

Brewster Ladies' Library



Photo by Gabrielle Griffis

2020 - 2021 Annual Report

Brewster Ladies' Library Association President's Report

JOAN PERNICE



Joan Pernice, BLLA President

In the early months of the library building being closed to the public, we all wondered how we could continue to provide vital library services. The resourcefulness of the library staff was truly noteworthy, as they developed online book ordering and scheduled curbside pick up. The “grab and go” model of book lending! The children’s librarians developed a rich roster of virtual programs, including arts and crafts events.

Then as the pandemic became more controlled with the implementation of public health measures and vaccination by mid-April, the building was opened on a modified schedule for in-person visits. On June 15th, library hours were extended to a full schedule with a hold only on evening hours.

Although the annual Nickerson lecture was canceled, the library staff and the Nickerson Committee of the BLLA — in partnership with The Brewster Book Store — sponsored a virtual discussion with author Sally Cabot Gunning, as part of the launch of her latest novel, *Painting the Light*. The BLLA sponsored two outdoor book sales, in October and June. Although smaller than the traditional indoor book sale, they reinforced our commitment to the community. The three Little Free Libraries that were installed last summer at Brewster beaches and Drummer Boy Park were so successful that the BLLA purchased two more for installation this year: one at the bike path at Rt. 137 and another at Nickerson State Park. A group of library volunteers keep these Little Free Libraries stocked with books.

The BLLA supported the development of a new library website that will improve access to library resources and provide easy-to-find links, including to the BLLA Membership page. We expect to launch this in late summer. The Board’s Membership committee, led by Susan Stewart, updated our printed materials and developed an attractive new BLLA brochure that was sent with the annual membership renewal letter. Board members continued to meet monthly, via Zoom, for more than a year, so we were especially pleased to conduct our annual meeting in-person in the Library auditorium.

Flexibility on the part of the staff and board enabled us to move through this “unprecedented” year. I extend my appreciation to all of them.

Two outstanding directors retired from the Board at the annual meeting on July 15.

Barbara Wellnitz had been a Board member from 2010-2015 and then was asked to come out of retirement and return to the Board in 2018. A former president, she also led our public relations and communications outreach, has been the editor of the BLLA Annual Report for several years, and served on the Nickerson committee.

Fran Manion has been an active member of the Membership committee and contributed many hours to our fundraisers, soliciting art from local artists for our Art Auction and setting up the Outdoor Book Sale.

We will miss these two very special women and want to acknowledge the significant contributions they made to the library and the BLLA.

Joan Pernice, President

Library Director's Report

CYNTHIA ST. AMOUR



Cynthia St. Amour, Library Director

The reopening of the library and return of the public to our building were the highlights of this year's recovery. Thanks to our devoted staff, we were able to maintain the newsletter, programs, and remote access for our community. We were at the forefront with the new Grab & Go service and expanded hours, to meet increased public demand. We were the first library on the lower cape to reopen our doors, 10am-5pm, six days a week. The hard work of the staff and their flexibility continues. We also have reimaged and evaluated our physical layout. We have accommodated the demand for quiet areas for work and study within the parameters of the existing spaces.

Thanks to the Brewster Ladies' Library Association sponsorship, and in collaboration with the Eddy Elementary School, we gave away more than 600 books as part of the summer lunch program. The Brewster Select Board said it was one of the highlights of last year during the pandemic. We are planning to repeat the program this year. We also distributed more than 2000s book through the very popular Little Free Libraries. These eye-catching little libraries serve as goodwill ambassadors for the BLLA. Remote programming proved to be a vital connection to the community, as were the newsletter and social media accounts. More than 3100 people now subscribe to the monthly newsletter, and we have 1421 Facebook followers and 1187 Instagram followers. There have been 585 posts to our social media platforms since last Spring.

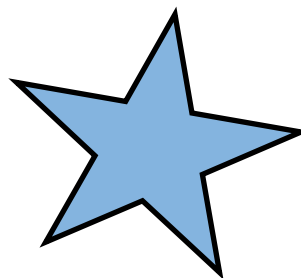
Our bandwidth was greatly increased by removing the video camera feed from the public Internet connection. We were able to join the town's fiber optic link rather than continue to operate a separate connection. We hope to see an increase in our IT spending — and connectivity — through federal funding programs.

It is an exciting time to plan for the future of our library in the heart of Brewster. Libraries have taken on the task of helping people acquire knowledge, whatever the means of delivery, and have become more central to community life. The sociologist Eric Klinenberg made libraries Exhibit A in his 2018 book, *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life*. He argued that "social infrastructure" — public places where people mingle and interact — can help reduce crime and isolation, and even strengthen communities. The Brewster Ladies' Library with its rich history and bright future is positioned for success for many years to come.

Cynthia St. Amour, Library Director

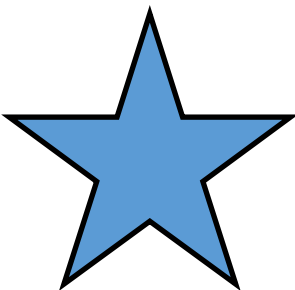
The Year In Review

2020 - 2021 BY THE NUMBERS - A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER



Even with all the COVID restrictions, the Library circulated a total of **104,165** items. Patrons downloaded **32,943** ematerials this year, compared to **28,395** last year, and **1715** magazine issues.

Once the library reopened there were **9,766** patrons who walked through our doors.



There were **378** new borrowers added to the CLAMS system. There were **194** new borrowers registered in Overdrive for eMaterials .

FY 2021

BLLA FINANCIAL DATA

Association Revenue*	\$120,277
Association Expenses	\$135,988
Town Expenses	\$644,818
Total Library Expenses	\$780,806
Town Contribution	82.5%
Association Contribution	17.5%

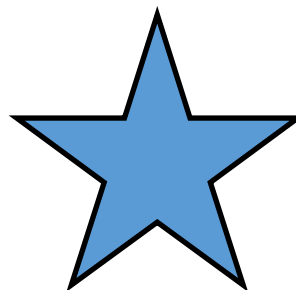
*Realized gains /losses from endowment portfolio \$116,056 are not included in Revenue

The income and expenses for the association reflect pandemic impact and limited activities at the library.

Income and expenses as well as net income were favorable to Budget.

Membership income was very good at \$39,932, 25% better than last year.

The pandemic restrictions limited our book sale and fund-raising income.



The Cape Cod Times was viewed **54,846** times via the Library website, up **more than 4 times** from the previous year.

We now have **over 3100** subscribers to the Library's monthly newsletter, **1421** Facebook followers and **1187** Instagram followers.

The Year In Review

2020 - 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

Molly Savage

Named 2021 Mayo Award Winner



Molly Savage and Cynthia St. Amour

Molly Savage received the Sarah Augusta Mayo Award during the July 15 annual meeting of the Brewster Ladies' Library. The presentation was kept secret until then.

Named for one of the two founders of the Library, the award is presented each year to an active adult volunteer member of the Association whose service is truly noteworthy and significantly contributes to Library programs and/or initiatives.

In presenting the award, Library Director Cindy St. Amour said: "Molly has done outstanding work on many projects and is always willing to assist in children's programs and wherever arts and crafts and/or painting are requested. A former art teacher, she eagerly contributes her talents to promoting our Library throughout the community."

Just during the pandemic year of 2020-21, Molly Savage was the artist who created the Little Free Libraries, the Christmas display and the Mayflower Madness float. She has been a volunteer since 2015.

Molly received a framed certificate to recognize this honor, and her name has been added to the plaque at the entrance to the Library that lists all recipients of this distinguished award.

The Year In Review

2020 - 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

New Scholarship Program



The Brewster Ladies' Library Association Board of Directors has announced a new scholarship program that will offer a \$2500 scholarship to a Nauset High School senior, beginning with the class of 2022. Brewster residents planning to attend a two- or four-year accredited college or university, or vocational or technical school of higher learning, will be eligible to apply.

Selection criteria include:

- Brewster residence at time of application
- Grade Point Average
- Participation in extracurricular organizations
- Volunteer work within the four communities in the Nauset Regional High School district
- Employment records during the high school years
- Financial need
- Future goals and objectives

The application process will include a copy of a completed Nauset Regional High School Guidance Department Student Financial Aid Request and a copy of the applicant's grade transcript. Application deadline will be April 1, 2022.

Relatives of the BLLA Board of Directors and any other member of the scholarship selection committee are not eligible to apply for this new scholarship. Relatives of Library employees are eligible to apply, assuming they meet the requirements, including residence in Brewster.

Further details will be announced at a later date.

The Year In Review

2020 - 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

A Thank You Note



Dear Library Staff,

Thank you so very much for all you have done for us, the library patrons all through this coronavirus pandemic. You have fed us books, DVD's, audiobooks, ebooks, and kindness and patience.

Thank you for the hard work it has taken to keep the library open safely for pickup and now for Grab and Go service.

Please enjoy these cookies as a small token of my appreciation for all you've done.

Warm regards,

A Grateful Patron

The Year In Review

2020 - 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

Little Free Libraries



The popularity of our Little Free Libraries continues to grow. There now are five: at Breakwater and Crosby Landing beaches, Nickerson State Park, the Bike Path across from Ferretti's Market, and at Drummer Boy Park. With more than 2000 books distributed, this very successful project raises the visibility of the BLLA within the greater Brewster community. A small group of volunteers keeps these libraries well-stocked throughout the summer season.



The Year In Review

2020 - 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

Youth Book Giveaway, Brewster in Bloom & Book Launch



Youth Book Giveaway

The Brewster Ladies' Library was able to deliver 600 books to kids via the Summer Eats program at Stony Brook Elementary School during summer 2020. The books, along with Summer Reading bookmarks, were handed out by the Brewster lunch aides along with free lunches in the "Grab-and-Go" food program.

Brewster in Bloom

The 35th annual Brewster in Bloom "parade" was held — but not as usual — with lawn displays along Brewster's Main Street (Rt. 6A) and some nearby side streets. Following the theme of Mayflower Madness, local artist Molly Savage designed a Mayflower boat float with book sails, displayed on the Library's front lawn for passersby to enjoy. The installation guru was our own Rick Cronin of the library staff.

The Library, and Molly, were pleased to accept the Best Interpretation of Theme Award this year.



Celebrating the Launch of *Painting the Light*, new novel by Sally Cabot Gunning

The BLLA was part of the June 1 launch of Brewster resident Sally Cabot Gunning's latest novel, *Painting the Light*. In collaboration with The Brewster Book Store, and as part of the Nickerson lecture series, the Library offered a Zoom discussion with the author of this historic novel set in 1898 Martha's Vineyard. Board member Pat Maguire Meservey introduced the author, while Mindy Todd of WCAI moderated the discussion with author and participants.

VIRTUAL BOOK LAUNCH WITH
SALLY CABOT GUNNING
TUESDAY, JUNE 1ST AT 7PM OVER ZOOM

Please join the Brewster Ladies' Library Association and the Brewster Book Store for a special conversation with Sally Gunning to celebrate the publication of her new book, *Painting the Light*. Q&A to follow the presentation. Registration is required and this event will be held over Zoom.



BREWSTER BOOK STORE
TO REGISTER, PLEASE EMAIL:
MFECTEAU@BREWSTERLADIESLIBRARY.ORG

The Year In Review

2020 - 2021 HIGHLIGHTS



Sean Burke Magic Show



Marsha & Mark Wilson Eyes on Owls

KIDS' PROGRAMS

The pandemic year brought changes and challenges galore, especially to the many children's programs that we typically offer. But, soon after mid-March 2020, staff members were back with online programs designed to satisfy the curiosity of our youngest patrons. More than a year's worth of arts & crafts and story hour programs were "zoomed" into the homes of toddlers and kids.

With warmer weather, and staff creativity, the Library was able to host several outdoor events, among them a magic show, kids' concert, seed planting, and "Eyes on Owls."



Zoe Lewis Concert



Seed Planting

The Year In Review

2020 - 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

More Kids' Programs



BREWSTER LADIES' LIBRARY

CRAFTY CORNER FRIDAYS

EVERY FRIDAY WITH NORI AT 10:30AM ON FACEBOOK LIVE

This graphic features four small photos of a woman, Nori, holding up various craft projects: two white cat faces, a rainbow with clouds, a grey cat face, and a colorful circular craft.



STORY TIME WITH NORI

WEDNESDAYS AT 10:30AM ON FACEBOOK LIVE!

BREWSTER LADIES' LIBRARY

This graphic features three photos of Nori reading books to children. The books shown are 'All You Need is Love', 'The Snail and the Whale', and 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'.



Outdoor Unicorn StoryTime

Tues. July 13 @ 10:30am

Weather dependent. Masks are required. Bring a blanket to sit on. Families can sit together, at a distance of 6 ft apart.

Brewster Ladies' Library
1822 Main St. Brewster, MA 02631

This graphic features a large, colorful unicorn illustration with a rainbow mane. Three book covers are shown on the left: 'Join the Unicorn', 'Unicorn Day', and 'Thelma the Unicorn'. A small library building icon is at the bottom right.

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Grants to the Brewster Ladies' Library in FY2020

The Eddy Foundation awarded \$4583 to our Library, for the final phase of the Stoltenberg collection. More than 2200 items now have been digitalized for preservation. A working group of BLLA board members is reviewing the collection in its entirety and will make recommendations for public display.

We also received a Grant in Aid of \$12,769.54 from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), to be used in any way that supports library services. The MBLC also provided a Small Library Grant of \$2,125., to be applied to the membership costs of the CLAMS organization.

Contributions from Clubs and Organizations

Brewster Men's Club

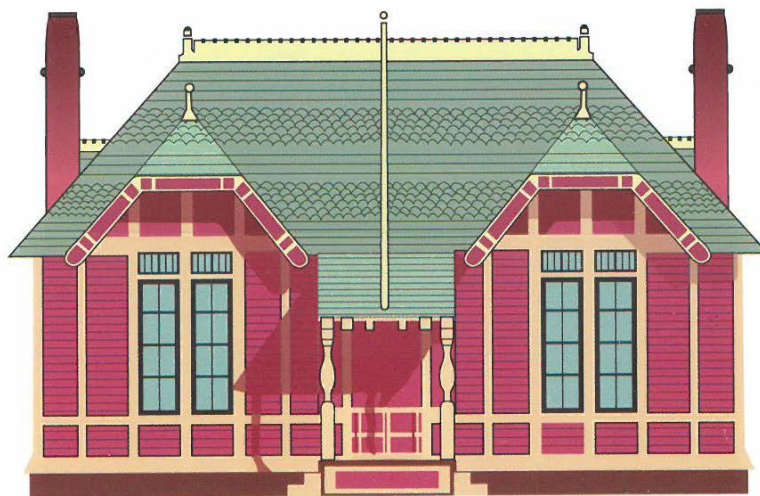
Cape Cod Genealogical Society

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2020-2021

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BREWSTER LADIES' LIBRARY
1868

BLL Library Staff

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