made to the Athenæum's aged electrical system, which have mitigated fire risk and improved electrical capacity throughout the building. Engineers conducted ultrasound investigations of the Athenæum's unique gravity hot water heating system, and, for the first time, the library now has a detailed map of the extensive piping system that supports the building.

LEFT: Architect Norman Isham's proposed plans for the 1914 Athenæum addition







Treasurer's Report

The fiscal year ending June 30, 2019 found the Athenæum in its strongest financial position in several years.

Revenues improved in nearly every category, including membership (5%) and fundraising (7%). Facility rentals increased by 33% owing largely to a one-time television shoot. While funding for capital projects declined by 48%, grants received in FY17 are being applied to work being conducted at the beginning of FY20.

Investment income designated for operations increased by 2.5% due to growth in the endowment holdings. The Athenæum's endowment grew by 1.3% in FY19, after accounting for drawdowns for operations. Total net assets increased by 1%, to \$13,120,889.

Total expenses increased by 1%, largely owing to investments in programming and information technology infrastructure. (In 2019 the Athenæum upgraded its WiFi system to offer members better service, which accounts for much of the increase in its General Office & Administrative expense). Personnel expenses declined by 1.3%, largely the result of temporary vacancies.

Overall the library's financial position remains strong, and, for the third consecutive year, the Athenæum ended its fiscal year with a surplus.

INCOME STATEMENT

BALANCE SHEET

REVENUE	FY 19	FY18
Membership	\$191,433	\$181,518
Fundraising	\$391,361	\$365,803
Capital Projects Funding	\$27,762	\$52,976
Facility Rental	\$55,065	\$36,750
Bequest	\$0	\$0
Trust Funds	\$39,160	\$38,632
Miscellaneous	\$19,110	\$25,098
Investment Income for Operations	\$509,187	\$495,829
TOTAL REVENUE	\$1,233,078	\$1,196,606
EXPENSES		
Personnel	\$787,135	\$797,813
Library Materials	\$47,224	\$43,239
Library Services & Management	\$29,292	\$41,319
Programs	\$46,629	\$31,966
Communications & Marketing	\$17,674	\$14,636
Membership & Development	\$37,449	\$39,330
Building & Grounds	\$68,519	\$68,286
Capital Projects Expense	\$27,762	\$52,976
General Office & Admin.	\$129,599	\$100,080
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,191,282	\$1,189,645
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$41,795	\$6,961

ASSETS	FY 19	FY 18
Cash	\$490,887	\$442,592
Endowment	\$10,889,416	\$10,744,136
Receivables	\$26,757	\$36,775
Prepaid Expenses	\$29,892	\$16,790
Inventory	\$1,044	\$4,992
Fixed Assets*	\$1,682,893	\$1,703,706
TOTAL ASSETS	\$13,120,889	\$12,948,991
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	\$18,273	\$10,594
Accrued Expenses	\$45,197	\$38,487
Deferred Revenue	\$8,915	\$12,975
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$72,385	\$62,056
EQUITY		
Unrestricted	\$10,276,975	\$10,165,577
Temporarily Restricted	\$1,280,971	\$1,232,475
Permanently Restricted	\$1,490,558	\$1,488,883
TOTAL EQUITY	\$13,048,504	\$12,886,935
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$13,120,889	\$12,948,991

Note: the above financial information presents only unrestricted operating activity before fixed asset capitalization or depreciation. Revenue and expense for special projects are included only as net assets are released from restrictions. Further details are published in the audited financial statements available through the accounting department.

^{*}Fixed assets are listed here net of accumulated depreciation.

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It is only through the generosity of its members and friends that the Athenæum has thrived for close to 200 years. The following pages are a tribute to these people, businesses, and foundations who gave cash and in-kind contributions to the library between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019.

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The Champlin Foundation
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*resigned FY19

Laura & Roy Brady, in honor of Lindsay Shaw & the best children's library, ever!

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Cathy Lund & Peter Karczmar / City Kitty Veterinary Care for Cats, in honor of the amazing cats of Providence, who know that reading creates more laps to sit on!

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Writer

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The following individuals have generously provided for the long-term financial health of the library by including the Athenæum in their will or estate plans.

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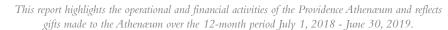
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The first Annual Report of the Providence Athenæum, 1836



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THE PROVIDENCE ATHENÆUM