



The 'modern' Providence Athenæum is 186 years old, but its origins stretch back before the dawn of the republic. It was established in the wake of great philosophical upheaval, during which time the very nature of society underwent radical transformation. Since then, there has rarely been a decade when America was not gripped by some crisis - a revolution, various religious awakenings, civil war, plagues, financial panics, and the ongoing struggle to expand human liberty.

In the United States, few institutions have endured for so long. But in 2022, the Athenæum did more than simply survive. The library ended the year with more members than at any point in its history, as its membership grew younger and more diverse. Its humanistic programs reached national audiences. The institution received the most significant addition to its Special Collections in more than a century and saw overall circulation increase for the first time in five years. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the library did not fully re-open to the public until May of 2022 - but when it did, it opened a new Visitor Center capable of properly welcoming guests. And as the Athenæum broke membership and fundraising records, it reduced its endowment draw, improved pay equity across the institution, and produced its sixth consecutive budget surplus.

All of this is a testament to the work of our tireless Board and Staff, who labored through yet another year of the pandemic, and to you, our supporters, who made all of it possible. 2022 was truly a remarkable year for the Athenæum.

Thank you.

Jonathan Bell

President of the Board

MATT BURRIESCI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Genesis Barrera Library Assistant

Gabriela Cantú Library Assistant

Andrés Escobar\*

Library Assistant

Mecca Levesque Library Assistant

Sandy Markley Membership & Development Assistant

Erin Perfect Library Assistant

Morgan Ross Library Assistant

Lily Wright
Library Assistant

\*Resigned in FY22.

\*\*Mary Brower retired in 2022 after 18 years of dedicated service.

# FY21-22 Snapshot

28,003

Patrons & visitors served by the library

1,921

Total memberships

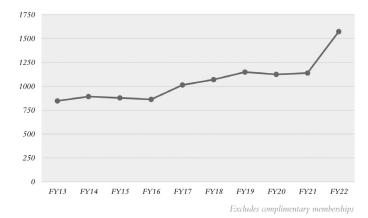
### PROGRAMS

212 adult events 8,403 adult event attendees 756 kids' craft activities assembled 63 building & collections tours

### LIBRARY SERVICES

175,945 items in collection1,550 acquisitions27,282 total items circulated6,556 digital items circulated

### MEMBERSHIP GROWTH





# Programs

8,403 people attended an Athenæum program this year, in which we welcomed leading humanists from a wide array of disciplines, including best-selling authors, Pulitzer Prize-winners, and recipients of the National Book Award. Presenters included Michael Pollan, Eddie Glaude, Jr., Barbara Kingsolver, Ann Patchett, Azar Nafisi, Jeffrey Stewart, Dan-el Padilla Peralta, Jonathan Rauch, Betsy West, and many more. The Athenæum offered more than a dozen reading groups on a broad range of topics, facilitated by excellent leaders from our community.

In 2021, the Athenæum launched its Program Working Group to help curate events. The group consists of members of the Athenæum's board, staff, and of the larger community, and its charge is to develop diverse, high-quality humanistic events.

Athenæum programs engage viewers from around the world, and moving forward, the majority of events will be presented live at the Athenæum and via simulcast. Programs are available free of charge to the public through our growing Program Archive, which now features more than 125 events. Anticipating a return to in-person programs, we developed the infrastructure to record and stream events live from the library itself, installing a new audio/visual system in the Reading Room.



# Collections

This year, the Athenæum welcomed the most significant gift to its Special Collections in more than a century: the Susan Jaffe Tane Collection of Ralph Waldo Emerson & Henry David Thoreau. Among the many historically significant items in this collection are a copy of Thomas Carlyle's *The French Revolution*, signed by both Emerson and Thoreau; manuscripts by both authors; and a first edition of Emerson's *Essays* that belonged to Sarah Helen Whitman. We are deeply grateful for this extraordinary gift.

The library also saw a remarkable 25% increase in circulation. This shift is the result of the rapid growth in membership as well as investment in new digital resources like hoopla.

Other notable projects and acquisitions this year include:

- The re-installation of the mezzanine busts with the addition of Wollstonecraft, Douglass, and Alcott.
- Frederick Douglass. My Bondage and My Freedom. New York: Miller, Orton & Mulligan, 1855. 1st edition. Sarah Chapin Downes Fund & Thomas P.I. Goddard Fund, 2022.
- Mary Wollstonecraft. Obrana Prav Zen. Prague: Jan Laichter, 1904. First Czech translation of Vindication of the Rights of Woman. Christine Chace Wallace Fund, 2022.
- Robert Burns. Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect.
   Glasgow: David Bryce & Son, [1896]. A miniature facsimile presented in embossed metal case. Hayden Special Collections Development Fund, 2022.
- [LEFT] Print of Franklin's Reception at the Court of France,
   1778. Philadelphia: William Jay, Charles J. Hendenberg, &
   William H. Emerson, 1853. Presented in memory of Lois and Preston Atwood, 2022.

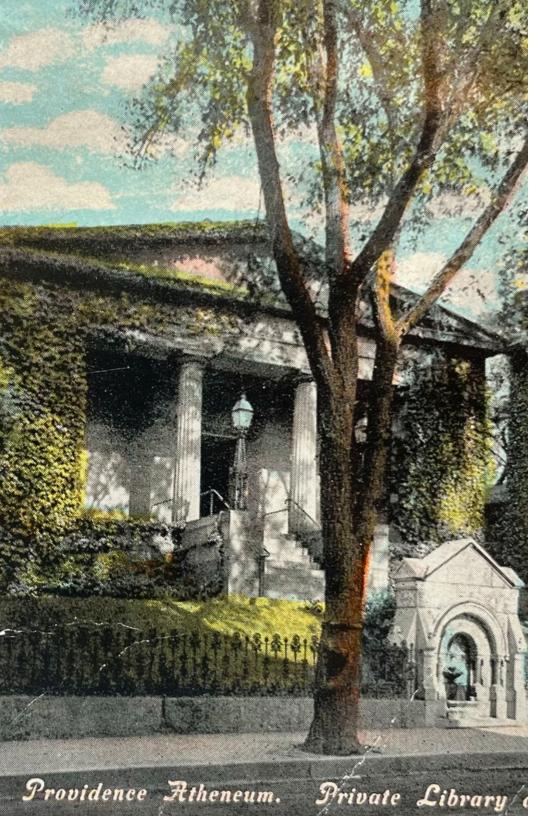


# Membership & Engagement

The Athenæum saw an unprecedented 38% increase in paid membership this year, welcoming hundreds of new members to our community. The library continued to extend hundreds of complimentary memberships to Providence's school teachers and to those who are unable to afford annual fees.

For perhaps the first time in the library's history, members were provided with membership cards, which enable them, depending on their membership level, to access the Rhode Island School of Design's Fleet Library and to visit over 1,000 museums free of charge through the North American Reciprocal Museum Association.

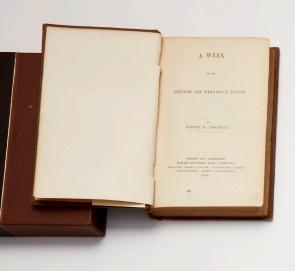
After the longest public closure in the institution's history, the Athenæum fully re-opened to the public in May 2022, greeting guests in a new Visitor Center. The new Center allows visitors to orient themselves and offers multiple newly designed self-guided tours of the building. It also enables the Athenæum to understand its audience, so we can better curate the visitor experience. The suggested \$5 donation per adult and merchandise sales are proving a significant new revenue stream to support library activities. Over 2,000 non-members visited in the first two months after re-opening.

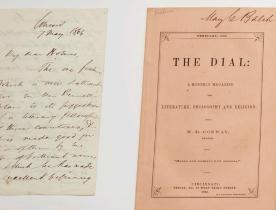


# Buildings & Grounds

We spent much of the year engaged in planning for the library's heating system replacement, which will commence in the Spring of 2023. Engineers, architects, and preservation experts developed plans and detailed drawings. Supply chain issues delayed the commencement of the work, but in 2023, the Athenæum will finally replace its antiquated and failing heating system – a key priority identified in our Master Plan. Once this project is completed, we will begin to address other critical infrastructure issues at the institution, including fire suppression, climate control, hardscaping, and accessibility.

The cast iron fence facing Benefit Street was repaired and repainted, the Richmond Fountain was turned back on for the first time since the pandemic began, and we commenced work to evaluate the landscape for both short- and long-term renovation and restoration plans.



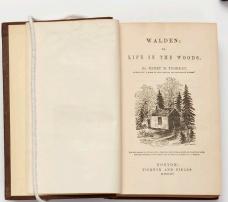




County AM. 1843

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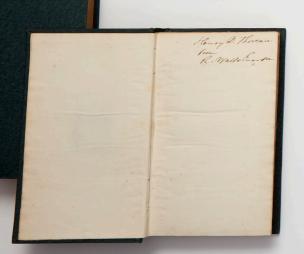


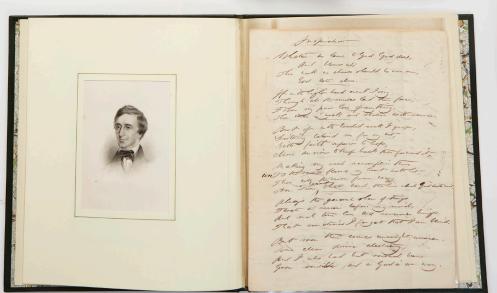


Sarah Helen Millman ESSAYS:

R. W. EMERSON.







### Treasurer's Report

The fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 found the library in a strong financial position despite ongoing disruptions caused by COVID-19 and the volatility of the national economy.

**Revenues.** Total operating revenues declined by 16% to \$1,401,064. The decline was due largely to the smaller draw from the endowment, and less capital project funding. Total fundraising also declined because of the absence of COVID-related government funded grant programs. On the positive side, the Athenæum saw an unprecedented rise in membership revenue, up 27%. The Annual Fund also set a record, and building rental income surged 896% as the building reopened after the COVID shutdown. The reduction in endowment draw to the lowest level in decades was made possible by the overall strength of operations and the benefits of COVID-related funding received. As a result, the Athenæum was able to preserve capital in the current volatile market.

**Expenses.** Total operating expenses declined by 2.6%, mainly due to a significant drop in Capital Project expenses due to the completion of the Master Planning process. Personnel expenses increased by 7%. Following a pay freeze for staff the previous year, the Athenæum has invested in its staff, and advanced pay equity. Significant percentage increases in Programs and Membership & Development expenses were due to investments in virtual programming and the post-COVID revival of some marketing campaigns. Other cost increases were attributable to normal operating functions. The major looming capital expense is the replacement of the heating system which will be done in the Spring of '23. Capital funds have been allocated for the replacement and will not adversely affect the bottom line.

**Balance Sheet.** Total invested endowment declined by 18.2% in fiscal year 2022 in line with the decline experienced

by financial markets in the last half of the fiscal year. Total Liabilities declined by 47% largely due to PPP loan forgiveness. Changes in other liability accounts were in line with normal operations.

**Other.** In fiscal year 2022, the Athenæum received the largest gift to its Special Collections in over a century. The trove of literary materials was appraised at \$525,500.

**Conclusion.** The Athenæum weathered the COVID years and emerged in strong financial shape, registering its sixth consecutive operating surplus. It remains well-positioned to continue to serve its members and the broader community.

Thomas Bryson Treasurer



REVENUE	FY22	FY21
Membership	\$229,506	\$180,565
Fundraising	\$393,994	\$458,288
Capital Projects Funding	\$74,281	\$202,340
Facility Rental	\$53,800	\$5,400
Bequest	\$0	\$1,000
Trust Funds	\$42,315	\$40,469
Miscellaneous	\$232,169	\$247,530
Investment Income for Operations	\$375,000	\$523,722
TOTAL REVENUE	\$1,401,064	\$1,659,364
EXPENSES		
Personnel	\$868,854	\$814,350
Library Materials	\$48,950	\$57,778
Library Services & Management	\$37,625	\$33,992
Programs	\$50,492	\$29,584
Communications & Marketing	\$13,897	\$15,942
Membership & Development	\$37,653	\$26,819
Building & Grounds	\$68,269	\$59,890
Capital Projects Expense	\$74,281	\$202,340
General Office & Admin.	\$134,155	\$128,498
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,334,176	\$1,369,194
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$66,888	\$290,170

Note: the financial information above presents only unrestricted operating activity before fixed asset capitalization or depreciation. Revenue and expenses 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.

FY22 FY21	ASSETS
\$1,042,137 \$918,713	Cash
\$10,772,945 \$13,166,689	Endowment
\$97,528 \$130,461	Receivables
\$30,775 \$22,099	Prepaid Expenses
\$9,810 \$4,780	Inventory
\$1,910,795 \$1,923,647	Fixed Assets*
\$13,863,990 \$16,166,389	TOTAL ASSETS
	LIABILITIES
\$60,659 \$33,110	Accounts Payable
<b>\$33,801 \$29,968</b>	Accrued Expenses
\$14,200 \$10,644	Deferred Revenue
\$13,3417	PPP Loan
\$108,860 \$207,140	TOTAL LIABILITIES
	EQUITY
\$10,793,537 \$12,787,150	Unrestricted
\$1,468,309 \$1,678,890	Temporarily Restricted
\$1,493,284 \$1,493,208	Permanently Restricted
\$13,755,130 \$15,959,249	TOTAL EQUITY
\$13,863,990 \$16,166,389	TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY
\$1,493,284 \$1,4 \$13,755,130 \$15,9	Permanently Restricted TOTAL EQUITY

<sup>\*</sup>Fixed assets are listed here net of accumulated depreciation.



### Supporters of the Athenæum

The Athenæum is deeply grateful to the following friends for their generosity & support. These pages are a tribute to the people, businesses, & foundations who gave cash & in-kind contributions to the library between July 1, 2021 & June 30, 2022.

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The Champlin Foundation James C. Raleigh Memorial Fund at the Rhode Island Foundation Susan Iaffe Tane

Antiquarian Circle (\$10,000-\$24,999)

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#### Committee Volunteers

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Grace Farmer, Finance, Board Governance, Pension Advisory Lyn Johnson, Finance, Pension Advisory Deming Sherman, Finance

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Robert Allio, The Examined Life Kip Brott, Stylish Revolutionaries Iain Bernhoft & Patrick Breen, Picturing Slavery Bonnie Clayton & Jonathan Migliori, Irrational Geographic Stephen Coon, Love Actually; Paris in French Film Mare Davis, Stories from Elsewhere Rebecca Falkoff, Beyond Bibliomania Vanessa Lillie, Reading Like a Writer Johanna Hannink, The Odyssey Suzanne Scanlan, Women, Art, Travel, Transformation Tom Sojka, Festivity Kathleen Spencer, New York Times Bestsellers

### Athena Society

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.

Anonymous
Anonymous (2)\*
Candy Adriance
Alex Aho
Kqantu Pareja Bennett
Garrett Bliss

Thomas & Antonia Bryson Stephen & Melanie Coon R. Tripp Evans
Dean Hantzopoulos
Brian & Lyn Hayden
Lynne Hoppin-Fazzi
Mary Louise Kennedy
Jane & Tony Lancaster
Cathy Lund & Peter Karczmar
Doug & Elsie Morse

Timothy & Claudia Philbrick Rich Rudert Gardiner & Cynthia Shattuck Deming & Jane Sherman Jim Sunshine Vicki Veh

\*deceased

This report highlights the operational and financial activities of the Providence Athenæum and reflects gifts made to the Athenæum over the 12-month period July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022.

Center spread: Selections from the Susan Jaffe Tane Collection of Ralph Waldo Emerson & Henry David Thoreau





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