



## Annual Report 2021

### OUR MISSION

*More than a place for books, Library of the Chatham provides resources that support valuable opportunities to build knowledge, culture and social experiences that enrich lives.*

In order to fulfill our mission in 2021, Library of the Chatham continually revamped processes, programs and policies. Flexibility was key to the success we had in 2021. In March, we offered in-person service by appointment. We offered take-out service for materials from January to June and returned to our traditional service in July. The library staff worked diligently to make the library a welcoming place in spite of the many changes we experienced.



### 2021 Annual Report In Snapshots

<https://tinyurl.com/librariansnapshots>



### 2021 LIBRARY USAGE SNAPSHOT

Residents' use of library services is evaluated constantly to ensure that services meet the needs and expectations of our community:

- 71,032 visits to the library from June to December
- 190,464 items borrowed including 2,342 streaming items
- 30,438 reference questions answered
- 317,521 visits to the library website and 146,317 visits to the library mobile app
- 86% of residents were library cardholders

Use of electronic materials remains high. In 2019, 21,723 eBooks and eAudiobooks were checked out. That number jumped to 35,604 in 2020 when the library was closed. In 2021, eBooks and eAudiobooks remained popular as patrons borrowed 31,191.

## Adding to the Shelves

Supply chain issues impacted the delivery of books ordered. As the year went on, the books finally started to come in. We added 4,515 adult books, 581 teen books, 2,450 children's books, and 1,362 audiovisual items to our collection.

## PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

- 302 adult programs = 1,335 adult participants
- 123 community group programs = 970 attendees
- 263 youth programs = 6,838 attendees
- 43 teen events = 452 teen participants
- 245 children signed up for the Summer Reading Club and they read 4,547 books!
- All programs in total attracted 9,840 visitors!

## YOUTH SERVICES PROGRAMMING

2021 was an interesting year for the Youth Services Department as we worked to follow the guidelines of our health department and the CDC while providing meaningful opportunities for children and teenagers to learn and have fun. Boogie Woogie Babies joined our *Thursday Is Library Day!* program lineup. Both children and caregivers love to boogie woogie!



This year, our Summer Reading Program theme was *Tales and Tails*. Due to the fact that we could not gather in person as we usually do, we used an online platform called ReadSquared that allowed participants to log their books and earn prizes that could be picked up at the library. A total of 250 children and teens joined the club reporting on 4,506 books.

We continued to build our *eBooks for All: School District-Library Shared Collection* by adding audiobooks and eBooks to our OverDrive platform that were chosen as favorites by students in the School District of the Chathams.

Throughout the year, we offered a number of take-home craft kits that patrons could pick up at the library using our take-out service and then complete at home with a pre-recorded video or by using our Creativebug database.

During the summer, the library partnered with Coding Cougars, an organization of Chatham High School students and graduates that teaches computer programming to children. Together we offered a 6-day coding camp for students in grades 4 to 8. The Cougars developed a

curriculum that included Scratch, Python, Java and much more. This collaboration exceeded all expectations!



We ran a total of 306 children's and young adult programs which brought in 7,290 visitors to the library – some in person and some virtually.

Thank you to these local groups for supporting our 2021 programming!  
The Friends of the Library  
Chatham-Madison Kiwanis  
Ann L. Buesing Children's Fund for the Library of the Chathams of the  
Community Foundation of New Jersey  
Marlee and Carl Frahn Fund for the Library of the Chathams of the  
Community Foundation of New Jersey.

## **ADULT, SENIOR AND FAMILY PROGRAMMING**

The library sponsored 302 adult programs with 1,335 people in attendance during the year.

There were 123 community meetings held with 970 people in attendance.

The Friends of the Library sponsored two art shows this year—the Drew Art Association and George Polazzi—and one photography show featuring Kathy Havens and Larry Kerner.

### **2021 Program Highlights**

- An art history lecture on the architecture of St. Peter's Basilica was presented by Drew University Professor of Art, Margaret Kuntz.
- Peggy Dressel, an artist from Oakland, NJ, gave a series of classes on portrait drawing.
- The Rutgers Master Gardeners presented many talks on a variety of gardening topics.
- Chatham Historical Society and Chatham Township Historical Society joined the library in sponsoring a program to commemorate Veterans Day. Speakers Susan M. Allen, Pat Wells, Martha Wells, and Debbie Fabian spoke on the history of Veterans Day. They presented stories of Chatham veterans who served in wars from the Revolution to the present.
- Journalists Nick Corasaniti (*The New York Times*) and John Aidan Byrne (*The New York Post*) spoke at the library on important current events.

- Arlene Ferris Weeks, Director of Investor Education at the NJ Bureau of Securities, Office of the Attorney General, spoke about cryptocurrency and safe investing for the public.
- Outdoor concerts with the band *Rewind* and young local performers Jacob Mathews and Grace Petersen were held on the side lawn of the library and attracted large crowds.
- The Veterans Project of the Chathams launched in 2021 to collect and offer our public audio, video, and written personal histories and testimonials of veterans who are or were residents of Chatham Borough and Chatham Township. Listen, read and watch at <https://tinyurl.com/chathamveterans>.



### **Community Group Meetings Held at the Library**

The library was closed to the public until June 2021. These community groups gradually came back to use our meeting rooms in person:

Chatham Antiques Club  
 Chatham Board of Education  
 Chatham Boy Scouts  
 Chatham Brass Band  
 Chatham Community Players  
 Chatham Court Condo Association  
 Chatham Democrats

Chatham Girl Scouts  
 Chatham Republicans  
 Chatham SEPAG  
 (Special Education Parents Advisory Group)  
 Garden State Quilters Guild  
 Morris County Literacy Volunteers  
 Women's Center for Entrepreneurship of NJ

The Chatham Historical Society and the Chatham Township Historical Society used the library's Zoom account to hold their very popular presentations.

### **American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Grant for New Jersey Public Libraries**

The Library applied for a grant from the NJ State Library and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. An \$11,120 grant was awarded to us in August and is being used for our English as a Second Language program for classes through September 2022.

### **New Events Calendar and Room Request System**

The library transitioned to a new events calendar and room request system that makes navigating and registering for programs easier. In addition, the new calendar comes with a way for community groups to request meeting room space at the library.

### **Reference Services**

Throughout 2021, the Reference Department resumed many services that were suspended during the pandemic shutdown. During the first few months of 2021, our reference staff continued to

pull holds for library takeout and provided remote printing for our patrons. To try to reproduce patron experiences as much as possible, we offered remote shelf browsing by iPad for patrons. In March, our public was allowed back in on a limited, appointment basis. In May, the notary and fax services were restored. Our inter-library loan service began operating again.

In 2021, we added the tutoring platforms, Brainfuse and Tutor.com, along with World Travel A-Z and Food America A-Z, to our databases. The library switched to Libby, a service that provides eBooks and eAudiobooks, as well as digital magazines and access to movie streaming by Kanopy.

### **New Public Computers**

Ten new computers for the public's use were installed in October. Nine computers were placed in the Reference area, and one was placed in the Young Adult area.

### **New Library Taskforce: CODA Task Force**

*Coming Out of the Dark Ages @ Library of the Chathams*

A strong organization always looks to improve, innovate, and respond to its customers. The library formed a task force in July 2021 to lead the library in *Coming Out of the Dark Ages* (CODA). The purpose of the CODA Taskforce is to:

- Lead our staff to reexamine past practices that make no sense for today's library user and may create barriers;
- Continue to welcome a new generation of library lovers who will enjoy the library over the next decade.

In some cases, we will need to lobby our consortium to get policies changed.

In order for the library to be perceived as more current and vibrant, Taskforce members are working on:

- Changing circulation policies that are not user-friendly;
- In-library signage similar to bookstores;
- A map of collections at the library entrance;
- Allowing staff more flexibility in decision-making that benefits our patrons.



### **Libby eBooks**

Led by Technical Services Head Mary Kennedy, the library lobbied the MAIN consortium to migrate from Cloud Library eBooks to Overdrive/Libby. Library of the Chathams always

supplied this service to our residents but had to split collection additions between two collections. Now patrons can use Libby/Overdrive and explore a wealth of eBooks without long waiting periods.

### **New Library Catalog Interface**

We were excited to offer a better search experience beginning in late 2021. The new discovery interface of the library catalog is now more intuitive and makes it easier for patrons to find what they want. Its format options include eBooks, movies, audiobooks, music, and books right from the library catalog.



## **THE LIBRARY BUILDING**

### **New Telephone System**

The library installed a new phone system in January. The updated phone system is a hybrid VOIP system that allows us to use VOIP technology but does not require each station to plug into its own data port. With the possibility of *Bridging Space to Place* construction in the near future, the new phone system will allow the library to segue into true VOIP technology if and when rewiring of the building takes place.

### **Michael Rex Mural Digitization**

Thanks to generous donations to our Kickstarter fundraiser, *Save the Michael Rex Mural*, this piece of art has been digitized. Stay tuned for mural-related projects to come!



### **Morris County Community Development Block Grant**

The Library successfully applied for and was awarded a Morris County Community Development Block Grant award for \$80,000. This grant will be used to improve the back entrance and access ramp.

## Construction Bond Act Grant Update

The Library was not one of the awardees for the NJ Library Construction Bond Act in the second round of awards. If any awardee fails to do its project, the Library is next in line to receive an award.

## LIBRARY SUPPORTERS

### *Bridging Space to Place Donors*

Generous donors continue to support our *Bridging Space to Place* campaign to help us renovate, modernize and repurpose the library space. The majority of pledges made in 2018 have been fulfilled, and many new donors are also contributing to the campaign. The Library continues to welcome donations to the campaign.



## Friends of the Library

### Friends Annual Book Sale



An active Friends Executive Board sponsors the Annual Book Sale and leads members to support the Library with their time, gifts, and talents. The 2020 Annual Book Sale was postponed until 2021. Two smaller outdoor book sales were held in the spring and a larger sale was held indoors in June with a limited number of people allowed in the rooms at one time. In December, the Friends were thrilled to hold a two-day Holiday Book Sale in the Lundt Meeting Room, and they were successful in bringing books and the community together. They raised over \$25,000!

## Board of Trustees

We thank the members of our 2021 Board of Trustees for their service during a year filled with uncertainties, and we look forward to working under the leadership of the 2022 Board.

### 2022 Board of Trustees

Andy Hollander, President	Lynn Magrane, Trustee
Kevin Sullivan, Vice President	Christina Mott, Trustee
Susan M. Allen, Secretary	Thaddeus J. Kobylarz, Borough Mayor
Barb Montague, Treasurer	Mark Hamilton, Township Representative
Danielle Dagounis, Superintendent's Alternate	