



Book Ends

MYSTIC & NOANK LIBRARY

Chris Bradley, M&NL Director

From the Director's Desk

Mystic & Noank Library is the most beautiful public library building in our state. It serves the community of Mystic, the most beautiful town in CT. The real beauty, however, lies with the Mystic Library people--the patrons who use the Library, the Board of Trustees who govern the library, and the Friends who support the Library. I have been fortunate enough to be part of another group of Library people, the library staff. As I approach my first full year here this December, I realize that I am standing on the shoulders of giants.

I had the pleasure of meeting Joanna Case and Roberta Donahue many years ago, and I could not believe my luck when I realized that they are both still with the Library, Joanna as a Friend and History Room volunteer, and Roberta as Assistant Director and Youth Services Head.

When the people of Mystic think of their Library, they think of those two giants. Either people have been to one of Roberta's programs as a child, or they remember taking their own children to a Library program. When she could no longer do programs in the building, Roberta took it outside and online. When we needed to make space in the attic for the Whiffenpoofs, Joanna created the "Clear the Attic Art Sale" and she is still the best resource for local history.

We recently welcomed two new staffers, Olivia Friederich and Parker Brady. Since moving my desk to the circulation area I have been able to experience close up their wonderful spirit of customer service. That excellent service is due in part to the leadership provided by our new Patron Services Supervisor, Jes Trejo. We are also lucky enough to have another Trejo, Katherine, as Administrative Assistant and board secretary.

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The dean of Patron Services is Philip Kuepper. Philip loves our excellent book collection, professionally curated by Julie Worthen for the past decade. Our newest librarian is Ery Caswell, who does adult programs and provides much-needed tech help. Now that we are back in the building, (though still masked) we so appreciate the work of Pam Orlando, our meticulous custodian.

And how would anyone know what is going on at the Library without Katie Kenney, who manages the website and makes those stylish posts on social media. The Library doesn't run on Dunkin, but on the revenue that our Development Director, Chris Kepple, has been so good at developing, all of it scrupulously accounted for by our loyal bookkeeper, Lori Slonski.

We look forward to meeting Michael Grater and Leslie Weber this month. They will both be working in the children's room. Sad to say, we also lost good people this year. We lost Kate Nelson to Dan and their Block Island 40. We lost Holly Schanz-Pederzoli to her academic writing. We lost Catherine Cummings to a law firm, and Loren Wren and Diane Gillece to their families.

We come and go, we library people, but we are so worth getting to know, and I am so proud to be part of this most beautiful team!

The Board of Trustees

Judy Munro, Board of Trustees President

As I look around and see the seasons changing, I was reminded of the changes that COVID-19 has made on our lives. Well into 2020 most of us thought ZOOM was the sound a child made when playing with cars. We watched as children viewed their teachers on a screen and as restaurants scrambled to create outside seating and provide take-out. People renovated, redecorated and took up sports and hobbies long forgotten. I have talked with many friends who are no longer required to go to an office every day and realtors who are unable to find good houses for their clients but have office space they can't rent. The Library has welcomed, and has creatively solved, so many of the challenges caused by these changes. Programs and meetings can be attended remotely. We have taken programs and events outside. Grab and Go activities have become a staple. As we look into the future, these will no longer be changes, but part of our fabric.

This is the beginning of our board year and we also have some changes. We are welcoming Caitlin Wroblewski as trustee and said goodbye and thank you to Roger Richards who completed his six year term as trustee and chair of Buildings and Grounds. Vice President Linda Kosta will be co-President with me this year and our hard working Treasurer Sara Lathrop agreed to serve another year. Ken Soeder will continue as Board Secretary and will also take over as chair of Buildings and Grounds. Our ten trustees have our sleeves rolled up and look forward to supporting and embracing the changes in our Library that will continue to allow us to bring excellent programming, services and events to our surrounding communities. That is why we love our Library!



Upcoming Events

Digital Program: Seeds for Seven Generations

Saturday, November 20 at 1:00 PM

Diane Wilson, award winning author and Executive Director for the Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance (NAFSA), will discuss Native American seeds and explore our evolving relationship with indigenous gardens to contemporary farming. She will also discuss exciting work being done today by Native organizations to reclaim and grow indigenous seeds as a form of cultural recovery and to provide food and rebuild health to these communities.

Art and More Auction Throughout November

For the month of November there will be an online auction of Art And More. Items will be on display in the Library for the first three weeks of the month and online for the whole month at Bidding Owl. The Friends of the Library auction will include art work for the walls, collectibles, a set of Spode dishes, and handmade items. All of the items have been donated by local residents and artisans, like Michele O'Donnell, Les Olin and Joanna Case. A lot of beautiful items are available. Watch for more news from the Library information broadcasts.

Like-New Holiday Sale

Monday, November 29 - Saturday, December 4

The Friends are happy to bring back the Like-New Holiday Sale in a restricted form this year. The sale of like new books and gifts along with a variety of gently used holiday items and decorations will be available in the Ames and Activity rooms for fully vaccinated and masked people (please show your vaccine card at the entrance). The sale will be open during Library hours beginning Monday November 29 and will end at 2 p.m. on Saturday December 4.

Digital Program: Cooking Workshop for Kids Ages 7 and Up!

Saturday, December 4 at 10:00 AM

Join Food Explorers to make Hot Chocolate Pop-Tarts! Exploring food encourages children to learn through sensory experiences, hands-on activities and working together to create delicious results. Food Explorers provides children with the knowledge to make healthy choices for themselves. By combining nutrition education with cooking and hands-on food exploration, you'll have a Food Explorer in no time!

**“So dull and dark are
the November days.
The lazy mist high up
the evening curled,
and now the morn
quite hides in the
smoke and haze; the
place we occupy
seems all the world.”**

— John Clare





The History of the M&NL

Joanna Case, Friend of the Library and Former M&NL Director

During Generva Ricker's time there were several major changes in the manner that the Library operated. The first supplementary Book Catalog was published and offered for sale to the patrons. This supplemented the original catalog that was previously sold. In 1905 the first Library Cards were printed. In 1907 there were 268 subscriptions for use of the Library books and the book collection was 5,836 items.

Electric lights were installed in the building in 1916 replacing the gas light fixtures. There was also a new steam heating plant installed the same year. This heating plant was fueled by coal.

In 1920 Miss Ricker suggested amendments to the rules and regulations of the use of the books for the library. This included setting up borrower accounts, where the patron has to sign an agreement to return books within two weeks. Children under 14, at the discretion of the librarian, could take out books, if the child's application was signed by the parent(s). Summer guests to the area were now allowed to borrow books with a \$1.00 deposit which was returned after all books returned.

In the 1923 Board minutes there is a reminder from Miss Ricker "that she has completed 27 years of service as librarian and expressed her feeling of affection for the library work to which she has given such conscientious attention." She later resigned after the Board declined to give her a raise. Miss Ethel Fish was the third Librarian at the Mystic & Noank Library starting in 1927 upon the resignation of Miss Generva Ricker. Miss Fish was related to many of the original families of the area. She was born in N.Y. where her father Charles Palmer Fish worked as a salesman. In 1910, Charles Fish died of pneumonia. Ethel and her mother, Fanny Parke Fish, moved back to Mystic to live with her Uncle, George Parke, on Noank Road. Another local connection is that her paternal grandmother was Hortense Desire Gallup. All well-known Mystic family names. More about Miss Fish in the next issue.

Book Bike Summer at the M&NL

Chris Kepple, Development Director



Groton Skate Park Photo Credit: Adryan Douglas

Mystic & Noank Library became the first library in Connecticut to launch a fully operational Book Bike program in the summer of 2021. The result has been new friends for the Library and hundreds of books distributed to children and adults within the communities the Library serves. It also means new collaborations for the M&NL as well as a lot of lively conversations with book lovers. When engaging with the Book Bike, people also found out what was happening back at the Library.

This summer, the M&NL Book Bike visited the Mystic Museum of Art, Mystic River Park, Groton Skate Park, and the Noank Historical Society. Still coming up is a visit to the Stonington Farmer's Market planned for the end of October. The bike also made numerous appearances at the M&NL as a new addition to programs for children and adults. Wherever the Book Bike visits, people think and talk about the Mystic & Noank Library. They grab books and talk about writers.

For me, one of the highlights of the first summer was the visit to the Groton Skate Park. The Book Bike could not have gotten there without the kindness of Dave and Sandie Scott who transported it in their truck. The hills in between the Library and the Skate Park are just too steep to ride.

I coordinated the visit to the Skate Park with Jessica Patterson, Community Outreach Specialist from Groton Parks and Recreation. She joined me for the afternoon with some additional surprises for visitors including pencils, erasers and other useful items provided by Groton Parks and Recreation. Jessica also brought T-shirts, which the skateboarders immediately accepted along with their book of choice.

While at the Skate Park, a local photographer, Adryan Douglas, found inspiration in the bike and in the community that had formed around it. He shared the photos with the Library at no charge.

How did the Library manage to purchase a brand new Book Bike? Once again, the generosity of the Friends of the Mystic & Noank Library and local business sponsors, including the Mystic Chamber of Commerce, Mystic Knotwork, and Snediker Yacht came through to make the 2021 Book Bike season a success.

The M&NL is looking forward to an exciting season of Book Bike appearances in 2022. We are planning to explore new ideas such as sending out themed bike selections that highlight the strengths of the Library's collections. Such themes could include poetry, short stories, nonfiction, fiction, fine art, maritime writing, and local authors.

The most exciting thing about the book bike, besides its great style and incredible speed, is that it presents the Library to the community in a new way. I look forward to continuing to work with partner non-profits and growing this program in 2022. So far, the unanimous response from the community and partner institutions has been a great delight.

**Make a Gift to the Library today online at mysticnoanklibrary.org
or by mail addressed to 40 Library Street in Mystic, CT 06355**

Friends of the M&NL Report

Sally Salancy, President

Fall is a great time for beginning again, with kids and teachers starting a new year, parents busy at work before the next holiday, and everyone enjoying the crisp air. It's also a time for planning and preparing. This year, the Friends of Mystic & Noank Library had hoped to host "All Things Pumpkin," but it was still too early for a room bursting with children sharing scissors, glue, and glitter. Well, maybe next year... Meanwhile, we are very pleased to hold another "Art and More Auction" this month. We're even more excited to finally have our first "Like-New Booksale" since 2019! (Look for the details elsewhere in this issue.)

Enjoy the new season! See you at the Library, in person or online!

Memorial Donations

In Memory of:

W. P. T. Hill Jr.	Kay Dreher
Patricia Copp	Joan Garborino
Frank Lionelli	Jennifer Welch
Anne Sargeant	Jean Perkins Serrie
Chris Frankewicz	Martha S. Perry

In Honor of:

Mike Linhares
Joanna Case
The Doyle Family
Bill & Lou Scheer



Some Comments on Technology Troubleshooting

Ery Caswell, Adult Services Librarian

I'm the first to admit I'm not a technology expert. In fact, most of what I know about tech help is from troubleshooting such different issues with people's phones, computers, and tablets here at the Library (just don't ask me about printers—they're a dark magic I will never comprehend).

I hear a few common technology gripes repeatedly. "It doesn't do what I want!" "I clicked one thing and it screwed everything up." "I'm just stupid with this stuff." I remind people it's not stupid to not know how to do something, especially if you have to learn it later in life. Learning takes patience and practice. Here are a few tips for helping you cope with the many frustrations and tribulations of technology troubleshooting.

1. Write it down: If you have to learn how to do something new on your device, write down the steps in detail. Be absurdly specific! Instead of "click the send button" write "click the send button that looks like a box with an arrow pointing up at the bottom right of the screen." You'll thank yourself later.

2. Keep it simple: All of these devices have a thousand options, apps, programs, and features. Don't get overwhelmed. If you won't use your phone to circumnavigate the globe, you probably don't need to use the compass feature. Get specific about what you want to learn.


3. Remain calm: We all have moments we want to toss the desktop monitor out the office window. But frustration and the "I can't do this" mentality short circuit your ability to learn. If you need to take a break—take a break! Otherwise, be patient, go slowly, and address one thing at a time.

4. Ask for help: If you're really stumped, I offer tech help appointments each week for a reason! Use the form on our web page to request an appointment slot. Or just call us at the Library. Even if I can't solve your problem, never doubt the power of moral support.

Tech help is available in person and on Zoom. Don't be shy about reaching out! After all—they help me rack up good karma. One day, I'll be the aggravated patron who needs a librarian's help getting my holographic information retrieval system to cooperate (or whatever the next technology zeitgeist is).


A Garden of Books

By Philip Kuepper



Walking through the open doors of the library
is like walking into an open garden,
each book a flower abloom with discovery.
Sunflowers open the mind to philosophy,
marigolds, to poetry.
Colorful bursts of geraniums will
draw your attention to art;
cosmos, and asters, to the universe.
Tulips are busy talking up fiction,

while mysteries keep their secrets like moonflowers,
and only bloom nights, mysteries, morning glories
delight in solving the instant they waken.
Daffodils know humor inside out.
Rosemary and basil will introduce you to cooking.
Thyme will make you forget time.
Then dandelions, floating on the wind,
will guide you to travel, and out the door, again.





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Sign up for our monthly eNews!

We are open:
Monday & Wednesday: 10 to 7
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday: 10 to 4

The Library will be closed:
November 11 for Veteran's Day
November 19 for Staff Development Day
November 24 at 1 PM for Thanksgiving Eve
November 25 for Thanksgiving

Want to receive Book Ends electronically?
Email friends@mysticnoanklibrary.org and include your name, address and email address.

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