



Mystic & Noank LIBRARY





ESTABLISHED 1893

Mystic & Noank Library

Vision 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.



Illustrations by **Sloan Rankin**

Table of Contents

4	Director's Report	14	Collection Report
5	Board Report	15	Friends of the MNL
6	Library Stats 2021	16	Book Bike
8	Youth Services Report	18	Program Report
10	Development Report	19	Circulation Report
11	2021 Donor List		& Library Staff



Director's Report

Director **Chris Bradley**

When I arrived at Mystic & Noank Library on December 6, 2020, we were ending our first Covid year. The number of patrons in the library was limited. Seating was removed. There was Plexiglas everywhere. When books were returned, they had to be quarantined.

By December, 2021, we were learning to live with Covid. The building is fully open, granting access to copiers, scanners, computers, printers and Wi-Fi. We increased our online offerings of downloadable EBooks, audiobooks, music, and movies, and offered one-on-one tech help remotely. We moved library programs online and increased the supply of weekly grab 'n go bags to get families through the winter.

In April, sisters Matilda and Violet moved into the second floor and stole our hearts. May brought Volunteer Day to spruce up the grounds. In June, the Friends hosted a Library Fair with an outdoor book sale and the Mystic Garden Club plant sale, and we introduced Reading on Tap. In October we collaborated with Mystic Seaport to have a lecture online followed by a visit to the Seaport. After three Roode summer concerts outside, we brought the Yale Whiffenpoofs and the Mystic River Chorale into the beautiful Spicer Reading Room this winter. Programs for children and families abounded. Besides the popular Grab 'n Go bags, we hosted craft programs at the newly installed stand of picnic tables, told stories under the trees, and did yoga on the lawn. Then there were the petting zoo appearances, with llamas, goats, and sheep!

Looking ahead, we hope to get through the cold months online and plan for more outdoor programs in the spring and another winter of brisk book circulation of both the physical and the virtual kind. We are hopeful for 2022, for more concerts, storytimes, and in-person programs, all the while staying safe.



MYSTIC & NOANK LIBRARY

Est. 1893

Message from the Board Presidents

Co-Presidents **Judy Munro & Linda Kosta**

As we say goodbye to 2021 and welcome the start of 2022, the Mystic Noank Library Board of Trustees welcomes the community back to the diverse array of services and programs offered by the library. Our dedicated and professional staff have been creatively putting their heads together to find new and innovative ways to provide library services to our community.

Currently, our historic library building is open to patrons. Stop by to select a book to check out, spend a few minutes with your children in the Children's Room, sit and enjoy the atmosphere while reading the newspapers or magazines, use a computer or send a fax. If you are not ready to venture out due to either the weather or COVID, take advantage of one of our many virtual programs and online book catalogue. If you want to learn more about online opportunities, book a librarian to help with your tech questions. Visit the Library's website (www.mysticnoanklibrary.org) to see all of the exciting opportunities that are available to you.

The Board has been busy during the past year with many administrative tasks designed to help the library staff meet the needs of our community. We have reviewed our Corporate By-Laws, engaged in a Human Resource study, spent countless hours on the maintenance and upkeep of our building and begun making plans for some exciting improvements to the Library's grounds.

As supporters, we have come to the library by many paths; some who have lived in the area for decades while others coming to learn more about their new community. Whatever path you have taken, we are excited about the promise of 2022 and all that it may bring.

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2021 STA

57,404 Visitors



Masked patrons refused to let the pandemic come between them and their library.

10,805 eBooks &

24,696 Wi-Fi uses



FREE Wi-Fi is available 24 hours a day inside and outside the library.

2242

Grab n' Go Bags

30,967

STATISTICS

5165 Cardholders



All residents of Groton and Stonington, as well as people who work or go to school in Mystic, are invited to get a library card.

& Audiobooks



Can't come in? Download a book from home.
Don't know how? Book a tech help appointment.

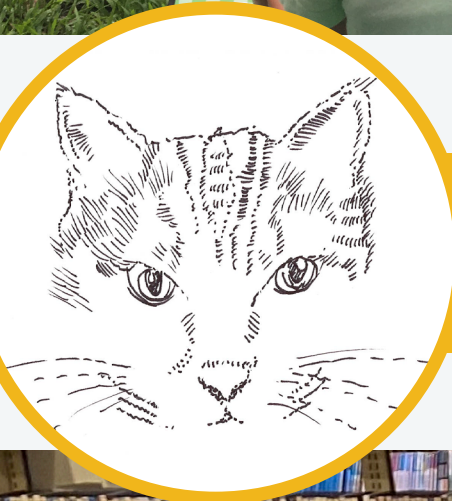
253 Programs



Online and in-person programs welcomed a total audience of 4,344 people.

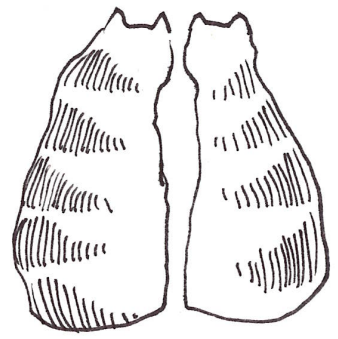
Items Borrowed

Youth



Services Report

Assistant Director / Head of Youth Services **Roberta Donahue**



Recently, I invited an out-of-town friend to visit the Library. We went upstairs, and as he looked around, he said, “You mean you get to spend your days here?” I remember the first time I visited the Mystic & Noank Library. I fell in love with the building too.

It was not long after my first visit; I started spending my days here. Lots and lots of them. It did not take long for me to realize this Library was more than just a beautiful building.

Libraries are forever changing, and this year was no different. We learned to be flexible – very, very flexible.

In the Children’s Room, we learned to adapt. We learned things like: it is possible to hold programs outside, even

when it looks like it is going to rain. We learned that online programs could be fun, especially when we baked hot chocolate pop tarts, or drew impossible animals together.

We upcycled. We gardened. We practiced yoga. We learned science and math. We hula hooped. We made Halloween costumes. We met rabbits and donkeys, owls and sheep. We even watched someone juggle with fire.

This year, we were reminded our Library is more than a beautiful building. Inside, outside, or online, it is a great way to spend our days, together.

We read. We laughed. We learned and most importantly, we stayed connected with our community.





Development Report

Director of Development **Chris Kepple**

"Go back?" he thought. "No good at all! Go sideways? Impossible! Go forward? Only thing to do! On we go!" - J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*, or *There and Back Again*.

It's the Mystic and Noank Library's 129th birthday! Alas, 129 years is far too short a time to live among such admirable Mystickers, Noankers, Grotoners, Old Mystickers, Stoningtonians, and Groton Long Pointers. That's right, the library is now eighteen years older than Bilbo Baggins was when he celebrated his eleventy-first birthday and disappeared mysteriously never to be seen in the Shire again. Not to worry, the Mystic & Noank Library will not be disappearing any time soon. And, we are proud to report that our library is in fine condition.

The library is thriving because of support from donors like you, the towns of Groton and Stonington, and the carefully invested endowment that contributes five percent each year to complete the annual funding equation. Funding the library's operations, like everything at the library, is a team effort and thrives through collaboration.

In 2021 we asked, and patrons, donors, and businesses answered the call with their generous support. The year of generosity kicked off with a successful Library Giving Day Campaign that earned \$13,580. The Book Bike joined the library and immediately contributed to fundraising efforts with inaugural sponsorships from Mystic Knotwork, the Mystic Chamber of Commerce, and Snediker Yacht Restoration. Giving continued as we celebrated the 2021 volunteer of the year, Joanna Case. Patrons made gifts to honor her many years of hard work for the library. In October, we managed to host a safe and scaled-down annual fundraising event with the Yale Whiffenpoofs. This "Singing to Celebrate Our Library" concert earned just over \$6000 after all expenses were paid, and gratitude must be expressed to event sponsors Jimmy Doyle, Densmore Oil, and Vail & Robson DDS. Finally, came the bedrock of our fundraising program, the annual appeal campaign. 2021's annual appeal campaign was a success, earning over \$120,000. Heartfelt thanks to all who pitched in to maintain and grow the Mystic & Noank Library and send us into 2022 with the necessary resources to succeed.

This library began in 1893 thanks to a remarkable act of generosity and foresight by Captain Elihu Spicer. He saw the coming centuries as an opportunity to equip Mystic as he might have prepared his own ship before a long voyage. He built the library for the community to be strong, to be inspiring, and to last for generations. Now five generations have walked into this library, admired it, learned with it, and shared it with their children. We wish the library a very happy 129th Birthday! And, we look forward to welcoming the next five generations with the same spirit of open-hearted generosity that has been our hallmark since 1893.

Library Giving Day

**is April 6th
2022**

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Collection Report



Adult Services Librarian **Julie Worthen**

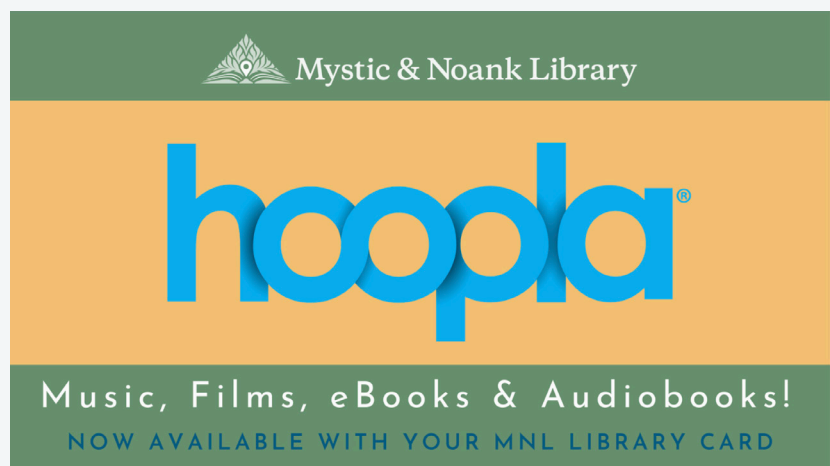
As the pandemic continued into 2021, the Mystic & Noank Library redirected resources and redesigned services while keeping our focus on the health and safety of staff and patrons. We maintained and improved our COVID-19 protocol for curbside delivery of materials and increased our virtual programming.

We continued to purchase the best of recent print titles, both fiction and nonfiction, as well as current newspapers and magazines. In addition, we dramatically improved access to digital content. Patrons can now check out ebooks, audiobooks, movies, and music without the need to come to the library in person.

The Mystic & Noank Library has invested in three platforms to provide digital content to our patrons:

- **OverDrive/Libby**
- **Hoopla**
- **Kanopy**

OverDrive contains over 5,000 bestselling audio and ebook titles that patrons can download to computers and mobile devices. Libby is a newer app released by OverDrive. Libby makes ebooks and audiobooks easily accessible on phones and



iPads, and has the same collection of titles as OverDrive.

Hoopla allows patrons to borrow movies, music, audiobooks, ebooks, comics, and TV shows to computer, tablet, or phone. Patrons can stream titles immediately, or download them to a phone or tablet for offline use later.

Kanopy is a film streaming service offering more than 30,000 films and documentaries, including rare and hard-to-find titles, film festival favorites, indie and classic films, and world cinema. Kanopy includes works from The Criterion Collection, Kino Lorber, Music Box Films, Samuel Goldwyn, The Orchard, The Great Courses, PBS, and many independent filmmakers. Patrons can view Kanopy films on a computer, phone, or TV.

Friends of the MNL



Friends of Mystic & Noank Library

Organized in 1979, the Friends are an important support group for the Library. A patron becomes a Friend with a donation of time or money to the Library. The Friends organize and work on fundraising projects, as well as special programs for both children and adults.

They sponsor book discussion programs, as well as annual events such as All Things Pumpkin and the Edible Book Contest. Primary fundraising activities include the Annual Spring Fair (held the first Saturday in June) and the Holiday Like-New Book Sale, along with the year-round sale of merchandise such as book bags, tee shirts, note paper and aprons.

Proceeds from the Friends fundraisers have been used to buy computers, an audio-visual projection system for the meeting room, conference tables for the Ames Room, software and other equipment needed by the library.

The Friends' meetings usually take place on the third Monday of each month at noon in the Ames Meeting Room. The Friends newsletter, BookEnds, with news of events and Library happenings, is published four times a year and is also available on MysticNoankLibrary.org.

For more information email the Friends at:
Friends@mysticnoanklibrary.org

Mystic Garden Club & MNL Friends collaborate at the Spring Fair



Book Bike



Director of Development
Chris Kepple

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 MNL 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 MNL Book Bike visited the Mystic Museum of Art, Mystic River Park, Groton Skate Park, the Noank Historical Society, and the Stonington Farmer's Market. The bike also made numerous appearances at the MNL as a new addition to programs for children and adults. Wherever the Book Bike visits, people think and talk about the Mystic and 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 his 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.

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 great delight.

The MNL 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, childrens' books, 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.



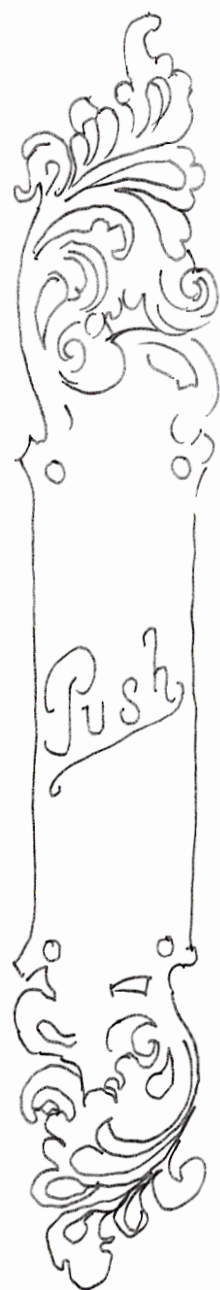
Program Report

Adult Services Librarian **Ery Caswell**

2021 certainly taught us the virtue of remaining adaptable— and library programming is no exception! The Library offered more formats and kinds of programming options than ever before, while continuing to monitor the state of the pandemic and to act in accordance with the latest pandemic public safety guidelines. Throughout the entirety of the pandemic, there's not been a single month when we didn't offer some form of public programming or tech help appointments to the public. On Zoom and beyond.

Like libraries all over the country, we've continued to host virtual programs on Zoom featuring a range of speakers both near and far. When it has been safer to gather in public, we've also reopened the door to our Ames Room for in-person programs, like a series of writing workshops with local authors. We've also met patrons off the Library grounds, at a local brewery for a night of literary toast making, or learning more about invasive species in the Mystic River Estuary from our friends at the Mystic Seaport Museum. No matter the format, we've been happy to greet you, to hear from our many guest lecturers, and to facilitate question answering, resource finding, and expertise sharing of all kinds.

In total, just over 3000 people attended the more than 200 programs for adults we hosted in 2021, some virtual, some in-person and all educationally enriching. If we haven't seen you at one of them yet, we hope to do so in 2022!



Circulation Desk

Circulation Supervisor **Jes Trejo**

Libraries are known for many things, some that are still accurate, and others that are long outdated. Many think of libraries as a place strictly for reading, while others come for referencing information or handling everyday technology needs.

Whatever the reason for a patron's visit, the Circulation Desk is the heart of the library. Here at the Mystic & Noank Library, a day at the Circulation Desk can range from checking out books and placings holds, to helping a patron sending a fax or troubleshooting a printer.

We always welcome the opportunity to offer a treat to our furry friends who come to visit, and offer our aid to anyone seeking assistance.

Libraries have gone through many changes, especially with more materials becoming available digitally; fortunately, our library cats, Matilda and Violet, make the patrons excited to come in.

Sometimes the first question we get is, "Where are the cats?" Matilda and Violet were adopted in March 2021 and are not only Manx cats, but also bonded sisters.

Staff

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Margaret Lincoln

Loriannelle Figueroa

Senior Circulation Assistant

Philip Kuepper

Board Secretary

Katherine Trejo

Bookkeeper

Lori Slonski

Custodian

Pam Orlando

Library Cats

Matilda

Violet



Mystic & Noank Library

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MYSTIC, CT 06355



RESIDENT
ADDRESS
CITY, STATE, ZIP

40 LIBRARY STREET
MYSTIC, CT 06355

860 536 7721 PHONE
860 536 2350 FAX

Monday: 10 am - 7 pm
Tuesday: 10 am - 4 pm
Wednesday: 10 am - 7 pm
Thursday: 10 am - 4 pm
Friday: 10 am - 4 pm
Saturday: 10 am - 4 pm
Sunday: Closed

www.mysticnoanklibrary.org

