Fiscal year 2022 was a year of unpredictability. While the pandemic crept quietly back into our lives, other events arrived with a bang: inflation, a bear market, and the war in Ukraine. Any one of those things could mean a change in how we spend our personal time and effort, where – or if - we decide to donate money, and even what values we hold most dear. Throughout the year, the Museum’s Strategic Plan kept us on course with a consistent vision and message.

We worked on “getting the house in order” – literally and figuratively. Our collections, which include the historic house, continued to require care and feeding. Staff made significant progress on the recommendations from our Collections Assessment for Preservation report, including, among other things, the start of an extensive collections inventory. And many parts of the property were restored or refurbished. The historic gardens are just as much part of the collections at RJD and so a restoration on the Southeast quadrant began under the guidance of Master Gardeners in the Garden Club of Buzzards Bay.

We are as much stewards of stories as we are the material collections. So, we dove into the lesser told stories of women and domestic help who lived and worked at this property. Collections Manager Lauren Prescott began research on early 20th century kitchens and how our first-floor kitchen, currently serving as the museum shop, might have looked in the Jones era (1851 – 1935). She and summer intern, Lexus Rakoski-Calvin, will use that research to design an exhibit to help visitors explore the types of food that were eaten at the time and how the Jones cook, Mathilde Lindgren, would have prepared them.

We have kept our eyes on the development of Abolition Row Park and the process of getting 7th Street designated a new historic district in the city. This classification will unify four partners in telling the narrative about abolition in New Bedford: RJD, New Bedford Historical Society, New Bedford National Park, and the City. Goal Two of RJD’s Strategic Plan commits us to this effort, and in anticipation of a new district, we became more “7th Street-facing”, adding flowers and a new sign at that entrance to the property.

Finally, we invested in our other essential assets - the human ones. Strategic Goal Four aims to grow our capacity as a diverse and inclusive organization, and year one of that goal meant looking inward, at board and staff. Many hours were spent in educational workshops and discussion about racial equity and inclusion. The D & I committee, comprised of community folks, continues to meet and advise the Museum about inclusive practice. And this year’s board might be the most diverse yet in background, experience, skill sets, age, gender and race.

We understand the ambitious goals of the Strategic Plan will take years of effort, but we’ve started the journey and we’re committed to the destination. Journeys like this are not taken alone. They are taken with our Corporators, supporters, members, friends, and the growing number of this community who are getting involved with this Museum. Thank you for your support, and let’s make this next year a great one.
Leadership

In Year One of the new Strategic Plan, committee assignments were made to advance the four goals of the plan. Executive Director, Dawn Salerno, together with staff, and the committee chairs, have implemented the first year of the Plan, using it as the driving force behind major initiatives and minor improvements.

The RJD is led by a stellar group of volunteers: The Board of Trustees. In order to improve the functioning, diversity and inclusive practices of the Museum’s leadership team, they completed a self-assessment and a profile survey, as well as diving in to a half-day retreat with facilitator Jayne Rebello Korn, and attending the virtual Institute for Trustees in April and May.

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Diana Henry
Ruth Oliver Jolliffe
Amanda Kuffoh
Kenneth Lauderdale
Ann M. Lopes
Gloria McPherson

Thank you

to this year’s outgoing trustee

Individuals serve on these committees as volunteers: we acknowledge and thank them for their gift of time, knowledge, and integrity. Thank you to this year’s outgoing trustee, Kreg R. Espinola!

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The “Great Resignation” hit the RJD during its busiest season: summer. Between June and August, three staff members resigned for various reasons. Even two open positions on a small staff meant that the museum was conducting all the work that needed to be done with just 66% of its work force. The silver lining was in the hiring of four highly qualified individuals that are now part of an enthusiastic team.

Archives: Volunteer, Beth Luey, processed, transcribed and digitized the Rotch-Taber Papers. Proper archival storage is necessary for the preservation of these types of materials.

These letters give a picture of life among New Bedford’s privileged young people. We learn about their social activities - ice skating, lyceum lectures, junior firefighting, and visiting menageries - as well as the classical curriculum then in vogue.

Collections Manager, Lauren Prescott, has been conducting a collections inventory, based on recommendations from a 2019 CAP Report. She has used this opportunity to work with collections volunteers and train them in best practices. In addition, a collections reconciliation is being conducted to ensure that collections are cataloged in the Museum’s database software. Following other CAP recommendations, Lauren cleaned and rearranged two rooms in the attic, where collections are stored.
Collections & Exhibitions

New Bedford Glass, January 23, 2022 - present

This exhibition, curated by Lauren Prescott, includes hand-blown glass objects from RJD’s permanent collection, as well as pieces from retired New Bedford glassblower, Alfred J. Aubut Jr.

Acquisitions

This year, the RJD accepted several donations into its collections.

- Transfer of furniture on long-term loan, New Bedford Whaling Museum (Sept. 2021)
- 19th century wicker bassinet, Elton Hall (April 2022)
- Books owned by various Rotch family members, Deborah Jackson Weiss and Mary Eliot Jackson (May/June 2022)

Audience Engagement

The RJD began a partnership with People Acting in Community Endeavors (PACE) last summer to serve as the location of its family programming. Every Thursday during the summer of 2021, families with children could be found in the RJD’s historic garden, enjoying music class, crafts, and playtime. This program is also running summer of 2022.

The RJD worked with these other organizations to deliver programming this year: BuyBlackNB, The Collective, Doodles, The Glass Horse Project, Garden Club of Buzzards Bay, New Bedford High, NB Free Public Library, NB Historical Society, NB Symphony Orchestra, Noyes School of Rhythm, WHALE, Your Theatre, and YMCA.
Programs Throughout the Year

AHA Nights @ the RJD, monthly second Thursdays, year-round
Yoga in the Garden, with YMCA, weekly Fridays, July through August
Plein Air Painting in the Garden, select Mondays, July through September
Appraisal Day, July 17
Doodles Creative Sessions, July 21, August 4 & 25
192021-A Vaudeville Redux, with The Collective, July 22 & July 23
As You Like It, with The Glass Horse Project, August 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21
Annual Meeting & Reception, September 23
House Tours, October 2, November 6
RotchtoberFest, October 13
The Great Pumpkin Parade, October 14
Uprooted: A Gardener Reflects on Beginning Again, October 21
Preservation Success Stories, November 11
Friday Night Brights, November 26
Afternoon Tea in the Parlors, November 30
Children’s Tea, December 5
Christmas on County, December 9
Members Reception, January 23
The Makers Series: Needlework, February 10
Open House at the Mansion, March 19
Chamber Music in the Parlors, with New Bedford Symphony Orchestra Musicians, April 3
The Makers Series: Woodworking, April 14
Mother’s Day Tea, May 8
Concert in the Garden, with New Bedford High School bands, May 17
The Makers Series: Glassblowing, June 2
Garden Tour, June 9
BuyBlackNB Pop-Up Vendor Market, June 19

Marketing

RJD partnered with its cultural colleagues to improve awareness and drive admissions from both locals and tourists. For example, one could purchase a joint ticket to the RJD and the Whaling Museum, or a three-for-one ticket to the RJD, Fishing Heritage Center and New Bedford Art Museum. Usage was lighter than hoped, but appreciated.

We believe that affordability should never be a barrier to participation in history and culture. Therefore, the RJD offered free admission through these programs:

- Blue Star Museums
- ConnectorCare Card
- EBT Card
- Museums for All
- Passport to History
- Wunderfund

The Museum receives no subsidy to cover these lost admission fees.

2,363
Number of Facebook followers (increased 89%)

344
Number of Twitter followers (increased 9%)

1,714
Number of Instagram followers (increased 162%)

43%
Average open rate of RJD E-news
Events

The pandemic pushed our annual June fundraiser into September. With variants emerging, many were reluctant to attend Amelia in Wonderland in person, but donations in lieu of attendance were outstanding. Though being under-goal, the event generated about $7,600 in net income to support our operations. As part of our Wonderland theme, the Mad Hatter Tea Party followed on September 26. Teas indoors and on the patio have proven popular.

The collaboration RJD has with The Collective resulted in the third annual Mystery at the Mansion on October 15. A pearl necklace had been stolen! Could it be the fictitious curator or the fictitious museum director? The guests would have to investigate. The garden, patio, and porches became the stage on which this interactive theater production was set. As much as a “friend-raiser” as “fundraiser”, M@M is now solidly branded as one of the best events in town.

The Mother’s Day Tea on May 8 captured the attention of many who had never been to the RJD, and it sold out. Also sold out was All That Glitters, the annual June garden party that serves as our one major fundraiser each year. The event hadn’t occurred since 2019 and was a success on all accounts.

Thank you to those who support these events with their attendance, donations, and sponsorships!

Preservation

Facilities Manager, Rick Finneran, conducted several maintenance and repair projects in FY22. The attic floor, an area that once functioned as lodging for the domestic help, received a skim coat and painting. It now serves its current function better: as collections storage and exhibition staging.

With grant funding from the Community Preservation Act, the entire mansion, Coach House, and Apiary were painted with a color historically accurate to the Rotch period. Our own staff restored rotting wood on the roof of the Apiary.

Grounds: The nor’easter in November broke a basement window and did some damage to the outdoor tent and lattice-work fence. The window and fence were repaired by RJD staff. As luck would have it, 2021-22 was the last year in the life-span of the old tent and it was slated to be replaced anyway. A new tent was ordered for the 2023 season, at a cost of about $28,000. A January blizzard, by contrast, had no significant impact on the building or grounds.
Preservation

The latest project of the Garden Club of Buzzards Bay restores an ornamental naturalistic woodland garden to the southeast quadrant. The new garden will be rooted in the history of the Jones family, yet environmentally sensitive and mindful of the current maintenance capacity of the Museum. In our second year of a partnership with the Massachusetts Master Gardeners Association, certified and aspiring master gardeners assisted with the installation of the new garden while earning educational credit for their work. Our own gardener, Rick Finneran, installed the irrigation and retaining walls for this area, and he will maintain the area henceforth.

Staff removed much of the ivy covering the stone well and the north side of the patio. This removal was recommended by a 2012 report about historic restoration of the property. The larger of the two 7th Street gates was replaced and painted. Again, Rick Finneran did the work, building the new gates in his workshop at the Museum. On the street side, a new sign was mounted at the pedestrian entrance following our strategic initiative to enhance the future Abolition Row historic district.

Facilities

Buildings: Not every historic house has the benefit of a cooling system; the RJD does. But one of our two condensers failed in August of 2021. It was replaced and the second received significant repairs. The lift which keeps the first floor accessible to those with mobility limitations required a $1600 adjustment to meet the new building code requirements. And a new Knoxbox, allowing first responders to access the Museum’s front door key in case of an emergency was installed. Their quick access to a key prevents them from chopping down our historic mahogany and cherry doors.

Technology: Every computer at the Museum was failing due to their age. Three laptops and Microsoft Office packages were purchased in this year. Together with the fourth machine purchased in the previous year, these upgrades ensure that every staff working on significant administrative tasks has the tools they need.

Capital Improvements

Total investment in maintenance & technology: $88,157

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knoxbox</td>
<td>$459</td>
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<tr>
<td>A/C Units</td>
<td>$3,405</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lift upgrade</td>
<td>$1,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers &amp; software</td>
<td>$2,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Window restoration</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External painting</td>
<td>$77,485</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$459
$3,405
$1,600
$2,208
$3,000
$77,485
The Museum has always welcomed local residents to the historic gardens and mansion, and last March, we launched a new discounted membership rate just for City residents. The resident membership program engages us more with the local community and reinforces our long-standing ties to the City. All RJD Members can enjoy the new Perks Program, launched Spring of 2022. Each quarter of the year features new perks, in addition to the regular annual Museum Member benefits. Perks are coordinated in partnership with local businesses so that Members can explore all the great activities New Bedford has to offer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue From Operations</th>
<th>FY 2022</th>
<th>FY 2021</th>
<th>% Change vs '21</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>$20,535</td>
<td>$18,785</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Appeal</td>
<td>$125,821</td>
<td>$140,640</td>
<td>-10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>$95,922</td>
<td>$41,950</td>
<td>128%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Annual-Type Gifts</td>
<td>$37,300</td>
<td>$37,810</td>
<td>-1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Events</td>
<td>$36,915</td>
<td>$2,465</td>
<td>1,397%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
<td>$3,880</td>
<td>$3,272</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments - Annual Draw</td>
<td>$82,880</td>
<td>$79,226</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>$38,847</td>
<td>$34,106</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Revenue</td>
<td>$442,200</td>
<td>$358,254</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operating Expenses</th>
<th>FY 2022</th>
<th>FY 2021</th>
<th>% Change vs '21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programs, Collections &amp; Education</td>
<td>-$7,337</td>
<td>-$6,971</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building &amp; Grounds</td>
<td>-$58,727</td>
<td>-$36,510</td>
<td>61%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Events</td>
<td>-$8,208</td>
<td>-$6,511</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin. &amp; Fundraising</td>
<td>-$63,230</td>
<td>-$62,508</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>-$247,017</td>
<td>-$223,701</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Operating Expenses</td>
<td>-$384,519</td>
<td>-$336,201</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net from Operations</td>
<td>$57,681</td>
<td>$22,053</td>
<td>162%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thank you to this year’s supporters!

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Mr. and Mrs. Clinton Furnal
Ms. Cheryl Gagnon
Ms. Stefanie Gouveia
Mr. Frank Gracia
Ms. Arla Gray
Ms. Stacey W. Stuart and Mr. Peter J. Greenhalgh
Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Gregory
Ms. Leah Hartman
Ms. Jessica Hibbert
Ms. Lucy Iannotti
Mr. Rod Immerman and Ms. Gal Costello
Mrs. Elizabeth Isherwood-Moore
Ms. Janet Kawa
Ms. Diane Kelly
Since its founding in 1985, the role of the RJD has expanded from steward of an historic building to a proactive member of the cultural community, offering a variety of programs for a diverse audience. Today this National Historic Landmark offers house tours, a variety of cultural programs and changing exhibitions, and curriculum-based educational programming to more than 6,000 people annually.