



Mystic & Noank Library

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



MYSTIC & NOANK LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

A PUBLICATION OF
THE MYSTIC & NOANK LIBRARY
40 LIBRARY STREET
MYSTIC, CONNECTICUT 06355

MYSTICNOANKLIBRARY.ORG



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MISSION STATEMENT

The Mystic & Noank Library will anticipate and respond to our community's needs with access to collections, technology and activities for all ages in a welcoming and historic space. We aspire to support each individual's cultural and creative interest to enable our community to better understand the past, succeed in the present and prepare for the future.



In 2023, which public library in southeastern CT had 83,631 visitors, 6091 library cardholders, 38,500 books checked out, 16,788 books downloaded, 553 programs attended by 13,032 children and adults, and two very precious library cats?

It's that same public library that, in 1893, Captain Elihu Spicer directed his executors to organize in the state of CT for the purpose of founding and maintaining a circulating library for the use of all inhabitants of Mystic, Old Mystic, Noank and the adjacent neighborhood, with a certain condition to be inserted in the deed:

"that the said party shall allow no sectarian preference in the selection or exclusion of books and that in case of a violation of this condition that the said premises shall revert to then become the individual property of the heirs..."

Captain Spicer not only knew how to build a library, he knew what was important. For the past 130 years, the trustees, friends, and staff of the Mystic & Noank Library have honored Captain Spicer's legacy.

2023 highlights include: Award winning author Richard Russo visited in the summer for a fundraiser at the Snediker Yacht Restoration boatshop.

We bid hail and farewell to two excellent staff members. Ellen Warfield has taken on the job of Fundraising Coordinator and Ery Caswell is moving on to a professional library position at the University of Connecticut.

Once again musical performances proved to be the most popular public programs for adults, with Food Explorers and petting zoos capturing the kids' attention. The after-school chess club and the preschool storytimes are going strong, as are our eight book clubs for adults.

Kent+Frost has completed a draft of the Master Plan for Library Park which we will be rolling out for community comment in 2024. We are also embarking on a strategic planning process, for which we will be seeking community input.

A WORD FROM OUR DIRECTOR CHRIS BRADLEY



Chris Bradley
CHRIS BRADLEY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2023 M&NL HIGHLIGHTS

APRIL: PETTING ZOO

The petting zoo from Xen's Critters was a very popular event with our young patrons, and grownups too!



JUNE: FRIENDS LIBRARY FAIR

The annual fair put on by the Friends of The Library is one of our cornerstone events of the year. The 2023 fair was a truly special day, with crowds of people of all ages enjoying music and delicious food. The sale is a huge task pulled off effortlessly by our dedicated Friends.



AUGUST: RICHARD RUSSO

Snediker Yacht Restoration hosted our author talk with Pulitzer Prize winning writer Richard Russo in late August. It was a beautiful evening with sparkling conversation next to a majestic yacht from 1905, DORIS.



OCTOBER: WILD MUSHROOM FESTIVAL

We celebrated all things mushroom with our friends at the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center. The library provided tons of information on foraging, identifying and growing fabulous fungi.



OCTOBER: TRUNK OR TREAT

Rain cannot stop Halloween and much fun was had at the Mystic Trunk or Treat at the Hoxie Fire Station! The library provided Sally, a dinosaur and tons of candy.



DECEMBER: HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

The library joined the festivities on the evening of the Downtown Mystic Holiday Stroll with a truly magical open house. Students from Stonington High School Chamber Choir sang carols and we had a special visit from Old Saint Nick in front of the fireplace.

MYSTIC & NOANK LIBRARY





CHRIS BRADLEY (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR), RICHARD RUSSO, BARBARA RUSSO, MARY TULLIS ENGVALL (SECRETARY)

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LINDA KOSTA, PRESIDENT

"You can't stay in your corner of the forest
waiting for others to come to you. You have
to go to them sometimes." - A.A. Milne



CAITLIN MCEACHERN WROBLEWSKI
VICE PRESIDENT

“The Mystic & Noank Library is uniquely special as a historic space created to connect members of our community to information and to each other in order to deepen our knowledge and enrich our lives. The wealth of programs offered is amazing. I personally enjoy hearing from renowned authors and attending the music events. When I have guests visiting, my tour of Mystic is never complete without a walk through our stunning library. I'm grateful to the wonderful staff and our community members for helping this beautiful, treasured library continue to allow us all to both look back and move forward.”

- Mary Tullis Engvall



PAUL FINNEGAN, TREASURER

“2023 was a great year for the Mystic & Noank Library! I am particularly proud of the valuable services the library continues to provide to our community. One highlight was our author-talk featuring Pulitzer Prize winner Richard Russo and hosted at the beautiful Snediker Yacht Restoration boatshop. It is unique events like this, along with all the other programs and offerings, that make the library such a valuable resource to our towns.”

- Caitlin McEachern Wroblewski

“It is an honor to be part of the team committed to upholding the legacy of the Mystic & Noank Library. Our library professionals support the community in so many ways, including a vast array of programs, events, and managing a first class facility for people of all ages to enjoy. We thank you for all the support and donations which are critical to ensure the continued success and financial viability of this wonderful institution.”

- Paul Finnegan



NOTES FROM THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

The Friends of the Mystic & Noank Library have again had a successful year in 2023. The Friends have supported the Library whether through our Library Fair the first weekend in June, the Like-New Book Sale the week after Thanksgiving or our ongoing eBay book sales which netted \$737 alone through November. All our efforts were staffed from our Board and helpful people from our community.

Our events were focused on supporting the library's Annual Fund and programs for children and adults. Many children have enjoyed the summer reading program and the movies for which we purchased licenses. From the Silent Auction in the Spring to All Things Pumpkin in October to the Like-New Book Sale in November, it has been a busy year.



The Friends have continued to raise funds and gather helping hands to bring these events to our community.

Our members even pitched in with the Fall outdoor cleanup and arrangements for concerts in the Spicer Room. Our quarterly newsletter, Bookends, features all the upcoming events to keep everyone informed of our activities. Past and present editions are available on the library's website.

All in all, the Friends of the Library have continued to "be there" for our library and the community. More members are always welcome. Together we can continue to support our Mystic Noank Library in 2024.





The Richard Russo event at
Snediker Yacht Restoration
in August, 2023

M&NL BY THE NUMBERS

83,631

Visitors

544

Donors

6091

Total number of cardholders

685

new library cards

553

Programs at the library and
hosted online



2

Feline library mascots
in residence



38,500

Check-outs

16,788

Digital downloads

13,032

Program attendees

8

Inflatable reindeer on the lawn
for our Holiday Open House

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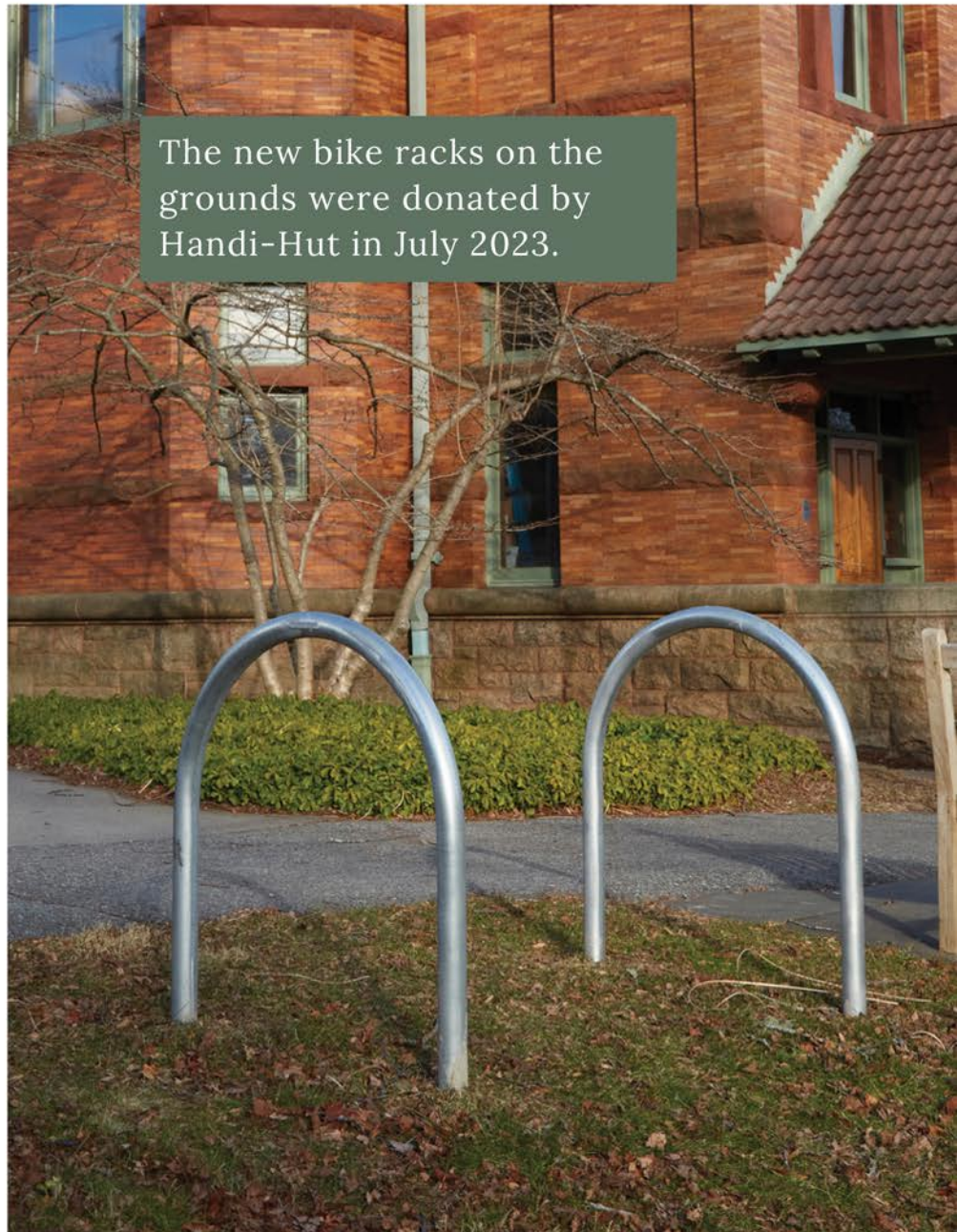
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The new bike racks on the grounds were donated by Handi-Hut in July 2023.

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