

Memorial Hall Library

Community and Library Profile 2022



*Memorial Hall Library
Andover, MA*



*Vicky Enright
DESIGNS*



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Andover Community Profile

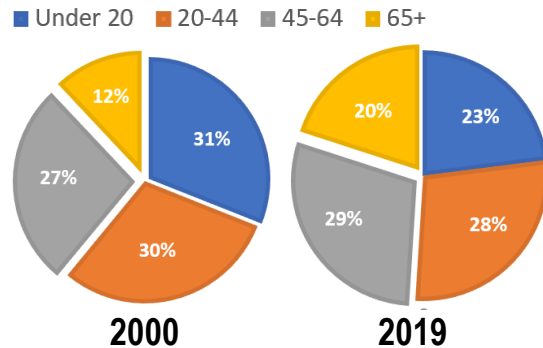
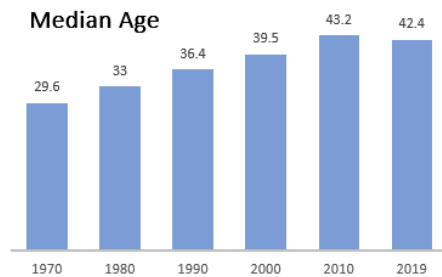
What We Look Like Today — A Community Snapshot

Andover

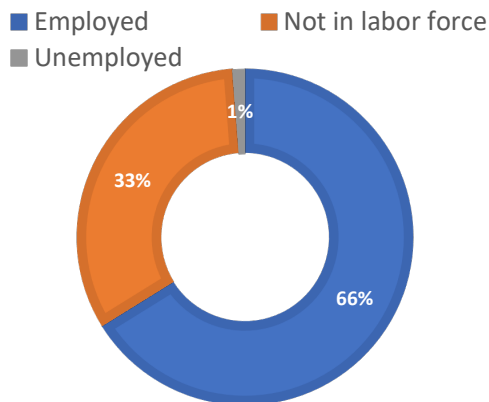
By the numbers

Population: 36,921

Age Distribution—The 65+ demographic has increased by 8% over the last 20 years; the under 20 demographic has decreased by 8% in that time.



Labor Market: 19,622 Employed



Income



Andover Household Median \$151,334



Statewide Average \$81,215

Education



High School 97.2%

Bachelor's or higher 74.5%



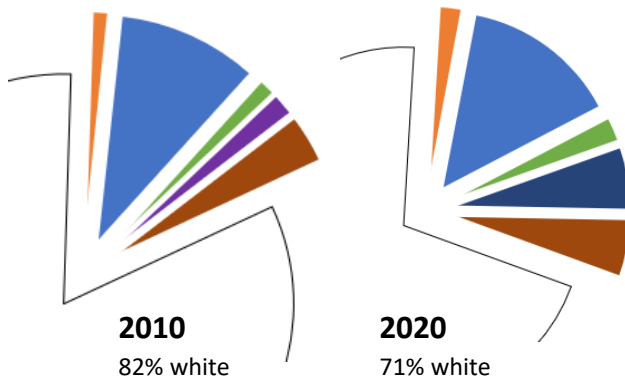
Statewide Average 91.3%



45%

Race and Ethnicity

Andover has become more diverse over the last 10 years



- African American / Black ↗ 1%
- American Indian no change
- Asian ↗ 4%
- Native Hawaiian no change
- other ↗ 1%
- two or more races ↗ 4%
- Hispanic or Latino ↗ 1%

Memorial Hall Library Profile

Memorial Hall Library

• BY THE NUMBERS •

2021



80,253
VISITORS TO THE LIBRARY




21,916
CARDHOLDERS



1,198
NEW CARDS
THIS YEAR



413,263
PHYSICAL ITEMS CHECKED OUT
(PRINT, MEDIA, AUDIO)



131,901
ITEMS DOWNLOADED OR
STREAMED



2,652
CHAT REFERENCE SESSIONS



6,958
ATTENDEES IN OUR 343
VIRTUAL EVENTS



18,834
NEW ITEMS ADDED TO
COLLECTIONS




205,946
HOLDS PLACED



395
DOCUMENTS
NOTARIZED



4,685
VIMEO
VIEWS



1,068,453
PAGES READ AND LOGGED DURING
SUMMER READING



1,206
CRAFT KITS DISTRIBUTED TO KIDS,
TEENS, AND ADULTS

COVID-19 PANDEMIC: When the Memorial Hall Library (MHL) closed its doors at 5 pm on Saturday, March 14, 2020, no one could have imagined that physical materials would not circulate again until May 18; the statewide delivery system wouldn't resume until June 27; patrons wouldn't enter the Library until July 29; and the year would end with no in-person programs or meetings being held inside the building.

Despite the pandemic, the Library expanded and created new and innovative services. In addition, virtual programming was available for children, teens, and adults. MHL continued collaborating with local organizations, such as Courageous Conversations, Andover WECAN, and the Addison Gallery. Merrimack Valley and statewide initiatives, such as Libraries Working for Social Justice and Best-Selling Authors, allowed the Library to increase access to many additional programs.

In 2021, the Library fully restored most of its services to pre-pandemic levels, including its hours, seating, technology, and some programming. While patrons returned to the Library slowly, averaging 400 per week in January 2021, the year ended with almost 2,500 weekly visits. Between 2020 and 2021, the Library hosted 550 virtual programs that 8,856 patrons attended. During the summer and fall of 2021, the Children's Room staff offered in-person storytime and programs outside and then in our Activity Room. We offered 60 programs that 1,010 children attended.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: The Memorial Hall Library Board of Trustees has been in continuous operation since founder Joseph Smith first committed to leading the Town of Andover in its efforts to build a Library in 1871. The Trustees' mission is to generally oversee the management of the Library, including the selection of the library director, the approval of its budget, administration of invested funds, and the establishment of general policies. The seven trustees are appointed by the town manager and serve a term of three years. The trustees play an important role in purchasing and installing public art at the Library. An essential part of the environment of discovery at MHL, children and adults alike consider the "polar bear statue" in the Library's front and the colorful kinetic sculpture in the back foyer hallmarks of their visits to the Library.



Curbside Pickup During the Pandemic



Outdoor Storytime During the Pandemic

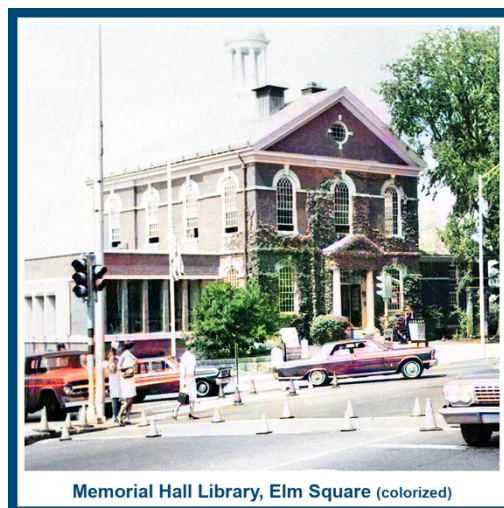
COLLECTION: In fiscal year 2021, the collection included 213,397 print and media items for adults, teens, and children, access to 10 downloadable and streaming services, digital access to 3 national newspapers, 67 paid databases, and a Library of Things with 43 items. MHL is part of the 36-member Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVLC), which allows reciprocal borrowing for our patrons throughout the Merrimack Valley and participates in the Commonwealth Catalog, allowing reciprocal borrowing throughout the State of Massachusetts.

FACILITY: At present, Memorial Hall Library consists of four levels of 55,000 square feet of ADA compliant and accessible space, with recently renovated restrooms on the lower level and level one. Public meeting space includes two meeting rooms that are managed following the Library Meeting Room Policy. The building is open 68 hours per week with ample seating, public computers, and a newly created Makerspace. Free Wi-Fi is available throughout the building. In 2020, Wi-Fi access points were placed in outdoor locations to make it accessible from the back patio, parking lot, and Essex Street.

FRIENDS OF THE MEMORIAL HALL LIBRARY: For more than 45 years, the Friends of Memorial Hall Library has raised money for the Library through membership fees, donations, and book sales. Funds raised by these dedicated Library patrons and volunteers provide financial assistance to MHL to provide programs and services not funded in the Town's budget. In addition, they encourage public support for and interest in the Library, foster awareness and use of the Library, and encourage the community to donate time and assistance to the Library.

STAFF: The Library is staffed by 21 full-time and 18 part-time employees. Positions include:

- Library Director
- 2 Assistant Directors
- Coordinator of Reference Services
- Coordinator of Children's Services
- Coordinator of Library Technology Services
- Reference Librarians
- Programming and Partnerships Manager
- Library Assistants
- Library Aides



Memorial Hall Library History

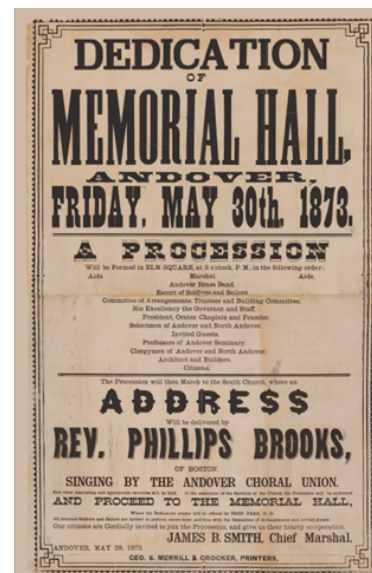


John Smith, Abolitionist, Mill Owner, and Founder of Memorial Hall Library

Andover mill owner John Smith, joined by his brother, Peter, and their business partner, John Dove, led the effort to build the Memorial Hall Library in the early 1870s.

In 1870, John Smith donated \$25,000 to the town of Andover for a "Memorial Hall to be built to keep in remembrance the names of those who gave up their lives in defending our flag and saving my country to God and Liberty." He stipulated that Andover residents

raise an equal amount to endow the town to "take care of the library, if there should be one, and a Reading Room."



Library Dedication Broadside printed by Merrill & Crocker Memorial Hall Library Collections

To commemorate those who served during the "War of Rebellion," the Library's cornerstone contains a list of the Andover men enlisted in the Army and Navy during the Civil War. In addition, the marble tablets in Memorial Hall are titled "To the Memory of Our Patriotic Dead" and list the names, death dates, and causes of death of all Andover residents who fought in the war.

Memorial Hall Library opened to the public in May 1873. Andover resident and Massachusetts 14th Regiment Veteran Ballard Holt was named the librarian and custodian.

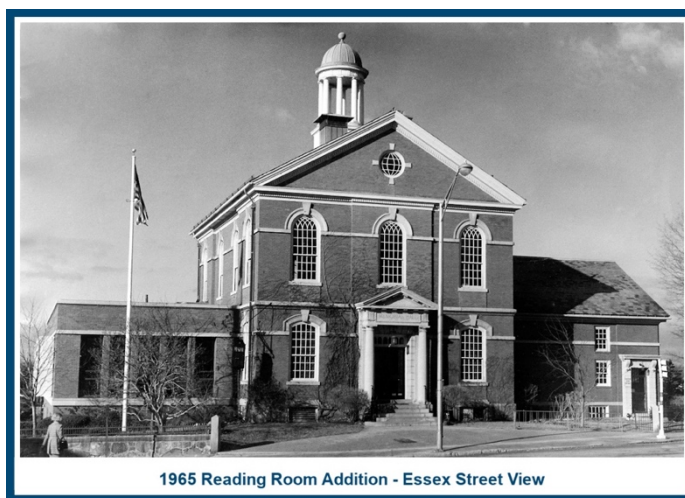
Following are key MHL accomplishments and activities:

- **1906-1918:**
 - The Library's collections were reorganized into a browsable, open-shelf system.
 - Library cards were made available to children over ten for the first time.
- **1918:** The Library closed its doors for six weeks because of the Influenza pandemic.
- **1926:** At Andover's March 8, 1926, Town Meeting, taxpayers voted to fund expanding the Library's original footprint.



Ballard Holt, Librarian and Custodian

- **1927:** A bigger, newly remodeled Library opened. Its original mansard roof was replaced with a Georgian roofline and cupola, and the front entrance was rebuilt. Interior features included an enlarged Reading Room, staff workspace, a refurbished Memorial Hall suitable for civic meetings, and the first “Junior Room” for children’s and young adult books and programs.
- **1940:** A book bus service was launched to deliver books to local neighborhoods and schools.
- **1960-61:** To relieve overcrowded children’s programs and add staff workspace, Boston architecture firm Shepley Bulfinch designed a modern brick and glass Children’s Room to be built. Dedicated and opened to the public in March 1961, the new addition marked the first change to the Library’s footprint since its 1927 addition.
- **1965-66:** Library and town leaders recognized the MHL’s congestion problem by approving a major expansion project. Miriam Putnam described the issue: “Our physical plant provides no quiet reading or study areas to which serious readers, old and young, can escape out of the traffic jam in the reading room and around the charging desk.” Designed by Shepley Bulfinch, the Reading Room addition provided 10,358 square feet of new and refurbished space.
- **1966:** Microfilm, LPs, filmstrips, and language tapes became popular, essential collections.
- **1967:** MHL was selected to serve as the new Eastern Massachusetts Regional Library System (EMRLS) headquarters.
 - As the regional center, MHL received state funding to provide interlibrary loan, delivery, and reference services to 36 towns north of Boston.
 - A teletype machine enabled MHL to communicate rapidly with six other MA regional libraries to facilitate sharing of articles and books between libraries.
- **1975:** Andover residents voted to purchase the Colonial Theater building behind the Library on Essex Street to accommodate future growth and parking.
- **1982:**
 - MHL was named to the National Register of Historic Places, a federal designation managed by the National Parks Service for historic preservation.
 - In collaboration with 11 other MVLC libraries, MHL staff began entering bibliographic records from paper catalog cards into a searchable database.



1965 Reading Room Addition - Essex Street View

- **1984:** MHL was the first Massachusetts public library to offer public access catalog terminals for book searching.
- **1988:**
 - Designed by Shepley Bulfinch, the 1961 Children's Room was razed, and the original balcony book stack loft on the main reading room's west side was removed to make way for a 30,000 square foot addition. The project included restoring "Memorial Hall" to its original design.
 - MHL became the hub for the newly created Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVLC).
 - Purchased an automated circulation system called Libs 100.



Front Entrance - Historic Footprints Project

- **1989:** MHL began offering public access to two online reference resources, Wilson Disc and Info-Trac.
- **1993:**
 - The front entrance area was re-designed to reflect the look of the building's front in 1910. Designed by Andover architect Jane Griswald, this "Historic Footprints" project featured an oval brick and granite patio as well as period lighting and landscaping.
 - Ten publicly accessible CD-ROM workstations with access to business, health, and social science research databases were made available.
- **1996:** With the launch of the Library's first website, mhl.org, two workstations with the Netscape Navigator web browser were made available to the public.
- **2002:** A former Interlibrary Loan office was renovated to create the Activity Room for children's programs and a Teen Room designed specifically for middle and high schoolers. The Teen Room was professionally staffed with circulating laptops and after-school clubs.
- **2003:**
 - ADA-compliant signage and service desks were installed.
 - Public Wi-Fi was made available.
- **2012-16:**
 - Two building renovation projects reflecting the full intent of the 1987 Shepley Bulfinch design were completed. First, a brick and granite patio with seating and new landscaping was installed. The handicap access ramp to the Library was also improved. Next, the Library opened a south-facing roof deck featuring a retractable sun canopy and teak furniture. Both popular outdoor gathering and work spaces offer free public Wi-Fi access.



Patio Addition

- As patron demand grew, licensing downloadable e-books, e-audiobooks, streaming music and video became collection priorities. Librarians supported new content formats with classes and one-on-one instruction.
- **2018:**
 - The Library's front stairs were restored, the front door was replaced, and the foyer was updated with a new tile floor and decorative painting by local artist Diane Grieco.
 - MHL introduced its Library of Things (LOT), a collection of non-traditional items available for borrowing. The continually expanding and increasingly popular LOT includes bike pumps, graphing calculators, projectors, Wi-Fi hotspots, and sewing machines.