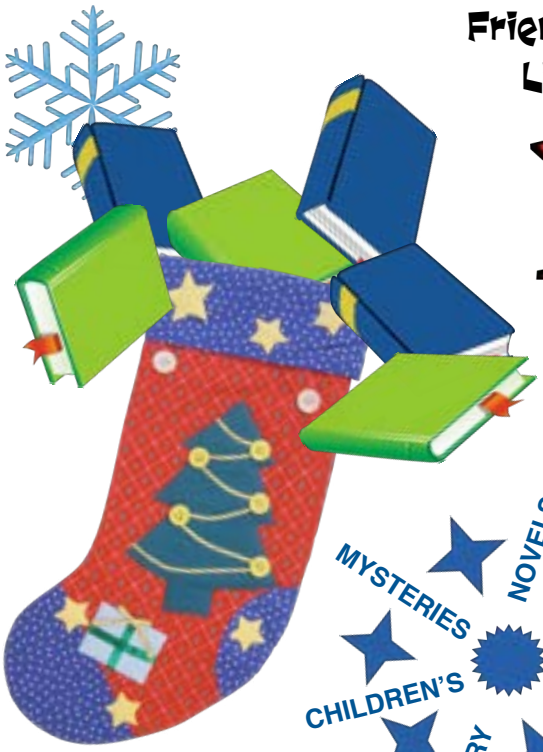
November
2026

Bookends

Newsletter of the Friends of the Mystic & Noank Library

Friends of the Library





LIKE-NEW HOLIDAY BOOK SALE

Monday, Nov. 30 -
Saturday, Dec. 5



Open during Library Hours ~ Monday thru Friday
Closes at 2:00pm on Saturday





Lots of books to choose from

Many unique gift items!

Volunteers needed.
Please email:
friends@mysticnoanklibrary.org
or sign up at the Library

Friends of the Library Co-Presidents
Kathy Busse & Patricia Menno-Coveney

OH NO! SAY IT ISN'T SO!

Christine Bradley will retire from her position as Director of MNL this December. We will surely miss her! Chris has been "at the helm" for six years and what good times we have shared together. Her consistently calm demeanor and sense of humor have helped to hold our programs together. Her willingness to deal with all the complexities of a 133-year-old nonprofit institution has been terrific. Her ability to listen to all interested groups has been a hallmark of Chris' tenure as Director of our Library.



Perhaps you have experienced Chris' cheery smile and infectious laughter. When you enter the building for a quick check on a book or an evening concert, Chris was often there to welcome you in.

Sarah Lathrop, former Board of Trustee Treasurer, said, "I have always appreciated Chris' professional approach and efficient resourcing of the community. She worked hard with the Mystic Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, and local business entrepreneurs to support the Library."

Chris' support of our Friends of the Library has been ongoing and genuine. Members join in praise of Chris' service. Judy Leonard says, "It has been such a pleasure to work with Chris. She is always available to talk and listen and work together to come up with strategies or ideas for the Library. She has the absolute best sense of humor! She will be missed!"

Patricia Menno-Coveney, Co-President of the Friends, adds, "Chris Bradley will be hard to replace. Besides sharing her vast knowledge and experience as a librarian and administrator for the enhancement of our Library, what stood out for me was how gracious she was to each person she met. I felt that every time our paths crossed. God bless her on her retirement."

Another Friend, Penny Miller, relates, "I frequently took advantage of Chris' accessibility and receptiveness and had many spontaneous conversations about books with her. Chris was also very engaged with the Friends of the MNL, always attending and giving a Director's Report at the group's monthly meetings. Her warm personality and intuitive understanding of people made her a truly outstanding leader…"

Janet Berggren travels from New London for our Friends' meetings because of Chris: "I will miss Chris dearly - she is charming, humorous, dedicated, and a really wonderful person to be around. I wish her the best in her coming endeavors."

We send Chris off - reluctantly - with a bit of the Irish Blessing, "May the road rise to meet you and the wind be always at your back and the sun shine warm upon your face…"



Busy and Busier - Friends in Action









The Friends support and promote a variety of activities for the Library each Fall. In September, the Friends collect, a week ahead, left-over craft items - yarn, unfinished craft projects, beads and string, paints and paper, and other odds and ends. Then it's time for the Craft Exchange. VERY popular. People line up well before the Library opens to take advantage of the free items. It's a great opportunity to recycle items and see many happy customers.







In October, we fund the magic act of Magician Ed Pop who entertains children and adults with his fun, engaging gags and magic. After the show the children enjoy cider and pick a small pumpkin to take home.

We also participate in the Honor Books event that takes place at Bank Square Books each Fall. For two days, customers to the book store are invited to buy a book for the Library from preselected books. People choose one or more books to "honor" a loved one which includes a bookplate to be affixed to the donated book. The Friends help with manning the table and thanking the generous folks who buy a book and support the Library.





The Library Development Committee



Keeping a Roof Over Our Heads…and Other Fun Maintenance Tasks

Our beautiful, historic Library is a perfect example of the old saying, “They don’t build ‘em like they used to.” Completed in 1893, its handsome Romanesque style crafted from Roman brick, granite from Leete's Island, CT, sandstone from Longmeadow, MA, Numidian marble from Africa, as well as marble from Vermont and Tennessee, was meant to reflect the world of art and architecture Capt. Spicer had seen during his many voyages around the globe. Today we can still feel the setting he hoped to create for generations of Library visitors from the stunning marble floor, glowing stained-glass windows and polished, carved oak panels inside to the ornamental Tondi sculptures adorning the exterior, representing Minerva for Literature and Apollo for the Arts. This beautiful building creates a unique sense of place that we all enjoy.

It also requires constant maintenance to keep up the interior, the exterior and the grounds.

So, who manages all that work? Our amazing, volunteer Buildings & Grounds Committee is on the job. As a committee of the Board of Trustees, board member David Snediker chairs B&G, as it’s known, and works with the other volunteer members: Mike Scarpa, Judy Munro, Bill Smith, Chris Wroblewski, Rod Cook, and Kathy Weinberger. Chris Bradley and Roberta Donahue attend the B&G meetings to communicate on the projects, facilitate the contractors’ work and, of course, pay the bills these projects generate. Lastly, Caitlin Wroblewski and I as Co-Presidents join the meetings to stay informed and provide support.

The Committee works to determine what needs fixing and then go about taking care of all those projects. Some projects are small and B&G will jump in and personally get the job done. But, many others are large scale projects that require investigation,

(cont. p.5)

(cont. from p.4)
contractor bids and selection, planning and oversight. With a building as old and as special as our Library, we are very careful to do the right thing and use the right people.

Here's a glimpse of what they're actively working on right now:

- **Chimney**- although many repairs have been attempted it still suffers from water leaking in and moisture levels are continuously monitored while experts are consulted, and a next course of action is determined.
- Gutters and Roof – Quotes for gutter cleaning are being obtained as some are blocked or holding sediment.
- **Window Replacement** – Due to leakage issues, all the windows that face Elm Street on the 2nd floor addition will soon be replaced.
- **Ames Room Ceiling -** During the heavy rain of 9/13 the source of the chronic leak above the Ames room was identified. The leak originated in the wall-to-roof flashing of the SW corner and has just been repaired. Now, the stained ceiling tiles in the Ames Room are being replaced.
- **WiFi Upgrade** – As part of our Library Park project, a grant was secured to handle electrical work and system upgrades, which are almost complete.
- **Volunteer Cleanup**—took place this year on October 31st to help take care of our lovely grounds. Please consider joining us in the Spring for our next opportunity to spruce up the grounds with guaranteed fun and community spirit.

It is fair to say, we all owe a debt of gratitude to our volunteer B&G Committee for working tirelessly to maintain and repair our treasured Mystic & Noank Library. So, please thank them when you see them—especially if they are up on a ladder or outside with a rake!

Mary Tullis Engvall, Co-President,
MNL Board of Trustees



LIKE-NEW
HOLIDAY BOOK SALE

Nov. 30 - Dec. 5
Open during Library Hours, except closes 2:00pm on Saturday

A chance to do some holiday shopping for books and other Christmas gifts

Brought to you by the Friends of the Mystic & Noank Library

Iconic Folk Hearts



Dolly Parton was the Walt
Whitman of Pop
music, an all embracing
gem of a person,
embodying what it is
to be American.
She sung the body electric.
She sung her way
into America's heart.
She was an island of refuge
in the stream of life for many.
She came down from the mountain
with love written on her heart,
and sang it, radiating
in all directions.
She became every brother's sister,
and a sister to women.
She was a leaf of grass
who grew green among the nettles.
She lived Walt's poetry.
He prophesied her coming.

by Philip Kuepper
Librarian & Resident Poet

On Words Behaving Gifted

I awaken to the word
"etiolate", thinking,
'What a pretty sounding word,'
eager to robe my mind in it,
delighted in the very syllables of it.
I have it happily defined in my mind,
without a clue to its meaning.
So it is to the dictionary I turn.
What a disappointment!
How could it possibly mean
deprivation of light?!,
the very antithesis
of the objective of a poet.
Why is it some words enjoy behaving badly?
They're like some people.
Of course, words, in a way, are like people.
Look at a word's definition.
It's like defining a personality.
Consider the word "charming";
or "disappointment". We've just seen
what disappointment is capable of.
O!, and the word "frustration".
Now, that is a word I stay wide of.
I mean, talk about waking up
of a morning, and thinking the word
you think pretty is a defining let down.
It's enough to make me want to
fall back asleep, but which, you see,
I haven't done, here. Instead,
I have girded the loins of my mind,

The Human Condition

I am flummoxed by the public conscious,
on the one hand obsessed with happiness,
on the other, finding
Romeos and Juliets irresistable.



Due to the high cost of print, please consider receiving the newsletter via email by contacting: friends@mysticnoanklibrary.org
Thank you!

November
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Kathy Busse,
Co-President, Friends of MNL



OPEN BOOK



"The Gem of Mystic!" That is what Kathy Busse called the Mystic & Noank Library. And Kathy is one of the "sparkles" in that gem. An active participant, she has been co-President of the Friends for the past few years.

When Kathy moved here from Ann Arbor, Michigan, 15 years ago, she dove right into the Library's "Great Discussions" group, led by Barry Boodman. Her vast knowledge of history and global affairs was an impressive contribution to the discussions. She joined Richard Semeraro's History Book Club, to which she has been a faithful member for years, sharing a wealth of knowledge. She also met people like Tricia Menno-Coveney (with whom she now shares the Presidency of the Friends) who could familiarize her with life in Mystic.

Her daughter and son-in-law, who live in Mystic, have two children, whom Kathy escorted to Library summer reading programs when they were young, as well as to concerts, at which they sat as attentively as their grandmother - a perfect role model!

Kathy's son remained in Illinois to bring up his two children, who have now produced Kathy's two great grandchildren, with a third on the way! Plane trips add to Kathy's busy schedules!

For many years in Michigan, and Illinois before that, she taught English as a Second Language (ESL). She has continued that passion for immigrants and their desire to learn, teaching them here in the Library, through the Start Fresh program out of New London. As a faculty member of the Literacy Council in Washington County, RI, she particularly enjoys running their conversation classes, and following her students as they progress in their ambitions.

Never one to miss an opportunity to enhance and expand her knowledge, she audits courses at UConn's Avery Point campus, to bring herself up-to-date on information as well as on the next generation.

With the "free time" that I have no idea how she finds, Kathy goes kayaking on the Mystic River with Tricia, and bicycles around town and in Mumford Cove. This is a great grandmother who knows how to keep her body AND mind active, nimble - and young! How lucky we are to have her "sparkle" right here at the Library.

by Dana Semerero
Friend of the Library

The Knitters Circle



What's that buzzing noise I hear outside the Library? It sounds like bees, but, wait, there's laughter, too. I walk closer to the patio and see a group of women knitting and discussing life's ups and downs.

Handcrafts are the overall theme but knitting is the main occupation. Talk often revolves around our annual Craft Exchange, held each September at the Library. The materials and ideas that spring from that keep the conversation lively. No topics are shushed except politics and religion. This is the **Knitters Circle**!

Our knitters bring different ages, experiences, and levels of skill to the Circle, along with a mutual love of making things. Over time, we share much more than yarn and patterns. We celebrate good news, listen through difIicult days, and build friendships that extend beyond our Tuesday afternoons. For newer members, a place to knit can quickly become a place to belong and one of the most anticipated parts of the week.

These hardy women have been meeting on the patio of the MNL for more than 10 years, in all kinds of weather. They have produced many items for those in need as well as for themselves.

If you want to see community with proven results, drop by Tuesday afternoons at 1 PM. We welcome all - crafters or not.

by Sandy Walton & The Knitters

Mystic & Noank Library
40 Library Street
Mystic, CT 06355