



November 2021

Dear Friend & Neighbor,

Autumn is a time many recognize the things for which we give thanks. Living in this wonderful community allows us to acknowledge an abundance of special things, and we don't take that for granted. Our hearts go out to those who experienced the hardships of Covid, yet we are grateful that Washington has remained a relatively healthy community during the past year.

The Library and Museum have met the challenges of the pandemic head-on and developed ways to not only provide services, but to enhance them. As the community adapted to a more curtailed life, patrons became more dependent on technology and people were swept up into new methods of interacting and communicating. Gunn Memorial found ways to utilize technology to its best advantage.

We collaborated with area libraries and institutions to share an affluence of diverse digital programming. We fielded requests for technical assistance with Zoom for doctor's appointments, family visits, and viewing our programs. Staff nurtured early literacy and maintained our sense of community through the Junior Library, providing weekly story times and programs to over seven hundred twenty-five children. A wide variety of take-home activity kits, as well as interactive Zoom sessions with our librarians, were offered. Over 2,200 kits were distributed! As one of only twenty-four Connecticut libraries fully reopened early in the fiscal year, we saw a tremendous increase in patronage from neighboring communities. Each and every patron who came into the library was appreciative and heartened we had developed protocols for their safety while providing public services.

The Museum presented 10 highly successful virtual guest lectures, recorded the popular Cemetery Tour for online viewing, and provided a history hike at Steep Rock. Oral history interviews were conducted, gathering information to be preserved for future generations. History Club initiatives, Readings from the Archives, and community outreach continued.

Your kind and generous support has made it possible for us to provide these increased services to our extended community. We are very grateful for the financial commitment the Town has made, yet we need to raise nearly 66% of our annual budget. We are so grateful for your support of our successful fundraising events, and we hope that you will also consider an annual gift to our appeal.

Your contribution funds a broad range of programs and services for an increasing number of people every year. Please give as generously as you are able - whatever you give is tax-deductible! You may respond using the enclosed envelope or contribute online through our website. Thank you – the services we provide free of charge would simply not be possible without you!

With gratitude,

Audra MacLaren
Executive Director

Jean Chapin
Development & Community Relations

Christina Klemm
President, Board of Trustees

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