

READING BY THE SEA SINCE 1893



MYSTIC & NOANK *Library*

Table of CONTENTS

01	Staff Report
02	Board Report
03	Library Stats 2022
04	2022 Donor List
08	Friends of the MNL
09	Our Staff



Staff REPORT



2022 was a very good year. People came back to the library. We had almost 80,000 visitors, almost back to pre-pandemic levels, but it's not just about the numbers.

Books! Our cardholders are a nation of readers who checked out 35,000 books and belonged to 8 book clubs.

Staff! Our charming and knowledgeable staff worked hard this year to improve our skills to give better service with training sessions on Belonging, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, on understanding different generations in the workplace, on customer service, and on the challenges of book banning that libraries across our country (but not in Mystic) are experiencing.

Volunteers! In the spring and fall Clean Up days, our hardy volunteers left their own gardens to come weed and rake in ours.

Outreach! Staff reached out with the book bike to the Halloween Trunk or Treat at the Mystic Fire Station, to Groton Parks and Rec programs, and to Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center. We partnered all year with Children First Groton, went to the Pride Festival in New London and co-sponsored "Portersville & Greenmanville: Representing Mystic Art & Culture" during the 1990's at Mystic River Park. We co-sponsored with the Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce the first Mystic Black History Month Celebration.

Music! In addition to the annual Roode concerts on the lawn in the summer, we hosted the Yale Whiffenpoofs and the Mystic River Chorale in the Spicer Reading room.

Art! We hosted preview lectures for the Norman Rockwell exhibit at the Mystic Museum of Art, the Sargent, Whistler, and Venetian Glass exhibit at the Mystic Seaport Museum, and the Circle Game exhibit at Lyman Allyn Art Museum.

Programs! Summer Reading this year was jam packed with magicians, petting zoos, yoga, bilingual storytimes, and grab 'n go bags. We hosted cooking programs, crafts, and a chess club. For adults we've investigated the paranormal, hosted writers' workshops, collaborated on car repair and even offered ukulele lessons! Award winning author Erik Larson visited in the summer for a fundraiser at the Snediker Yacht Restoration boatshop.

2022 was a very good year!

Message FROM THE BOARD

2022 was a year of change and growth for the Library Board of Trustees.

We welcomed three new members: Mary Tullis Engvall (whose father was President of the Board in the Nineties!) Eric Janney, and Paul "Finn" Finnegan. We said a sad goodbye to Bill Turner, and welcomed a new generation, Donovan Densmore Chase.

The Trustees continue to provide for the library with fundraising. We know that, without donors, there is no library. MNL relies on contributions from individual and corporate donors for two thirds of its annual operating budget. (The towns of Stonington and Groton together contribute 27%.) We can't do it without you, and we are so appreciative of all your support. We hosted a day of learning for library staff with a guest speaker who helped staff understand navigating with different generations in the workplace, and then finished the day enjoying our first ever Board/Staff social.

A fundraising highlight this summer was a program with award winning author Erik Larson at the Snediker Yacht Restoration boatshop. (Our donors also enjoyed meeting DORIS the 1905, 78', Herreshoff yacht that is currently being restored in the boatshop.)

We had two successful volunteer days when members of the community arrived to help us spruce up our beautiful grounds. I end with a Google review posted in September:

"Awesome friendly staff, great local history resources, and a beautiful building to boot! I love sitting and reading in the big comfy chairs with the beautiful views of downtown Mystic out the windows. Also, and this is clutch, they have real live library cats that live on the second floor! What's better than a library where you have the possibility of cat snuggles? I submit that there is nothing better!"



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STATISTICS *for 2022*

33,380

CIRCULATION

78,082

VISITORS

673

NEW LIBRARY
CARDS

14,328

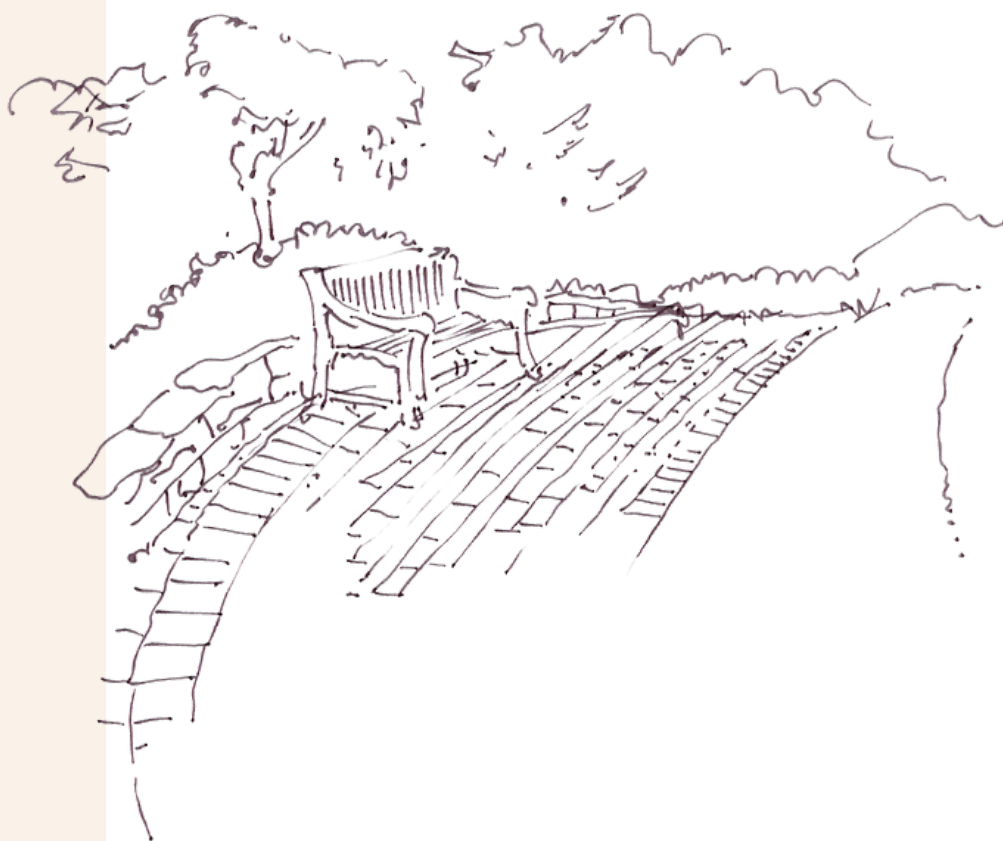
EBOOK &
AUDIOBOOK
DOWNLOADS

484

PROGRAMS

46,844

WIFI USES



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Library FRIENDS



In 2022, the Friends returned to nearly the level of activity of pre-Covid years. Once more, our large group of Cellar-Dwellers were busy pricing books for our two big yearly Book Sales, i.e., the sale starting on Fair Day, the first Saturday of June, and lasting through the whole next week, and our Like-New Book Sale, the week after Thanksgiving.



January is a quiet month, but last February, we donated a raffle basket for Valentine's Day, then donated another in April to celebrate spring, and finally, in October, the Friends provided three Halloween-themed baskets and paid for a magic show on the lawn. We hope to provide a traditional "All Things Pumpkin" in October, 2023.

Meanwhile, our Fair in June netted \$14,273, our miscellaneous book sales raised \$1,800, and our Clear-the-Attic auctions freed space and made a few dollars. As for where our money goes, we use the proceeds of our fundraising events to make a generous donation to the Library Annual Fund, to print and mail our

newsletter, Bookends, to cover the cost of movie licenses, teen programs and summer reading programs in the Children's Room.

Finally, the Friends help the Library with both free programs and fundraisers. This may entail moving chairs, arranging refreshments, or just pointing out the elevator. Perhaps you can think of us as "the third leg of the stool."

"The third leg of the stool"



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Rebecca Spera

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Ery Caswell

Youth Services Associates

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Michael Grater

Senior Circulation Assistant

Philip Kuepper

Bookkeeper

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Matilda

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Mystic & Noank
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