



Samuel H Wentworth Library

The First One-Hundred Years



*Dedicated to the citizens of Sandwich,
New Hampshire who have shown their
love of books and learning for more than
two centuries by founding and
supporting the Sandwich Libraries*

Samuel H. Wentworth Library

The First One-Hundred Years

by

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A copy of this publication has been posted for downloading on the Town of Sandwich website at <http://www.sandwichnh.org/>. Printing of the booklet version was made possible by the generosity of anonymous donors.

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Acknowledgements & Sources

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First and foremost are Patricia Heard, Florence T. Hodson and Silbert A. Forbes who carried out the detailed research that resulted in the first history of the Sandwich Libraries: “In Ways of Right and Sobriety”, published in 1972 to celebrate the dedication of the library annex. Information in that booklet and the extensive notes taken by the authors was an essential part of this updated history. The Annual Reports of the Town of Sandwich and Annual Excursion booklets of the Sandwich Historical Society were primary sources of numerical and biographical data. On-line internet searches provided background information.

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For their support, enthusiasm and patience there is no better group than the Trustees of the Wentworth Library. The preserved minutes of Trustees meetings also served as a guide to the historical record.

Finally, a special note of thanks to the library’s Director, Glynis Miner, for her willingness to seek, find and share a wealth of documents pertaining to the operations and history of the library and for her unfailing enthusiasm both for this project and for the library as a whole.

Sandwich Libraries before the Wentworth Library

Before beginning to describe the history of the Sandwich libraries it is well to put their development in the context of other libraries in the US at about the same time¹.

It is often stated that the first collection of books in the US made generally available to the public in the form of what we would today consider a public lending library was a gift of books by Benjamin Franklin in 1786 to the newly incorporated town of Franklin, Massachusetts in recognition of its adoption of his name.² The collection still exists on display in the Franklin library. The custody and conditions for loaning the books, however, were left in private hands. Indeed, in 1790 the town of Franklin seems to have explicitly rejected the notion of library support by taxation.

The first public library to receive sustained support by funds appropriated by a town seems to be the Peterborough Town Library of Peterborough, NH which the citizens voted to support with taxes in 1833. Sixteen years later New Hampshire became the first state to authorize voters in its towns to grant money to establish and maintain tax exempt free libraries.³

¹ An excellent account of the early history of the Sandwich libraries is given in a pamphlet entitled *A History of the Sandwich Libraries: "In Ways of Right and Sobriety"* prepared as part of the celebration of the dedication of the Wentworth Library Annex in 1972. The meticulous research notes taken by Patricia Heard, Florence T. Hodson and Sylbert A. Forbes for this publication continue to serve as a primary source of information about the history of the Sandwich libraries up to 1970.

² The story is told that the townspeople would have preferred a bell, but Franklin gave books...“Sense being preferable to Sound” – *A History of America's First Public Library at Franklin, Massachusetts 1790-1990*, John A. Peters and Nina C. Santoro; “Benjamin Franklin and Eighteenth-Century Libraries”, Margaret Barton Korty, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 55, No. 9 (1965), pp. 67-69.

³ *Public Libraries in the United States of America*, Special Report, 1876, pp 447-448.

The early history of the Sandwich library followed much the same course as these earlier developments. Book collections in Sandwich in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were held primarily by individuals, but were no doubt also shared among households.⁴ Community access to books in Sandwich was enhanced in 1800 by incorporation of the Sandwich and Moultonborough Social library. This gave way in 1810 to the Sandwich Social Library and was accompanied in the 1820's by the Sandwich Cooperative Library. During the early period books were also circulated by the Baptist Church in a basket that is now in the care of the Historical Society.

Despite the use of "Sandwich" in the titles of the early libraries they were basically private groups of residents determined to promote literacy and culture in the community through access to books. The first organized attempt to establish a lending library open to all residents was made in 1883 with the establishment of the Sandwich Library Association; but like its predecessors, it was privately managed. Some books were donated by individuals, but the majority were purchased with funds obtained from dinners and other fundraising activities. By 1885 the organization had 120 members...and only 108 books! Both numbers grew steadily and by 1895 there were 196 members and 1050 books. In 1888 the Association was incorporated in New Hampshire as the Sandwich Library Association, Inc. which continued until 1899. During the 1890's the collection, which had been housed in private homes or offices, became sufficiently large that a separate building was sought. The Quaker Meeting House seems to have been briefly considered. Eventually the collection was housed in the Masonic Hall and remained there until construction of the Wentworth Library.

Even though the Sandwich Library Association provided a library available to the public, it was not a "free" library. At the time of its

⁴ It has been estimated that the literacy rate in New England in the late 18th century was nearly 90 percent among men and about 50 percent among women. This was driven in part by the need for individuals to read the bible; but interest in reading rapidly spread to pamphlets and books that were becoming increasingly available and affordable. Michael H. Harris, *History of Libraries in the Western World*, 4th Edition, The Scarecrow Press, Inc., London, 1999; pp. 167, 170.

incorporation members were charged a 50¢ initiation fee and 25¢ annual membership fee. In the late 1890's, however, the need for a truly free library available to all began to grow. This led to a vote by the Town in 1898 to establish and support a free public library. In February 1899 the Sandwich Library Association was officially transformed into the Sandwich Free Library. The entire collection of the Association was transferred to the new group that continued to be housed in the Masonic Hall. In August 1899 a printed catalog containing more than 1800 volumes was issued and sold to the public for 5¢ per copy. Supplemental lists of newly acquired books were published annually in the Town Report until the Wentworth Library was established 15 years later. At least one copy of the 1899 catalog survives as well as records of borrowing for the years 1912-1914 and 1919-1922. Little other documentation has been found for the operation of the Sandwich Free Library during its 15 years of operation. Nevertheless it seems to have been sufficiently successful to inspire Samuel Wentworth to bequeath funds to build a new library to house and add to the book collection.

Samuel Hidden Wentworth Library



Samuel Wentworth
1854

The current era of the Sandwich Library was initiated in 1912 with a gift of \$17,000 from the will of Samuel Hidden Wentworth (1834-1912) specifically for the acquisition of land and construction of a new library that would bear his name.⁵ Wentworth's gift came at a time when private donations for public libraries were very much in vogue. Most notable, of course, were the gifts of industrialist Andrew Carnegie who built over 2500 libraries between 1883 and 1929 in the United States and elsewhere. Significantly,

⁵ One hundred years later that gift would be equivalent to about \$400,000. Extracts from the will of Samuel Wentworth and from a speech given by his nephew Paul at the dedication of the library on August 25, 1915 may be found in Appendices A and B, respectively.

Carnegie specifically excluded operating funds from his gifts, believing this was better able to ensure the long-term survival of the libraries.⁶ Wentworth's gift also was solely for purchase of land and construction, the Town having ultimate responsibility for the support of library operations.⁷ Since 1895 the state of New Hampshire has supported this responsibility through regulations requiring that any town that chooses to have a public library is bound by law to provide financial support.⁸

Evolution of the Building and its management

In the address he gave at the dedication of the just-completed library building, J. Randolph Coolidge, its architect, described his design as “modernized secular gothic”.⁹ In the opinion of at least one 21st century architectural historian¹⁰, however, the architecture is better described as “Tudor-Revival”. This characterization is based on comparison of the Wentworth library with other local contemporary buildings.¹¹ Another description of the building characterizes the architecture as “one of the area's finest examples of the Medieval revival styles”.¹²

In 1972, with funding from the large bequest of Joseph Wentworth, great-nephew of Samuel, a 2-story annex was built on the southwest side of the main library. It was designed by Robert R. Lemire of Laconia,

⁶ George S. Bobinski, “Carnegie Libraries”, American Library Association, Chicago, 1969, pp 43-45.

⁷ Later gifts by Samuel's great-nephew Joseph B. Wentworth, were less restrictive. In 1969, following the death of his widow, Maude, the Town received a gift of \$270,00 (equivalent to \$1.5 M in 2015) which was “to be used for the support, benefit, and upkeep of the Samuel H. Wentworth Library”. *Town Report*, 1969; p 75.

⁸ State of New Hampshire, RSA Section 202-1:4.

⁹ Appendix C.

¹⁰ Cristina Ashjian, private communication, Nov. 2015

¹¹ For a discussion of the architecture of a building in New Hampshire designed at about the same time as the Wentworth Library by Coolidge's partner see: Cristina Ashjian, “The Swallow Boathouse is a soaring masterpiece”, *New Hampshire Home Magazine*, May-June 2012. <http://www.nhhome.com/May-June-2012/The-Swallow-Boathouse-is-a-soaring-masterpiece/> accessed 15 Feb 2016]

¹² Appendix D.

NH. Maintaining the large, flat roof in the cold, wet weather of New Hampshire has, at times, proved a logistical and financial challenge.

In 1983 the Wentworth Library was included among the buildings in the village of Sandwich cited in the National Register of Historic Places. The application for inclusion contains a detailed description of the library building as it appeared in 1983.¹²

Regardless of the stylistic label, the library building has remained a remarkably durable structure, now beginning its second century as a place of book protection and a center for public gathering and contemplation. Samuel Wentworth was prescient when he specified in the conditions of his original gift that the library be built “as near fireproof as possible...”.⁵ The building was one of the few to remain unscathed by the Great Fire of 1934 that left much of the village in ruins.

The original building would not have had electrical power, a water supply or sanitary facilities. Heat was provided by the large fireplace occupying much of the northwest wall of the lobby. In particularly cold winters more than 15 cords of wood were used for heating¹³. This eventually gave way to a wood furnace and was followed by oil heat in 1953, and for a few years, electric heating in the library annex. No record of the first lighting used in the library could be found. Electric lights were not installed until 1921. It seems likely that before electricity was available the use of the library would have been restricted as much as possible to daylight hours. Plumbing was not put in place until 1965 when a toilet was installed in the basement. Other milestones showing how the building has been changed and managed are listed in the Chronology of Library History.

¹³ *Town Report*, 1930, pp. 30-31.

The Collection and Circulation

As has been mentioned, in 1885, the first year for which records have been found, the Sandwich Library Association had 125 dues-paying members and only 108 books. The figure below demonstrates how that situation has changed over the last 120 years. Unfortunately circulation records for the Wentworth Library did not appear in Town Reports until 1940 and the collection size was not reported until 1965. Free Library acquisitions, however, were published each year and are included in the figure.

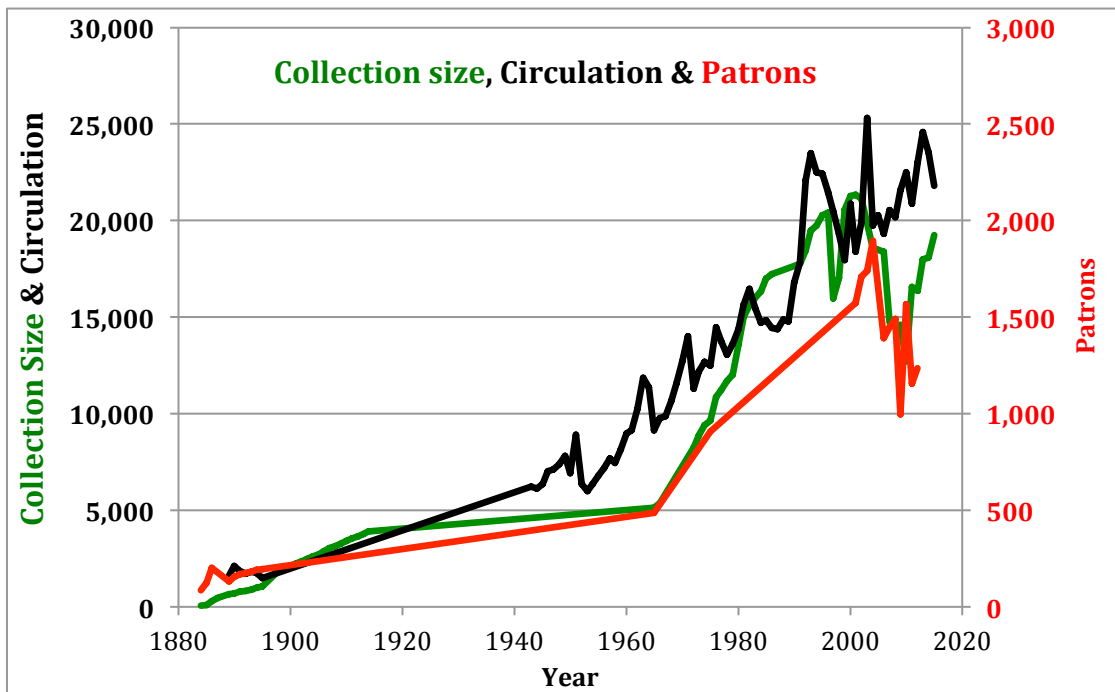


Figure 1. Comparison of the size of the library collection, circulation and number of patrons 1885-2015

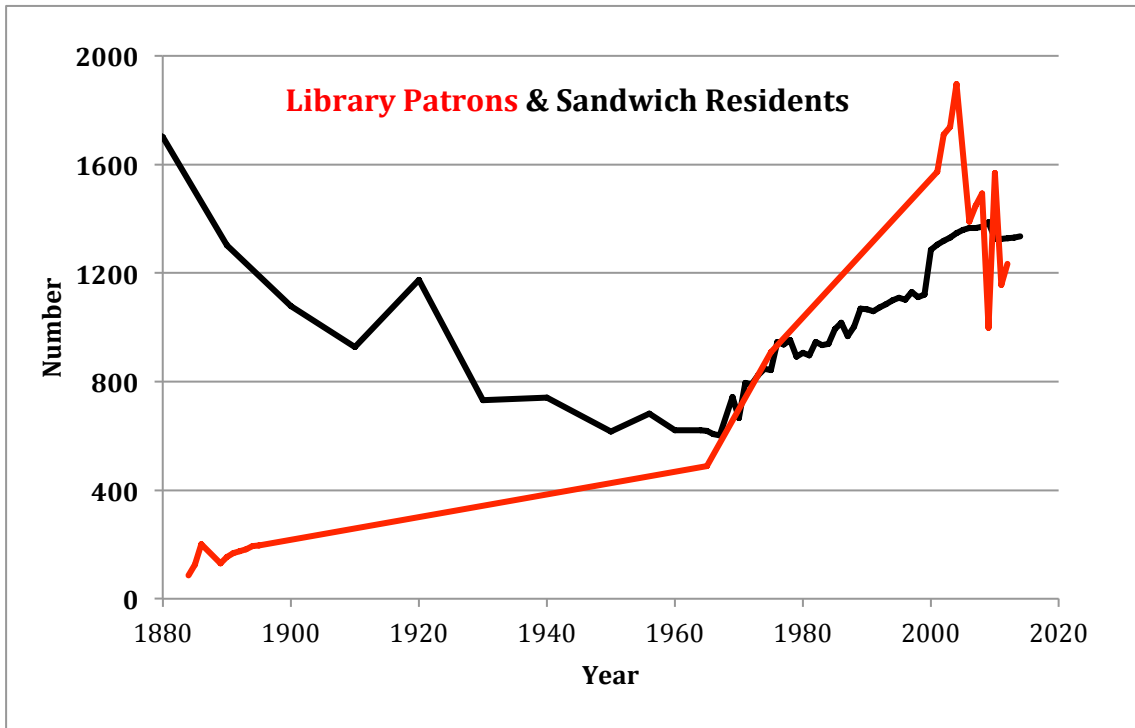


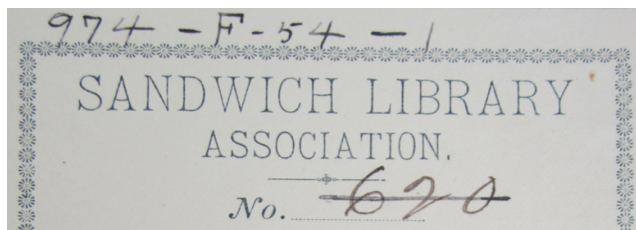
Figure 2. Comparison of the number of library patrons and residents of Sandwich 1885-2015

A glance at the figures shows that the number of items “checked out”, i.e. circulated, each year had steadily risen with the number of borrowers, and has in most years exceeded the number of items in the collection. On average each item is checked out at least once per year. Also on average each borrower checks out at least 10 items each year. Comparison of patron numbers with the population of the Town shows that at times the number of borrowers has been nearly twice the population, reflecting the popularity of the library with seasonal non-residents.

Cataloging

The book collection of the Sandwich Library Association and Sandwich Free Library was cataloged as a simple list of books assigned numerical labels. A catalog of books held by the Free Library as of 1898 was published in 1899 and sold for 5 cents per copy. A list of the Free Library's newly acquired books was published annually in the Town Report until the collection was taken over by the Wentworth Library.

After the establishment of the Wentworth Library the simple list was replaced by a combination of two systems, Cutter's 2-Figure Authors Table and the Dewey Decimal System. The former was introduced by Charles Ammi Cutter, the librarian of the Boston Atheneum, in 1880. It provided for shelving by author name. On the other hand, the Dewey Decimal System, published in 1876 by Melvil Dewey, one of the founders of the American Library Association, organized the collection by subject. All three methods of book identification are illustrated in the photo below which shows a portion of the bookplate on the inside cover of "The Beginnings of New England" by John Fiske, published in 1889. The book can still be found in the Wentworth Library in the Classics section and can be checked-out.



Bookplate call numbers

51	Fio	Glo	51
52	Fis	Glu	52
53	Fishe	Gn	53
54	Fisk	God	54
55	Fit	Goe	55
56	Fitt	Goi	56
57	Fitz	Golds	57
58	Fitzm	Goldt	58

Cutter Table

The number "620" refers to the catalog of both the Sandwich Library Association and the Free Library. Note that this label was crossed-out and other labels written in after the volume was transferred to the Wentworth Library. "974" refers to the Dewey Decimal classification "History of Northeastern United States. The label "F-54" refers to the Cutter Table entry for "Fisk" as shown in the Cutter Table entry. The numeral "1" designates this as the first volume under that Cutter entry. The 1899 catalog listed at least six books by John Fiske, but the others

were on subjects that would not have been shelved under the “974” Dewey Decimal label.

Because of a surviving circulation record book, we know that the method of classification described above persisted until at least the early 1920’s.

Cataloging library holdings in the late 20th century and early 21st century became more complex as the variety of items available for circulation increased. Magazines were added to the book collection at the very beginning of the Wentworth Library and possibly in the Free Library as well. Music became available for check-out in 1969 with a gift of records. This was followed by cassette tapes (1988) and compact disks (CD’s) (1991). It soon became possible to circulate audio books on tape and, later, CD’s. Movies became available on videotape (VCR tapes) (1989) and digital video disks (DVD’s) (2002). The library also steadily acquired the equipment needed to play electronic media, installing a TV and VCR in 1990, a CD compatible minicomputer in 1992 and later a digital projector for showing DVD’s and computer presentations.

Keeping track of the multitude of new media items and streamlining the circulation process has required the installation of a modern computerized data system. The first step in this direction was taken in 1989 by establishing an on-line connection to interlibrary loan. The next step occurred in 1998 with the acquisition of an automated circulation system and catalog with internet access. This change required a major effort to label all of the items in the collection with barcodes readable by a laser scanner. It also saw the demise of the card catalog that had served the library for most of the 20th century. The system was upgraded in 2002 and was replaced by a new system in 2011 allowing on-line patron access to the catalog and check-out services.

Library Finances

Until the establishment of the Sandwich Free Library in 1899 any expenses of managing and expanding the book collection were borne initially by the users of the library, supplemented later by dues and overdue book fines. Virtually all income was used to buy books. This practice changed with the establishment of the Free Library under the statutes¹⁴ governing public libraries adopted by the State of New Hampshire in 1895 which directed towns to appropriate funds for the maintenance of public libraries. The first library appropriation in Sandwich was passed in 1898. The values of the appropriations, compared to overall municipal expenses¹⁵, over the next 117 years are shown in Figure 3. *Note that the scales are logarithmic and differ by a factor of 100.*

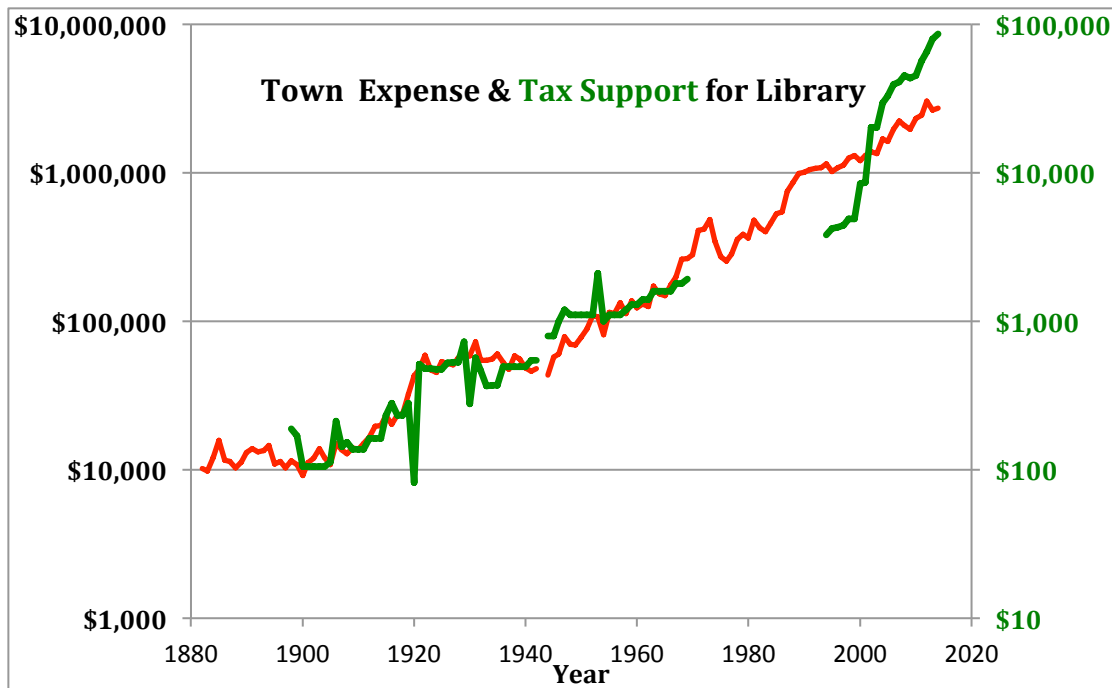


Figure 3. Comparison of tax support for the library with Town expenses, exclusive of school, county and state 1898-2015.

¹⁴ Public Statutes, Title 3, Ch. 8, Sections 23-26; available for viewing at: <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.35112105219168;view=1up;seq=106>; accessed 15 Feb 2016

¹⁵ Municipal expenses as defined here exclude payments for schools or county and state taxes.

Or, as a percentage of town expenses:

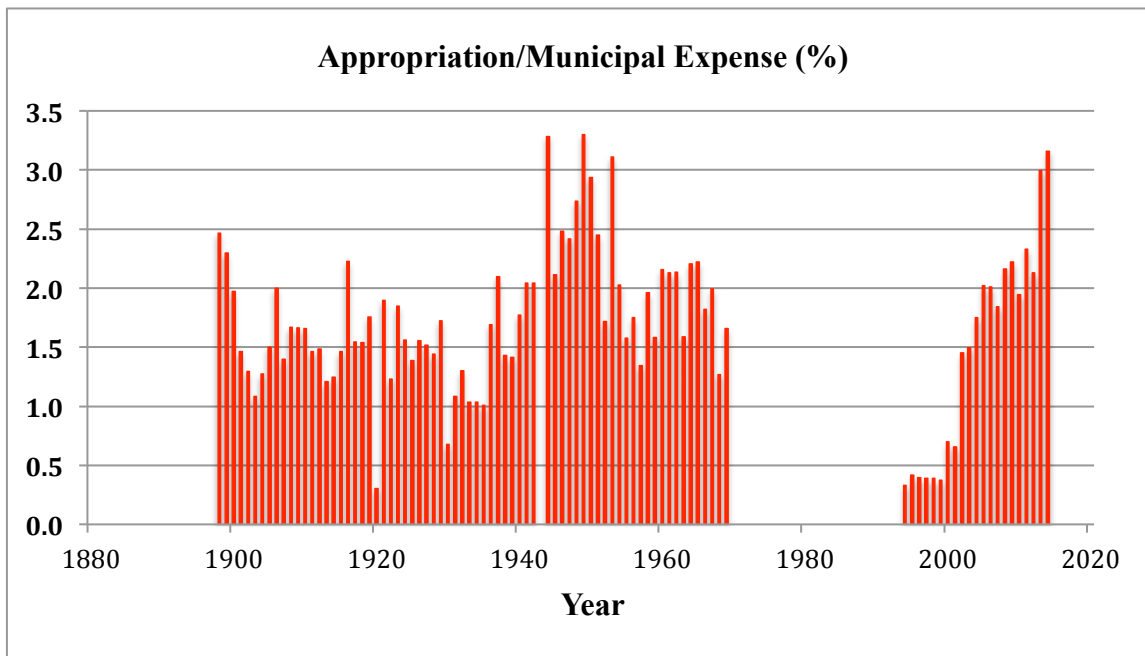


Figure 4. Library tax appropriation as a percentage of municipal expenses 1898-2015.

It is significant that for 24 years (1970-1993) income from the trust fund established by the gift of Joseph Wentworth and from other funds and donations made it unnecessary for the Town to contribute directly for support of the library through tax appropriations.

The reason for resumption of tax support can be seen in Figure 5 below which compares library expenses and receipts and tax support over the past century. Although the budget has always remained close to balanced, beginning in 1994 a tax subsidy became necessary. The current library appropriation is about at the same level relative to the Town budget that it was 70 years ago during WWII and the early 1950's, and not much different from the first Town contributions at the beginning of the Free Library. Even with steadily increasing expense, the Wentworth Library continues to be one of the best-endowed public libraries in New Hampshire

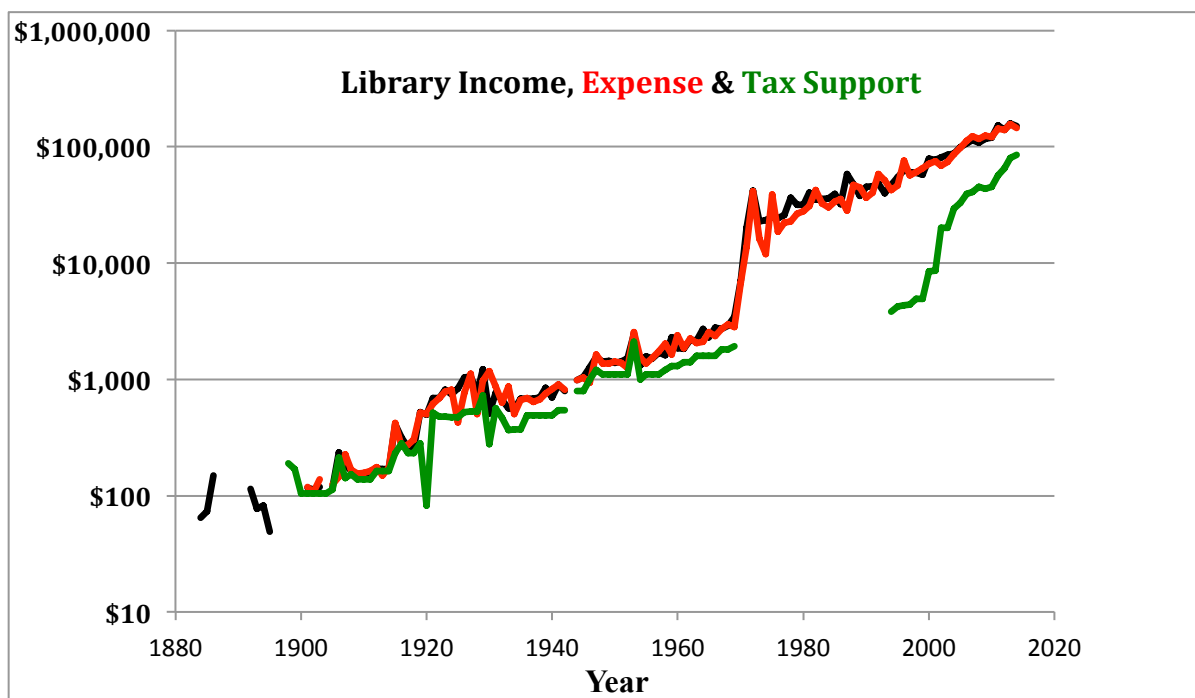


Figure 5. Comparison of library expenses, receipts and tax support 1885-2015. Note that the scale is logarithmic.

A better idea of how library expenses, and Town expenses, have changed over the years can be seen in the plot below which gives the expenses in inflation-adjusted dollars from 1885 to 2015.

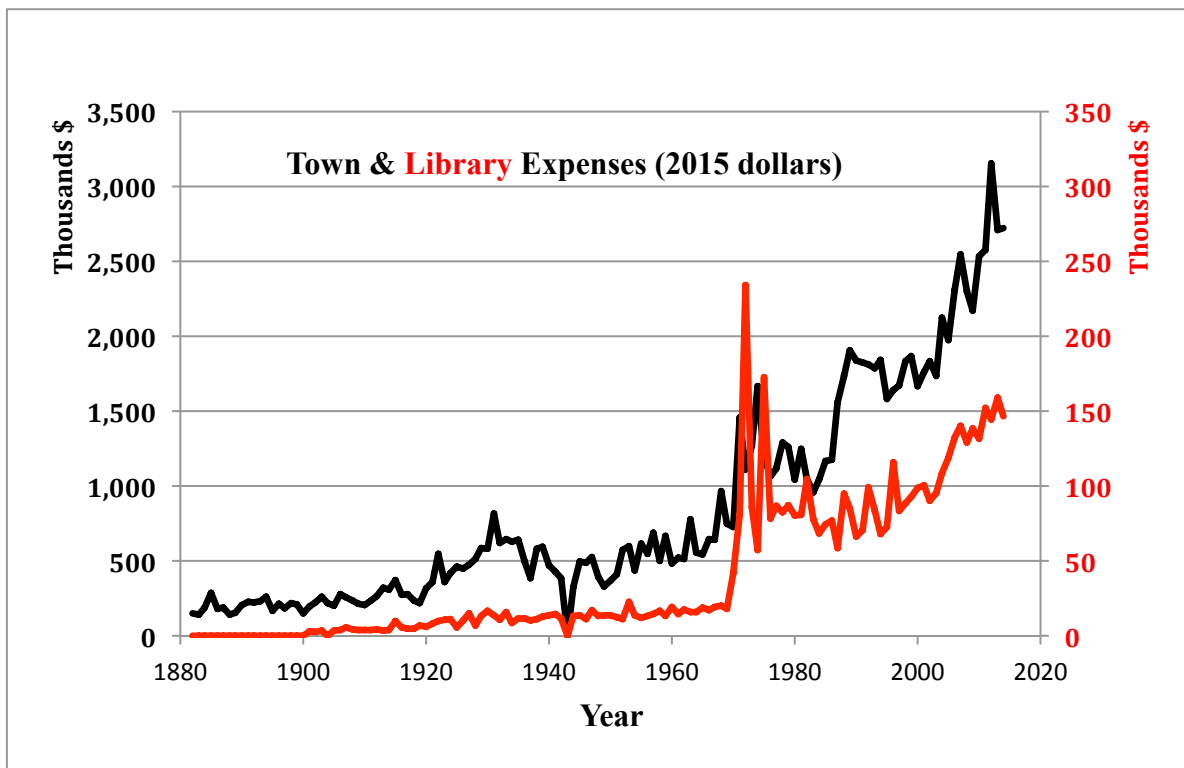


Figure 6. Comparison of Town and library expenses 1885-2015, inflation adjusted. Note that the scales differ by a factor of 10.

Although expenses in both categories continue to rise faster than inflation, library expenses seem to be rising somewhat more slowly than the Town budget. The sharp spikes in the early 1970's arose because the library budget included repayment of a loan of \$ 80,000 to cover the costs, not covered by a Federal grant, for construction of the annex. Remarkably, the loan was repaid, largely from trust fund income, without asking for taxpayer support.

Friends of the Library

One of Samuel Wentworth's concerns in donating funds for the construction of the Library was that the Town continue to demonstrate a commitment to raise additional funds and provide other support for a new library. Since the beginnings of the Sandwich Free Library the taxpayers of Sandwich have demonstrated their support by tax appropriations and through the efforts of numerous volunteers to help manage the Library. This support was extended in a more formal way in 1966 by the establishment of the Friends of the Samuel H. Wentworth Library (FSHWL) as a New Hampshire registered non-profit organization. The Sandwich organization was among the first dozen or so Friends groups in the state. During the succeeding half-century the FSHWL has always had at least 100 members and in some years more than twice that number.

The by-laws of the FSHW state: "The purpose of the FSHWL shall be to maintain an association of persons interested in libraries, to focus public attention on the library, to stimulate the use of the library's resources and services, to receive and encourage gifts, endowments and bequests to the library, to support and coordinate with the library in developing library services and facilities for the community"

The success of the FSHWL in achieving its goals is well illustrated by a list of some of the types of activities that they have sponsored over the years. Each activity is labeled with the year that it was first introduced. In most cases the activities continued for many years, up to the present day.

Activity	Introduced in
Managing and cataloging record collection	1966
Book cataloging, preservation, repair	1967
School Library staffing	1967
Summer reading program	1967
Outreach to shut-ins	1967
Grant from State Library to purchase books	1968
Building and grounds maintenance	1968
White Elephant sale	1969
Book reviews, story hours, films	1969
Book cart, bulletin board, other library accessories	1969
Donation of books in celebration of newborns	1969
Exhibits of arts and crafts and on other subjects	1970
Float for Fair parade	1971
Public lectures and presentations	1971
Little Red Wagon shows	1972
Book, magazine, monetary donations	1973
Annual book sale	1973
Christmas parties and other social functions	1973
Publicity for library activities	1973
Summer fair, plant and bake sale	1975
Luncheon book reviews, Books-Sandwiched-In	1976
Assistance at circulation desk	1982
Coffee Table Fridays	2004

Staffing, Governance and Maintenance

Since the beginnings of the Sandwich Library Association in 1883 the Sandwich libraries have been served by one or more librarians. A complete list of librarians from 1883 to 1969 is given in the earlier history of the library¹. An updated list of librarians of the Wentworth Library during the first 100 years is given in Appendix E . Except for the early years and some time in the 1950's, the Librarian has been assisted by one or more assistant librarians. More recently the library staff has been joined by pages, young people from Sandwich who help the staff in a variety of ways. By far the longest serving library staff member was Sylbert A. Forbes (Mrs. Walter Forbes) who started as an assistant librarian in 1946 and ended her service in 1991 after 40 years as Librarian. In 2001 the title of Librarian was changed to Director.

The first library trustees were appointed in 1897 when the library become a public free library supported by tax appropriations. A list of Sandwich Free Library trustees and Wentworth Library trustees through 1972 is given in the earlier history¹ and an updated list for the Wentworth library is given in Appendix F. Over the years the Board of Trustees has grown from three to five members. Library Trustees are elected by Town voters and, for the purposes of the governance of the library and management of its finances and property, have a status at the same level as, and independent of, the Board of Selectmen.¹⁶ Beginning in 2004 state law allowed the Selectmen to appoint up to three Trustee Alternates to serve when the elected members of the Board are unavailable.

Since the very beginning of the Wentworth Library, the building upkeep has been in the capable hands of a succession of custodians. Their duties have ranged from housekeeping, stoking the fireplace and replacing fuses to shoveling snow and removing unwelcome families of squirrels. Much of the credit for maintaining a building that has nurtured both the books and the readers for more than a century is due to this dedicated group.

¹⁶ State of New Hampshire, RSA Section 202-A:6

Library Artifacts

Samuel H Wentworth Reed Organ

The 19th Annual Excursion booklet of the Sandwich Historical Society in 1938 included the following description of a part of the library premises¹⁷: “Upon entering the high-ceilinged, well-lighted building, one sees by the Librarian’s desk a small melodeon. It was given by Mrs. Paul Wentworth to her son Samuel when he went to college and was one of his most cherished possessions. He was fond of music and while at Harvard played the college organ. The instrument was given to the library in 1927 by his niece, Long John Wentworth’s daughter, Mrs. Clarence W. Bowen of New York”. Attached to the front of the instrument, which has continued to reside at various locations in the library, is a brass plaque with the following inscription:



SAMUEL H. WENTWORTH
Born in Sandwich, N.H. July 16th, 1834
Died in Boston, Nov. 10th, 1912
Received this seraphine from his mother about 1850. He gave it by will to William Wentworth Thayer of Concord, N.H. who gave it by will to Mrs. Roxana Wentworth Bowen of New York who presented it to the trustees of the Samuel H. Wentworth Library in 1927 to be kept in perpetuity

The relationship of Samuel Wentworth to his instrument is further described in a lengthy profile published in the *The Granite Monthly*¹⁸ near the end of his life :

“...Mr. Wentworth is a great lover of music and while attending school at New Ipswich during his college preparation played the organ in the Congregational Church, as he also did for two and a half years in the

¹⁷ Sandwich Historical Society, 19th Annual Excursion, 1938, pp. 51-53.

¹⁸ “Samuel Hidden Wentworth”, by H. H. Metcalf, *The Granite Monthly*, Vol. XLI, No. 5, New Series, Vol. \$, No. 5, May 1909, pp. 147-151.

Harvard Chapel during his college course. For several years he was the musical and dramatic critic for a Boston daily newspaper. ...when not in his office, he passes his time with his books and parlor organ, which went through Harvard with him, and has been his constant companion since...”

The instrument in question is in need of restoration, but is otherwise a well-preserved example of a reed organ of the type that was very popular in the mid-nineteenth century before pianos became widely available. Recent inquiries¹⁹ into the nature of the instrument make it seem likely that it is technically a “harmonium” rather than a “seraphine”, the two types of instruments differing in the way that air is made to flow past the music-generating reeds. It was manufactured by Charles Austin of Concord, NH and would have had to have been made before Samuel Wentworth’s matriculation at Harvard in 1854. The well-established provenance of the instrument and the fact that it is in relatively good condition make it a valuable artifact that the library is fortunate to have retained over the years.

¹⁹ Correspondence from Mr. Allen Meyers, Secretary of The Reed Organ Society, October 2015.

Entrance heraldry

In his speech at the dedication of the Wentworth Library J. Randolph Coolidge described the entrance to the library as follows: "...In the porch gable are the Arms of the ancient town of Sandwich, England, and below these the escutcheons of the Wentworth family of N.H..."⁹ Added to the description now should be the New Hampshire coat-of-arms, shown to the left of doorway. A recent photo of the library shows the locations of these decorations.



The locations of the heraldry in the photo are as follows: Upper center: Sandwich Arms. Over the doorway, lower right: Arms of the Wentworth Family. lower left: Great Seal of the State of New Hampshire.

The heraldry is shown in more detail below



Sandwich



Wentworth



New Hampshire

The corresponding arms from which the images are derived are shown on the next page²⁰.

²⁰ Most of the historical background reported below is derived from articles in Wikipedia and various other on-line resources. These can be readily accessed by key-word searching.



Sandwich



Wentworth



New Hampshire

Sandwich Arms

At the left is shown the coat of arms displayed on the town hall of Sandwich, England, one of five towns known as the Cinque Ports, designated in 1155 by Henry II to “maintain ships ready for the Crown”. The name Sandwich in Old English could be translated as “sand village”. The name goes back to at least 640 A.D. The arms themselves are derived by combining the ships associated with the Cinque Ports with the lions on the coat of arms of King Richard the Lionheart who landed in Sandwich in 1194 after returning from the Crusades.

The two Sandwich’s became associated in 1763. Sandwich, NH was the name bestowed by governor Benning Wentworth on a grant of Crown land to a group of citizens to establish a town. He named the town in honor of his friend the 4th Earl of Sandwich (to whom is also often attributed the corresponding name of the food item). The 4th Earl inherited his title from his ancestor the 1st Earl, Sir Edward Montagu. Montagu received his peerage from Charles II in 1660. He chose Sandwich for his peerage title to recognize the port from which he had embarked as commander of the fleet that restored Charles to the throne²¹.

²¹ It is interesting to note that Montagu had first considered adopting the title Earl of Portsmouth (England) to recognize the naval shipyard there. Had he not changed his mind we might now be eating a “Portsmouth” for lunch...

Arms of the Wentworth Family

The Wentworth arms on the Library bear a similarity to the center image on the opposite page taken from the title page of *The Wentworth Genealogy* compiled by John Wentworth (“Long John”), a brother of Samuel. The Wentworth family traces its origins to at least the 11th century in England with roots in America dating to 1650.²² In 1868 the lineage of the American branch of the family was traced to English peerage and concluded that “the American family seems fully entitled to the family coat-of-arms, and possibly to the honor of the male representation of this ancient family”. The symbolism of 3 leopard faces and a chevron seems to be characteristic of all of the English branches of the Wentworths but its significance is unclear.

Great Seal of the State of New Hampshire

The great seal of the state of New Hampshire in the photo on the right displays the frigate *USS Raleigh* shown under construction in the Portsmouth, NH shipyard. Her construction was authorized by the Continental Congress in 1775 to provide one of thirteen warships for the new American navy. She was captured by the British in 1778, commissioned in the Royal Navy as *HBMS Raleigh*, and continued to fight in the Revolutionary War...for the British. Ironically, she was decommissioned in 1781 at Portsmouth, England.

²² *The Heraldic Journal*, IV, No. XXL, 1868, p. 125-129.

Moose and deer heads

Since at least the mid-1930's the circulation desk and the fireplace have from time to time been decorated with the stuffed head of a deer or moose. A photo²³ dating from the mid-1930's shows the head of a deer mounted over the fireplace. Similarly, a photo apparently taken by Trustee Wayne Thompson dated 1961 shows the head of a moose mounted over the circulation desk. There seems to be no record of the origin of these two artifacts or how long they occupied their respective locations.²⁴



1930's



1960's



1998 - 2015

The situation is much more definite for the moose head that was mounted over the fireplace from 1998 until the ceiling restoration in 2015. Recent research²⁵ has revealed the fascinating story of where it came from and how it came to reside in the library.

Readers who watched the “Mystery” series on public television in the 1980's when the actor Vincent Price was the host would have been able to see this moose head. It occupied a space above a fireplace, just as it did in the library, as part of a set in a studio at WGBH in Boston reminiscent of a mysterious Victorian parlor. When Price retired and was replaced by Diana Rigg in 1989 the set was updated to a more modern theme and the props, including the moose head, were no longer needed.

²³ Courtesy of Joan Cook from her extensive archive of Sandwich photographs.

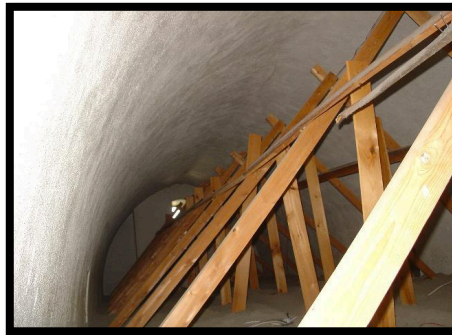
²⁴ There is a story, however, that the moose head over the desk was a gift in the '40's from a local resident who came across it, attached to the live animal, in Sandwich at a time when moose hunting was illegal in New Hampshire. Another version claims that it was from a legal Canadian moose.

²⁵ Conversations with John Perkins and correspondence with Mark Duffield, November 2015.

Enter Mark Duffield who had joined WGBH in 1987. He had long admired the moose head, adopted it in 1990, and displayed it in his office at WGBH for several years. During the 1990's Mr. Duffield visited Sandwich and frequented the Wentworth Library where his longtime friend John Perkins was librarian. As he put it: "On one visit I stood in front of the fireplace and thought my moose head, Vincent Price's moose head, belonged above the fireplace".²⁵ His gift was installed there in 1998, by attaching it to the dropped ceiling. The ceiling restoration project in 2015 made it impractical to mount the moose head safely in the space from which it had overseen the users of the library for 17 years. That space is now occupied by a large mirror that reflects the newly renovated interior of the lobby.

Barrel Vault Ceiling

The architecture of many of the public libraries built during the early 20th century was dominated by vaulted ceilings that gave an air of grandeur to the interior of even a relatively small building like the Wentworth Library. The original barrel vault ceiling in the main library was exposed to view until 1941 when a dropped ceiling was installed to save on mounting energy costs. Although an architect was consulted in 1988 about the feasibility of opening the ceiling, it remained hidden, and largely forgotten, until the early 21st century. In 2015, after an extensive fundraising campaign, and under the guidance of Wendy Shambaugh, the dropped ceiling was removed and the vaulted ceiling and upper windows were revealed once more. The ceiling and windows were also insulated using modern materials and new lighting compatible with the restoration was added just in time for celebration of the Wentworth Library Centennial in August 2015.



Before



After

A Chronology of Sandwich Library History

The history of the Sandwich library may be considered to cover four periods extending over more than two centuries. Some of the significant library events occurring in Sandwich and New Hampshire during those times are listed below:

The Pre-Wentworth Era 1800 – 1912

This era was covered in a 1972 pamphlet prepared by Patricia Heard and Florence Hodsdon¹

1800-1898 Early groups: “Social” and “Cooperative” libraries were similar to book groups.

- 1800 Sandwich and Moultonborough Social Library
- 1810 Sandwich Social Library
- 1820's Sandwich Cooperative Library
- 1833 Peterborough NH, first tax supported public library in USA
- 1849 NH law enabling towns to establish public libraries
- 1883-1899 Sandwich Library Association, \$0.25 annual dues
- 1888 Sandwich Library Assoc incorporated in NH in Masonic Hall
- 1895 NH law mandating town support for public libraries
- 1898 Sandwich Free Library established
- 1898 First tax appropriation for Free Library
- 1899 Catalog published, >1800 titles; \$0.05 per copy
- 1899-1914 Sandwich Free Library, residing in the Masonic Hall

Samuel H Wentworth Library 1912-1969

- 1912 Samuel Hidden Wentworth death and bequest for library building (10-Nov.)
- 1913 Planning Committee for Samuel H Wentworth library appointed (14-Jan)
- 1913 J. Randolph Coolidge presents plans for building (5-Apr.)
- 1913 Deed to land secured (11-Mar.)

- 1915 Dedication of new library building, Old Home Day (25-Aug.)
- 1915 Collections of Dr. Charles White and Free Library moved to new building
- 1917 Warrant article to allow a Town Fair to be held on the library grounds
- 1921 Electric lights installed at a cost of \$75
- 1924 Grange Fair Assoc. granted right to build on Library grounds
- 1926 Rug exhibition by Mrs. J. R. Coolidge started Sandwich Home Industries
- 1927-1931 Branch library opened in N. Sandwich during winter months
- 1938 Assistant Librarian paid for first time
- 1939 Wood furnace repaired
- 1940 Interlibrary loan of non-fiction books arranged with State Library
- 1941 Ceiling lowered and vaulted ceiling hidden (until 2015)
- 1943-1947 Resumed N. Sandwich branch library to conserve gasoline
- 1947 Library exterior painted and front lights installed
- 1953 Oil furnace installed
- 1956 Inside and outside of building painted
- 1960 New interior lighting and ceiling supports added
- 1961 Concrete steps built for front walk
- 1962 Sign placed in front of building displaying opening times
- 1963 Dr. White's collection sold... for \$425
- 1965 Water and toilet installed in basement
- 1967 Restoration of doors and gold leaf on entrance heraldry
- 1966 Friends of the Samuel H Wentworth Library formed
- 1966 Gift of music records added to the collection
- 1969 Water supplied to library from well on Quimby field
- 1969 Paul and Lydia Wentworth (parents of Samuel) portraits returned to NH Historical Society
- 1969 Telephone installed

Joseph Wentworth gift & annex construction 1969 – 1988

- 1969 Joseph Wentworth bequest establishes Library Trust Fund
- 1970 Proposal to add 2-story wing with meeting room
- 1970 Wentworth Trust income removes need for tax support
- 1972 Library annex opened to the public (17-Jun.)
- 1972 Publication of “A History of the Sandwich Libraries”
- 1972 Well drilled to provide independent water supply
- 1974 Borrowers cards issued to 675 readers
- 1976 Ceiling insulation added in main building
- 1976 Books-Sandwiched-In started
- 1981 Energy audit
- 1983 Library included in National Register of Historic Places
- 1987 Connection to Village sewer system
- 1988 Consultation with architect about ceiling restoration

Communications and technology revolution 1988 – present

- 1988 Cassette tape player acquired
- 1988 IBM PC purchased with grant from Benz Trust
- 1989 Computer connection to Plymouth for interlibrary loan
- 1989 Video tape collection started
- 1990 TV and VCR acquired
- 1990 Borrower numbers assigned to protect checkout privacy
- 1991 CD collection started
- 1991 Telephone answering machine installed
- 1992 CD Rom/minicomputer acquired for reference room
- 1992 Annex electric heat replaced with circulating hot water
- 1993 Addition of wall insulation
- 1994 Americans with Disabilities Act handicapped access
- 1994 Addition of upstairs bathroom
- 1994 Tax support of library restarted after 24 years
- 1995 Fax machine installed
- 1998 Automated circulation system with internet access
- 1998 Barcoding for cataloging
- 1998 Public computers available for email and on-line browsing
- 1998 “Mystery” moose head installed over the fireplace

- 1999 Library card scanner installed
- 1999 Façade repainting and front door repair
- 2000 HVAC upgrade with improved air circulation and cooling
- 2001 Outside reading circle built with donated materials and labor
- 2002 DVD collection started
- 2002 Computerized circulation system upgraded
- 2004 Long range planning committee considers expanding or replacing library building. Recommends not proceeding.
- 2004 High speed internet and wireless installed for users
- 2007-2009 Carpet replacement
- 2009 Energy audit
- 2011 On-line access to catalog and check-out services
- 2012 Community room refurbished
- 2013 Lighting upgrade at circulation desk and new desk installed
- 2015 Vaulted ceiling restored & revealed for first time since 1941
- 2015 Part of original Library lot deeded to Sandwich Fair Assoc.
- 2015 Centennial celebration of the Samuel H Wentworth Library

Appendices

Appendix A

Terms of the will of Samuel H. Wentworth:

“I give and bequeath to the Town of Sandwich in the Country of Carroll and State of New Hampshire, Seventeen Thousand Dollars for the purpose of purchasing of land and the erection upon it of a Library building at that part of the Town of Sandwich called Center Sandwich, to be known and called The Samuel H. Wentworth Library. Said Building must be built of Stone or Brick and as near fireproof as possible, little wood being used in the interior finish. Said Library shall be distant from all other Buildings at least fifteen feet and shall be used exclusively for a Library and for no other purpose.”

Appendix B

Extract from address given by Paul Wentworth, chairman of the building committee and nephew of Samuel H Wentworth, at the dedication of the Samuel H Wentworth Library on August 25, 1915. (*Sandwich Historical Society*, Nineteenth Excursion, 1938, pp 51-53):

“In boyhood days walking frequently with others past this little eminence, on our way to and from Daniel G. Beede’s school, I did not suspect that I would ever see a structure of this kind built upon it. Around its base were houses, and in front a main highway, but its top was barren of any building. It belonged then to an individual, and its destiny unknown, but now it is clear-it is owned by no single inhabitant, but by all Sandwich and on its top there stands this library to be dedicated to the dissemination of the seeds of instruction, pleasure and knowledge in conjunction, and hand in hand with the churches and schools...

While we cannot thank in person today the donor who had this library so near to his heart and sacrificed so much to be able to give to his native town, we can thank him though absent in body as yet present in soul; and when we are gone, and our children and grandchildren come here to read books, they too, will thank him.”

Appendix C

Address of Joseph Randolph Coolidge, Jr. at the dedication of the Samuel H. Wentworth Library on Wednesday, August 25, 1915 as reported in the *Sandwich Reporter*, Thursday, September 2, 1915:

“The Sandwich Library stands upon a knoll on a site four acres in extent, on the edge of the village far enough from the highway to afford quiet reading rooms undisturbed by motor traffic and offering opportunity for the future development of a town garden similar to the one in Concord.

The walls are of field stone from the immediate neighborhood, trimmed with artificial stone resembling granite. The roof is covered with purplish red tiles, and the windows are glazed with plate glass in large lights. These windows are brought down low enough to give varied outlooks over the beautiful scenery of Sandwich and no fear is felt that such a prospect will unduly divert attention from the interests of the building. On the contrary, much enjoyment can be had from reading amid beautiful natural surroundings. The porch, although enclosed to serve as a vestibule, is intended to invite all comers to enter the library. In the porch gable are the Arms of the ancient town of Sandwich, England, and below these the escutcheons of the Wentworth family of N.H. The interior is finished in red oak, native to the region, and the style of the building is modernized secular gothic.”

Mr. Coolidge paid high compliment to the builder Mr. Weed, whose skill as a builder is well known.

Appendix D

Description of the Samuel H. Wentworth Library architecture, building #70, in the application for listing of the Historic District in the National Register of Historic Places – 1983:

#70 Samuel H. Wentworth Library (Town of Sandwich).

Samuel H. Wentworth, a Sandwich native who became a successful Boston lawyer, died in 1912, leaving \$17,000 to his native town for the erection of a library in Center Sandwich, Wentworth specified that the building be of brick or stone. The latter material was chosen for the building designed by architect J. Randolph Coolidge and erected by contractor Larkin Weed. Speaking at the dedication on August 25, 1915, the architect described its style as "a modernized secular Gothic",¹ In 1972, the library was expanded by a rear addition designed by architect Robert R. Lemire.

The library stands on the top of a knoll overlooking Main Street. The older section was basically cruciform in plan, a tall one and a half story main block with two lower projections on its rear axis, a small, one-story entrance pavilion towards the street (northeast), and a small one and a half story wing to the rear. The gable roofs of all three sections are sheathed with red tiles, with tile-covered ridges. "The walls are of fieldstone from the immediate neighborhood, trimmed with artificial stone resembling granite,"² The uncoursed rubble walls have a water table of the smooth artificial stone at the window sill level. The entrance pavilion, however, is mostly glass and wood above low stone walls with the usual "stone" sill course.

The entry itself, two double doors with linen-fold lower panels, and multi-pane leaded glass windows featuring trefoil tracery, is set in a four centered arch with moulded trim. In the panel above the doors is found the inscription "Erected IIIMCXIV" between escutcheons of the State of New Hampshire and of the Wentworth family, all surrounded by carved foliage. Above this panel is the inscription "The Samuel H. Wentworth Library" in gilded letters, beneath a shallow modillioned cornice. The gable, divided into panels by vertical boards, features a large carving of the arms of the town of Sandwich, England, in the central panel.

The doorway is flanked on each side by multi-pane leaded glass windows with trefoil drop tracery, topped by transom windows, also with multi-pane leaded glass and trefoil tracery, all with moulded trim. Three similar windows fill each side façade of the pavilion. Ornamental bargeboards cover the rakes of the gable; and

exposed rafters appear in the lateral eaves. The main block and the rear wing have massive stone walls stepped at the corners and extended upward at the gable peaks for chimneys. The lateral walls have plain wooden close eaves, while the gable walls are topped by a smooth "stone" course, beneath close wooden verges. On each side of the entrance pavilion on the main block's northeast front is found a large triple window with large deepset single panes of glass and smooth "stone" surrounds. The northwest gable end has two large single pane windows with the same "stone" surrounds on the main level, and a narrow window with "stone" sill and lintel in the gable. The southeast gable end is distinguished by a very large window, with heavy "stone" surrounds, mullions and sash bars, dividing it into large rectangular panels. Topped by a hoodmould, the four-panel wide window is four panels tall in the two central sections and three panels tall on the sides. On the visible rear facade, south of the rear wing, is found a shallow projection with another triple window like those of the main facade. The rear wing, blank on the southeast facade and covered by the addition on the northwest, has only one visible window, a narrow window with "stone" sill in the rear gable.

Because of the slope of the land, the upper story of the two-story addition corresponds to the main level of the older building. The addition, which covers the northern two-thirds of the original library's rear façade, consists of two sections a small, shed-roofed section filling the angle formed by the main block and the rear wing, and a square, large, flat-roofed section behind the rear wing and the smaller section. The shed-roofed section has a facade of vertical boarding topped by a simple box cornice. Topped by a deep concrete "cornice", the facades of the main section have wide panels of fieldstone at the corners, with vertical boarding in between. Both sections have modern doors and windows. The grounds, mostly grassed, are ornamented with trees and shrubs. An asphalt ramp leads from the concrete platform in front of the main entry to a small parking lot on the southeast side of the building. Another small parking lot is found off Quimby Field Road. A stone retaining wall marks the street frontage. The Samuel H. Wentworth Library is an anomaly in this village of clapboarded wooden buildings of the vernacular, Federal and Greek Revival styles. But, it is also one of the finest public libraries in the region and one of the area's finest examples of the Medieval revival styles.

1. *Sandwich Reporter*, Sept. 2, 1915.

2. *ibid.*

Appendix E

Librarians of the Samuel H. Wentworth Library

	<u>Librarians</u>	<u>Assistant Librarians</u>
1915-1924	Mildred M. Blanchard	
1925	Ethel E. Atwood	
1926-1934	Belle E. Forbush	
1935-1936	Belle E. Forbush	Doris Chittuck
1937	Doris Chittuck	Beatrice D. Burrows
1938	Beatrice D. Burrows	Ethel E. Atwood
1939	Beatrice D. Burrows	Elizabeth R. Dumas
1940	Beatrice D. Burrows	Elizabeth R. Dumas Sylbert U. Ainger
1941	Beatrice D. Burrows	Pearl Smith Grace E. Ainger
1942	Beatrice D. Burrows	Grace E. Ainger
1943	Bernice A. Vittum	Beatrice D. Burrows Grace E. Ainger
1944-1945	Bernice A. Vittum	Grace E. Ainger
1946	Bernice A. Vittum Helen Ingles Hazel Mudgett	Grace E. Ainger Hazel M. Mudgett Sylbert A. Forbes
1947-1950	Hazel Mudgett	Sylbert A. Forbes
1951	Hazel Mudgett Sylbert A. Forbes	Sylbert A. Forbes
1952-1960	Sylbert A. Forbes	
1961-1968	Sylbert A. Forbes	Madeline Bryant
1969-1971	Sylbert A. Forbes	
1972	Sylbert A. Forbes	Florence T. Hodson
1973-1975	Sylbert A. Forbes	
1976-1977	Sylbert A. Forbes	Susan Sweet
1978-1990	Sylbert A. Forbes	Mary Francis Hambrook
1991	Sylbert A. Forbes John E. Perkins	Mary Francis Hambrook
1992-2000	John E. Perkins	Mary Francis Hambrook

	<u>Librarians</u>	<u>Assistant Librarians</u>
2001	John E. Perkins Jo Darling	Mary Francis Hambrook Marilyn O'Kelly
2002	Jo Darling	Mary Francis Hambrook Anne Papen Glynis Miner
2003	Jo Darling	Anne Papen Glynis Miner Suzie Shevenell Rose DeMars
2004	Jo Darling Glynis Miner	Anne Papen Glynis Miner Rose DeMars
2005-2008	Glynis Miner	Anne Papen Rose DeMars Marion Blackshear Bethany Powers
2009	Glynis Miner	Anne Papen Marion Blackshear Bethany Powers Lois Brady
2010-2011	Glynis Miner	Anne Papen Marion Blackshear Lois Brady
2012-2013	Glynis Miner	Anne Papen Lois Brady Katie Wonders
2014-2015	Glynis Miner	Anne Papen Lois Brady Katie Wonders Frederick Bickford Diane Johnson

Appendix F

Trustees of the Samuel H. Wentworth Library

1915-1925	Katherine F. Bryer
1915	John S. Quimby
1916-1918	Dr. Albert B. Hoag
1916-1923	Jesse L. Ambrose
1919	Ellen L. Wentworth
1920-1921	E. Louise White
1922-1924	Dr. James S. Roberts
1924-1927	Dorothy Weed
1925-1927	J. Randolph Coolidge
1926-1930	Susie M. Stevenson
1928-1932	Carl S. Dorr
1928-1949	Mary H. Coolidge
1931-1946	Mabel E. Ambrose
1933-1947	Perley C. Knox
1925-1946	Beatrice D. Burrows
1945-1950	Rosealie Q. Burrows
1945-1957	William P. Hacker
1947-1968	Isadora S. Lear
1947-1961	Alice W. Pierce
1948-1956	Harold M. Parker
1950-1951	Mary H. Coolidge (Honorary)
1950-1964	Raymond G. Moses
1952-1956	Florence B. Knox
1957-1958	Helena Davis
1957-1966	Anna L. Coolidge
1958-1966	Wayne B. Thompson
1959-1971	William C. Greene
1962-1970	Doris P. Hunt
1965-1973	Harry G. Balch
1967	Jean Brown
1967-1976	Dana Pearson
1968-1971	Elisabeth G. Powers
1969-1972	Florence T. Hodson

1971-1974	Carlton F. Heard
1972-1980	Frances W. Doughty
1972-1976	Frances T. Mauch
1973-1976	Vaughn Harmon
1973-1978	Joan Cook
1975-1978	Robert E. Purdy
1977	Austin Burrows
1977-1979	Grant Lewis
1977-1985	Janet Laverack
1978-1980	Paul Gillis
1979-1984	Sharon Heath
1979-1984	Rita Taylor
1980-1985	Lynwood Bryant
1981-1983	Lois Harmon
1981-1983	William Hoag
1984	Sharry Smith
1984-1991	Donald K. MacDougall
1985-1989	Margaret Goodwin
1985-1989	John Perkins
1985-1992	Barbara Parsons
1986-1988	Ruth J. Congdon
1986-1988	William Smith
1987-1998	Jeffrey Fleischmann
1989-2000	Virginia Heard
1989-2003	Walter Johnson
1991-1993	Anne C. Papen
1991-1999	Lisa Scott
1991-2005	Diane Decker Booty
1993-1998	Priscilla Seeley
1994-2003	Richard Allen
1998-2001	Dale Mayer
1999-2004	Susan C. Mitchel
2000-2002	Alan J. Simmons
2001	Lois Brady
2003-2008	Linda F. Danielovich
2004	Ronald G. Lawler (Alternate)
2004-2005	Richard Crockford

2004-2006	Philip Strother
2004-2006	Milan McNall (Alternate)
2004-2009	Edward Harding
2005-2006	Mara Burns (Alternate)
2005-2006	Nancy Sterns
2005-2007	Ronald G. Lawler
2006	Carla Muscat (Alternate)
2006-2007	Carl McNall
2007	Cecelia Cox (Alternate)
2007-2015	Carla Muscat
2008-2010	John Doherty (Alternate)
2008-2011	Cecelia Cox
2008-2013	Betty Alcock (Alternate)
2008-2014	Wendy Huff
2009-2014	Jeanne Ryer
2010	Edward Harding (Alternate)
2010-2013	Nancy Sterns
2011	John Enright (Alternate)
2012	Joan Merriman (Alternate)
2012-2013	Linda Marshall (Alternate)
2012-2015	John Enright
2013-2014	Carol Clark (Alternate)
2014	Chris Boldt (Alternate)
2014-2015	Linda Marshall
2015	Carol Clark
2015	Chris Boldt
2015	Thomas Klein (Alternate)
2015	Wendy Huff (Alternate)
2015	Ronald G. Lawler (Alternate)

NOTES

