

The Darwin R. Barker Library & Museum Association



2025 Annual Report

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*Photos by Bird Padgett, Graham-Tedesco-Blair,
Catherine Oag-Miller, and Kay Szewczuk*





A Letter from our Director

Dear Community Members,

It brings me great joy to share the remarkable progress made by the Darwin R. Barker Library and Museum Association over the past year, made possible by your unwavering support. As your Director, I am deeply inspired by the community's dedication to education, culture, and personal development, which has allowed the D.R. Barker Association to be a vibrant hub of knowledge and connection.

Here are some of our notable achievements, which have been made possible with your help:

- **Educational Initiatives:** A diverse range of programs, from story times to computer workshops, ensure that all our patrons have the opportunity to learn and grow.
- **Community Building:** Our vibrant book club, author talks, animal visits, and other events bring people together, fostering a sense of community and intellectual curiosity.
- **Youth Empowerment:** Creative activities like story times and arts and crafts, encourage imagination and creativity in the younger generation of library patrons.

Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to secure our community's future, or including us in your financial or estate planning. Every contribution, no matter the size, makes a significant difference. You can donate online at www.BarkerLibrary.org

Thank you for being a part of this wonderful community and for your continued support in shaping a brighter, more knowledgeable future!

Sincerely,

GRAHAM TEDESCO-BLAIR

Graham Tedesco-Blair
Executive Director
Darwin R. Barker Library & Museum Association

Library History

For over 120 years, since its establishment in 1883, the *Darwin R. Barker Library* has been a cornerstone of the *Fredonia* and *Pomfret community*. Our mission is to provide essential resources and opportunities that may not be readily available otherwise. The library boasts an impressive collection, with over 40,000 books, 3,000 DVDs, and a vast digital library of 29,000 eBooks and audiobooks.

But we are more than just a repository of knowledge; we are a vibrant community hub. Our public meeting facilities and internet access make us an inclusive space for all. We host a variety of classes, from art and computer skills to gardening, ensuring there is something for everyone to learn and enjoy.

We are dedicated to promoting local literary talent and fostering a love for reading. Our book talks featuring regional authors and our engaging storytimes for early childhood literacy are just a few examples of our commitment to enriching the community. With this multifaceted approach, the *Darwin R. Barker Library* continues to be a vital resource, bringing people together and empowering them through knowledge and shared experiences.



Museum History



The *Darwin R. Barker Museum* is a treasure trove of Fredonia's history, with a collection that spans the region's earliest human occupation to the present day. Housed in a historic 1821 building, the museum boasts an impressive array of artifacts, including over 2,600 objects, 2,600 photographs, and 1,900 archival items.

Additionally, our museum holds 1,000 books, all carefully maintained by our dedicated curator, archivist, and volunteers.

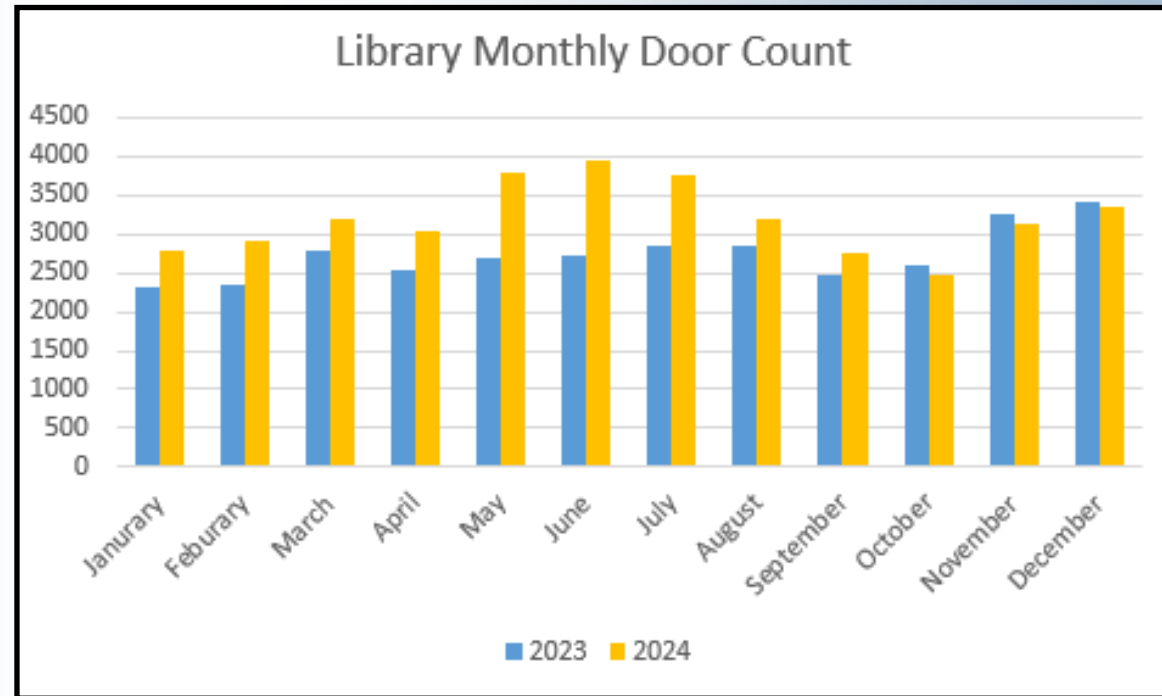
One of our key priorities is maintaining accurate and up-to-date records of our artifacts. We are proud to report that since 2020, staff and volunteers have cataloged an impressive 5,568 *new* artifacts. This brings our total to over 8,100 artifacts!

We are also committed to fostering the next generation of museum professionals. Our internship program, launched in 2020, has supported the professional development of five interns from *SUNY Fredonia*, with two going on to work at *Chautauqua County museums*. Furthermore, we accept and train volunteers, three of whom have found employment in the educational sector. By providing these opportunities, we play a vital role in helping individuals build their resumes and achieve their career aspirations during transitional life stages.

Library Statistics

Total Library Visits: 38,370

That's Up 16.8% from 2023!



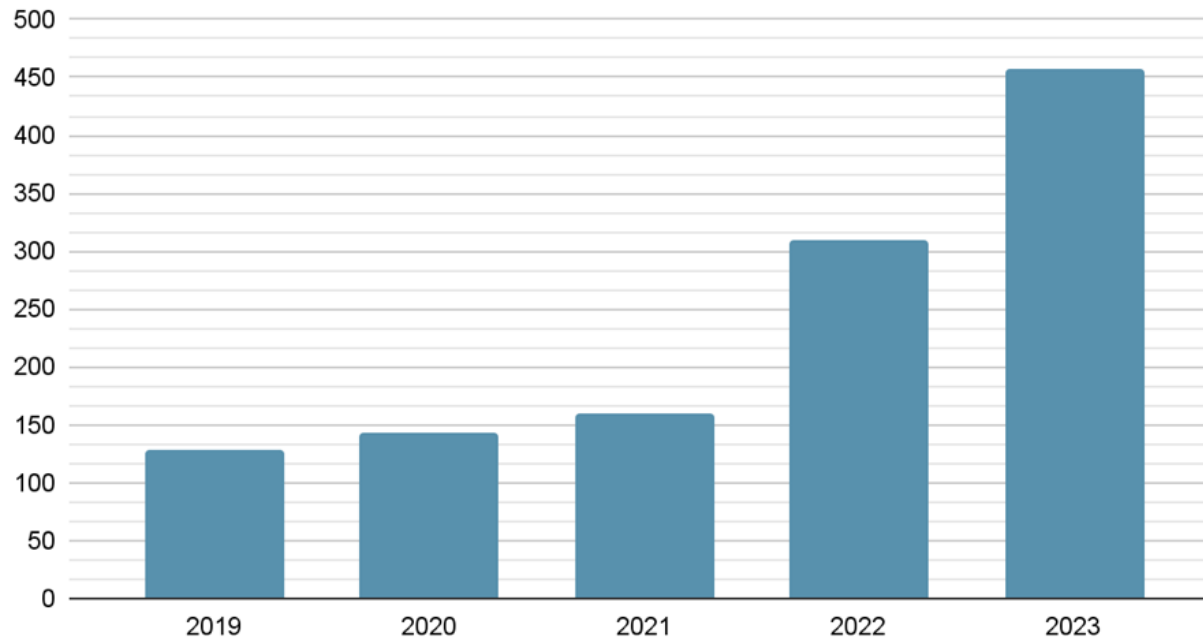
Your Library's Collection:

Adult Fiction _____16,763
 Adult Non-fiction _____12,101
 Audio Books _____1,584
 Children's Fiction _____7,259
 Children's Non-fiction _____4,830
 eBooks _____22,380
 Online Audiobooks _____8,683

CDs _____2,828
 DVDs _____3,048
 Video Games _____61
 Museum Passes _____52
 Oral History Kits _____5
 Ukuleles _____2

Museum Statistics

Annual Gallery Visitation



Museum Visitors: 535

Your Museum:

Objects _____ **3,529**

Photographs _____ **3,227**

Books _____ **1,174**

Total Objects _____ **10,624**

Your Archive:

43+ *Archival Collections*

1,247+ *Historical Books*

2,000+ *Digital Scans of Archival Documents*

2025 Budget



Funds

Municipal Funds: **\$113,000**

Endowment Income: **\$273,000**

Other Sources: **\$79,056**

Expenses

Media Purchases: **\$23,500**

Employees: **\$373,316**

Operations: **\$64,290**

Library Statistics & Return on Investment

Library Services & Activities	2023 Library Statistic	Average Service Price	Comparable Non-Public Service	2023 Value to residents
<i>Annual Circulation</i>	39,116	\$35	<i>Books, audiobooks, magazines, newspapers, music, & films</i>	\$1,136,060
<i>Annual Interlibrary Loans Received</i>	3,918	\$40	<i>Journal articles, books, audiobooks, music, & films</i>	\$156,720
<i>Annual Digital Circulation</i>	32,678	\$25	<i>Downloadables: e-books, e-audio, & streaming video</i>	\$816,950
<i>Annual Database Usage</i>	11,205	\$40	<i>Specialized information via electronic databases</i>	\$448,200
<i>Annual Attendance at Library Events & Literacy Programs</i>	5,203	\$10	<i>Programs, concerts, & classes</i>	\$52,030
<i>Annual Visitor Count</i>	32,865	\$2	<i>Community meeting & study space, microfilm reader, newspapers, & literacy items</i>	\$65,730
<i>Annual Public Internet Use Not Including Wi-Fi</i>	3,923	\$15	<i>Internet, printers, fax, scanners, & specialized software</i>	\$58,845
<i>Annual Reference Questions</i>	940	\$15	<i>Information & reference support</i>	\$14,100
<i>Total Value to Residents</i>				\$2,745,635
<i>2023 Library Operating Budget from Public Funds</i>				\$113,000
<i>Ratio</i>				24.32

That's \$24.32 in value for every \$1 invested!

A Letter from Our Curator

Dear Community Supporters,

In 2024, the museum continued to thrive. The year began with a special lecture series featuring renowned scholars, historians, and authors, offering insights into various aspects of local history, from viticulture to architecture. Two major exhibitions filled our galleries: "Fredonia UnCensored: The History of the Local Press," which explored the town's printing history, and "We are the Champions: A Dynamic Celebration of Athletics in Fredonia," celebrating the impact of sports on the community.

Looking ahead to 2025, the museum has ambitious plans to commemorate the bicentennial of General Lafayette's visit to Fredonia. This event will be a collaborative effort with local partners, including historical societies, veterans' organizations, and businesses. The celebration will feature reenactments, musical performances, a themed dinner and dance, lectures, and an exhibition exploring the context and legends surrounding Lafayette's visit.

The Barker Museum's 2025 goals include expanding its summer educational programs, in particular, and continuing to invite renowned lecturers to share their expertise. By broadening our collections and presenting engaging exhibitions in the coming year we ensure that the stories and experiences of the past continue to inspire and educate future generations.

Sincerely,



Max Walters
Curator of Collections



A Letter from Our Archivist

Dear Fredonia Community,

Reflecting on the past year, I am delighted to share the accomplishments of the Barker archive with you. This has been a year of growth and connection, as we worked diligently to preserve and share the rich history of our community. We processed 12 complete collections, totaling over 3,580 individual items. These resources, encompassing topics such as archaeology, agriculture, and industry are now available, offering invaluable insights into our region's history and culture. Additionally, our revamped museum website and the debut of the Grape Belt Digital Archive, have enhanced accessibility and engagement with our resources.

Community outreach has been a cornerstone of our efforts. Through several lectures and a new collaboration with the U.S. History department at Fredonia High School, we fostered dialogue and introduced students to archival research, inspiring the next generation to connect with history in meaningful ways. These initiatives reflect our commitment to serving and engaging with the Village of Fredonia.

Looking ahead, I am eager to build upon these accomplishments. Our digitization initiatives will remain a priority as we preserve fragile materials and expand accessibility. Community outreach will continue as we explore innovative ways to celebrate and preserve our village's rich history.

Thank you for the unwavering support and enthusiasm which makes this work possible!

Warm regards,



Catherine Oag-Miller
Archivist
Darwin R. Barker Historical Museum



Future Plans

Physical Environment Enhancement: We aim to transform our physical spaces to better serve our community. This involves modernizing and renovating existing areas, as well as creating new, purpose-built spaces to foster an environment of innovation and creativity. Additionally, we are dedicated to making our library more inviting and accessible to all, ensuring an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere.

Strategic Alliances and Partnerships: Recognizing the pivotal role of our library and museum as community hubs, we are committed to strengthening our relationships with local organizations. We will continue and expand our collaborations with nearby schools, community centers, literacy groups, historical societies, and various non-profit entities. Together, we can create synergistic programs and events that benefit the entire community. Furthermore, we aim to reach out to local businesses and other potential partners, broadening our network and the range of resources and services we can offer collectively.

Financial Support and Resource Augmentation: To better serve our community and achieve our strategic goals, we must prioritize enhancing our financial resources. This involves actively pursuing grants and donations from various sources, as well as collaborating with local government to secure additional funding. By increasing our funding and resources, we can provide more comprehensive services, acquire the latest technology, and create an even brighter future for our community.



Enhancing Community Engagement: One of our primary goals is to actively involve and engage our community. We understand the importance of adapting to the evolving needs of our patrons, and over the next five years, we are dedicated to achieving this. To boost community involvement, we will offer an expanded range of events and programs that cater to a diverse array of interests. This includes an increase in the number and variety of classes, workshops, and lectures, ensuring there is something for everyone. We will continue to showcase works by local artists and offer more rotating collections in our museum.

Sponsor a Project



Acquisition Fund

- “Mark Twain” Watch, made in Fredonia by the Independent Watch Company, 1882 - \$4,000
- Dr. Pettit’s American Eye Salve Co. Collection, 1850s-1880s - \$4,500

Archival Supplies

- 25 Blue-Grey Barrier Board Textile Boxes - \$1455.75
- Microfilm Machine Repair (labor & parts) - \$1000
- 4 Acrylic Lipped Open Book Cradles - \$300
- Scanner: Epson DS-50000 WorkForce - \$2,000

Exhibit Supplies

- 2 Acrylic Lipped Book Cover Displays - \$64.30
- 3 Flex Snake Weight Packs - \$61.50
- 2 Exhibit Banners - \$700
- Enhanced Image Prints for Exhibit Use - \$480

Gift Shop

- 100 Giclee Fine Art Prints of Paintings in the Museum’s Collection - \$800
- 100 of each: *Pendants, Pins, and Keychains*, representing 5 historical events in Fredonia, designed and produced by a Local Studio - \$6,000
- 50 *Mugs, Coasters, and Tiles* produced by a Local Studio from Clay Sourced from the Site of the Village’s First Brickyard c. 1819. - \$5,000

Publications

- 30 copies of *The Fair Chambered Corridor: Explorations of the History of Fredonia NY* (2023, D. Shepard, A. Bailey, M. Walters) - \$500
- 100 Copies of *Mark Twain’s Legacy in Fredonia* (Walking Tour Program) - \$500

Other Ways To Give:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| ♦ Pledges | ♦ Planned giving |
| ♦ Gifts of stock or property / real estate | ♦ Naming opportunities |
| ♦ Estate Planning | ♦ Book Sponsorship and Memorials |