



Book Ends

MYSTIC & NOANK LIBRARY

From the Director's Desk

Chris Bradley, MNL Director

Nineteen years ago, I was with Eastern CT Libraries, Inc. when a group of librarians and book lovers met at Groton Public Library to see if folks in our region would be interested in a community read. The idea had taken hold in cities around the country, but it was Steven Slosberg, then with *The Day*, who first brought up the idea of everyone in Southeastern CT reading and discussing the same book. That first meeting was a success and One Book One Region was born. We started with Pete Hamill's *Snow in August*, and the rest is history.

This year's choice, *Interior Chinatown* by Charles Yu, could not be more timely. Attacks on Asian Americans have shaken cities around the country. In Los Angeles, hate crimes against Asian Americans more than doubled in the last year. Cities like New York and LA have seen a series of brutal attacks on people of Asian descent as anxiety and trauma grip many Asian communities.

Interior Chinatown, winner of the National Book Award for Fiction in 2020, is written in the form of a screenplay, telling the story of an aspiring Asian actor who discovers the secret history of Chinatown and the buried legacy of his family. "This book will launch an important conversation within our community, at a time when the country is reckoning with the treatment of and discrimination against the Asian American and Pacific Islander community," said Jefferson Singer at Connecticut College.

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2021 is the sixth year that the college has partnered with One Book One Region to bring community members and the college community together. Yu's book was formally introduced at a virtual kickoff event on June 24, and he will join the Southeastern Connecticut community for an author event on October 5.

We have many copies available to borrow from the library, and Bank Square Books has copies for sale, so join your friends and neighbors in reading *Interior Chinatown* and come to our community book discussion on August 23 at 7 PM.

Welcome to Your Library

Judy Munro, Board of Trustees President

The Board has been doing a lot of work on our bylaws and policies this year. It occurred to me that while we have had our heads down (or really up, looking at our computer screens on Zoom meetings or reading drafts), that most patrons don't know that this is one of the most important responsibilities of our board.

The Association of CT Library Boards (ACLB) describes library boards as follows: "they may be either governing or advisory. Governing boards have final legal and fiscal authority for the library." We are a non-profit, association library and therefore we are a governing board. The ACLB goes on to say that we have "an important responsibility for representing the community, ensuring the quality of library service and advocating for adequate funding." By creating clear policies and having up to date bylaws we create the guidance that helps staff do their jobs in an effective and efficient manner.

Two of the more interesting changes to our bylaws recently have been to allow us to meet on Zoom and also to remove the requirement to notify trustees of a special meeting by telegraph! So if you see a trustee with blurry eyes, it is probably from reading the fine print.



Our new cats-in-residence: Violet (left) and Matilda (right). See more of them on the Library's Instagram @mysticnoanklibrary

Upcoming Events

Virtual: Become A Fair Housing Advocate

Wednesday, August 25 @ 6:00 PM

Please join us for an advocacy workshop where you will be able to learn about some of the major issues and barriers many face with housing and identify ways you can help! The Connecticut Fair Housing Center's Education and Outreach Coordinator, Rashida Rattray, will walk us through a brief history of the fight for housing equity and provide resources on how you can better support agencies working toward this goal.

Outdoor Concert: US Coast Guard Clarinet Quartet

Thursday, September 2 @ 6:30 PM

Join us on the Library grounds for an outdoor concert featuring members of the clarinet section of the U.S. Coast Guard Band. The group exhibits many musical styles including light classical and jazz transcriptions. They will present a program entitled "Sounds of America" which focuses on American composers and themes including works by Gershwin, Copland, and "The American String Quartet" by Antonin Dvorak arranged for clarinets.

Friends' Craft Exchange

Saturday, September 11 from 10 AM-12 PM

The Mystic Noank Library Craft Exchange will be held September 11th from 10-12. This is our annual event where craft materials are donated and brought to the library the week of September 7-10 (Monday is Labor Day) and stored in the old front hall. On Saturday, anyone may come and take donated items home with no cost or obligation. We hope everyone will clean out and bring raw materials for projects - and take lots of materials home for new projects.

Introduction to Genetic Genealogy

Monday, October 4 @ 6:00 PM

Join us and retired Pfizer scientist, Rob Spencer, as we discuss the common goals in genealogy and the limitations of traditional oral and written sources. Then we review the three types of DNA used in genealogy (autosomal, mitochondrial, and Y chromosome), their strengths and limitations, how they're inherited, and the types of markers (mutations) used in genealogy. Forensic DNA is discussed, as well as privacy concerns. Finally, we review the different types of consumer DNA tests available with recommendations.

Lisa Starr (left) and Juan Melendez (right) read at a Library fundraiser, Reading on Tap at the Barleyhead Brewery in Mystic.



“Books are the quietest and most constant of friends; they are the most accessible and wisest of counselors, and the most patient of teachers.”

— Charles W. Eliot



A Piece of MNL History

Joanna Case, Friend of the Library and Former MNL Director

In my continuing research about my predecessors, I have spent some time reading the old newspapers. After 1902 the Librarian's Annual Report to the Board of Trustees was published in the local paper. Her report included both the increases in the collection, number of uses of both circulating and reference books, and the number of new subscribers. Then a list of the donors of books, magazines, and pamphlets were listed by name in her report along with the gift. The Librarian also made regular submissions to the local newspaper of newly added titles. So it is obvious that she was busy doing records when she was not retrieving or returning books to the shelf. From Board minutes it is inferred that her duties also included maintenance of the collection and providing display or storage space for new items. It appears that most of the additions to the collection were through gifting.

After the death of Miss Anna Augusta Murphy, in 1902, Generva Ricker took over the Librarian's position. It turns out that Generva Ricker was Anna Augusta Murphy's niece. Anna's sister Lucern was married to Generva's father, Milton Ricker. The Ricker family lived at 26 High Street in Mystic and another Murphy sister lived with them, Mary J Murphy. The Rickers had four children but only Generva lived to adulthood.

In 1927, Miss Ricker requested a raise of \$25 per month to the existing wage of \$30 per month and the Board refused. The following month she submitted her resignation. That same year Miss Ricker bought a house at 6 Pearl Street in Mystic where she lived out her life. She died in 1935 and is buried at Elm Grove Cemetery.

The hours of the Library were Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays 2:00-5:30 and Saturday evenings from 7:00 – 8:30. During July and August additional hours were added to each day by opening in the morning from 10:00-12:00. These were indicated in Miss Ricker's first report. These hours set a trend that the Library closed for dinner hours and reopened afterwards.

Proud June for Friends and Volunteers at the Library

Chris Kepple, Development Director

The last Sunday in June was a special occasion at the Mystic & Noank Library. A small reception was held to honor Joanna Case who received the 2021 Horace B. Lamb Jr. Volunteer of the Year Award.

Joanna is one of the most admired former Directors of the Library, a local history researcher, ceramics artist, and fierce champion of all things Mystic & Noank Library. Library Trustee Linda Kosta presented Joanna with the award and thanked her warmly for her many years of dedicated service. Bouquets from the Library's gardens were assembled to celebrate the occasion and refreshments were served.

Earlier in the month at the annual Library Fair, the power of the combined efforts of the Friends, and the many volunteers who lend their support, was on display. At this year's Fair, Friends and volunteers did the usual, which certainly felt extraordinary. They moved a small army of tables from storage, set up tents and hefted countless boxes of books and merchandise onto the Library lawn. They then staffed those tables and engaged the many visitors who came to the fair. Members of the Mystic Garden Club were on hand beautifully showcasing and selling plants that they donated and delivered. The combined effort of these two groups yielded a big contribution to the Friends of the Mystic & Noank Library. The Friends quickly turned their Fair earnings, and a significant contribution from the Mystic Garden Club into a \$5000 gift to the Library's Annual Fund.

All in all, June was a heartwarming display of grassroots community fundraising and friendship. Now in its 128th year, the Library is more dynamic and inclusive than ever before. Our volunteers and donors enable the Library to continue fulfilling its important mission.

On behalf of all the staff and trustees here at the Library, we wish to thank our Volunteer of the Year Joanna Case and all our volunteers and donors for their investment into this Library. We simply could not do it without them. If Joanna's legacy of service, philanthropy and volunteerism inspires you, then please make a gift to the Library today in honor of all her achievements. Do you think you have what it takes to be Volunteer of the Year? We welcome you to try!

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

**“Sleep is good,
he said, and
books are
better.”
— George R.R.
Martin**



Friends of the MNL Report

Sally Salancy, President

The 2021 Library Fair was held on Saturday, June 4!

The Friends of the Mystic & Noank Library have been supporting it since 1978, but between March 13, 2020, and our 2021 Fair, we missed a whole year of fundraisers, as well as some just-for-fun events. Then on June 4, 2021, we held our 41st Fair, unlike any other in our history, consisting of a one-day Book Sale, a Tag Sale, and a Mystic Garden Club Plant Sale. Though it brought in thousands of dollars less than pre-Covid fairs, we considered it a great success!

In fact, the 2021 Fair was our first big fundraiser since the December Like-New Book Sale in 2019! It was held without hot dogs, soup, fudge, Bake Sale, Silent Auction, or even a week-long Book Sale, yet it was especially sweet, as it brought together friends and neighbors from both sides of the Mystic River and beyond, people we hadn't seen since the beginning of the pandemic. It also gave us the perfect chance to see what was new on the grounds, what was happening on the main floor, and who has been living upstairs!

Coming up in the fall are the Fourth Annual Craft Exchange on Saturday, September 11 (see elsewhere in this issue of Book Ends for details), and in October or November our Third Annual Silent Art Sale. We also hope to have a pop-up Book Sale, but the date has not yet been determined. In the meantime, come to the Library for all the wonderful things it provides, in person and online. If you have ideas for Friends' projects and would like to help the Friends support the Mystic & Noank Library, contact me, Sally Salancy, at Salancy@gmail.com.

Happy Late Summer/Early Fall!
See you at the Library!

Memorial Donations

In Memory of:
Mary Oberhelman
Suzanne Allard
Kathryn Dreher
Louise Muzin
Ann Beaty
Evelyn Ritchey
Jane Donnel
Kathryn Hill
Leonard Sawyer

In Honor of:
Joanna Case



Local Authors Offer Workshops on the Craft of Writing

Erik Caswell, Adult Services Librarian

This summer we hosted writing workshops with local authors who taught attendees about what it takes to write a book. Ruth Crocker instructed on how to write compelling nonfiction, true stories that move the reader. Susan Kietzman showed attendees the art of writing fiction and how to develop realistic characters. Regina Bartlett talked about memoir and how writing can be a process through which we heal from various traumas. All of these writers shared some common insights, and one particularly insistent point: Writing a book is hard work and it can take a long time. But that's no reason not to start.

In the coming months, we will be offering more workshops led by local authors about various genres, styles, and ways to approach the process of writing a book: from first drafts to getting published. These workshops can be a valuable resource to jumpstart your writing process, or revisit an old draft of a story you started years ago. Authors can tell you all about their pitfalls, their shortcomings, and their barriers so you won't be running into them blind. Writing workshops are also a wonderful place to connect with other people striving to do the same thing you are.

People write books for so many different reasons. Not everyone needs or even wants to be on the bestsellers list or to become the literary world's newest darling. Some people may want to write a book to leave for their family. Others may have passions, interests, and expertise of value to a localized audience. Still more might want to start writing to deal privately with something they experienced years ago and have always wondered about.

There are as many reasons to write as there are stories. They're all valid and there are more potential routes to publication suited to those reasons than ever before.

Why not embark on that next step?

Tell your story!

Our Library Cats

By Philip Kuepper



I have named them
Dimple and Darling,
though those are not
their official names.
They could, just as well,
be Noggin and Nugget,
or Cupcake and Cutey.
What about Pinch and Princess?
Or is that too royal
for us democratic folk?

Whatever their names,
they have become
our four-legged Members of Staff.
And, in time, I will approach them
to find out if they know
how to remove the glitches
that confound my ordering ILLs.
Perhaps if I bribe them
with pinches of catnip?
Hmm. That's a thought.





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www.mysticnoanklibrary.org

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram:
[@mysticnoanklibrary](https://www.instagram.com/mysticnoanklibrary)

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
Monday, September 6 for Labor Day
Monday, October 11 for Columbus Day

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



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