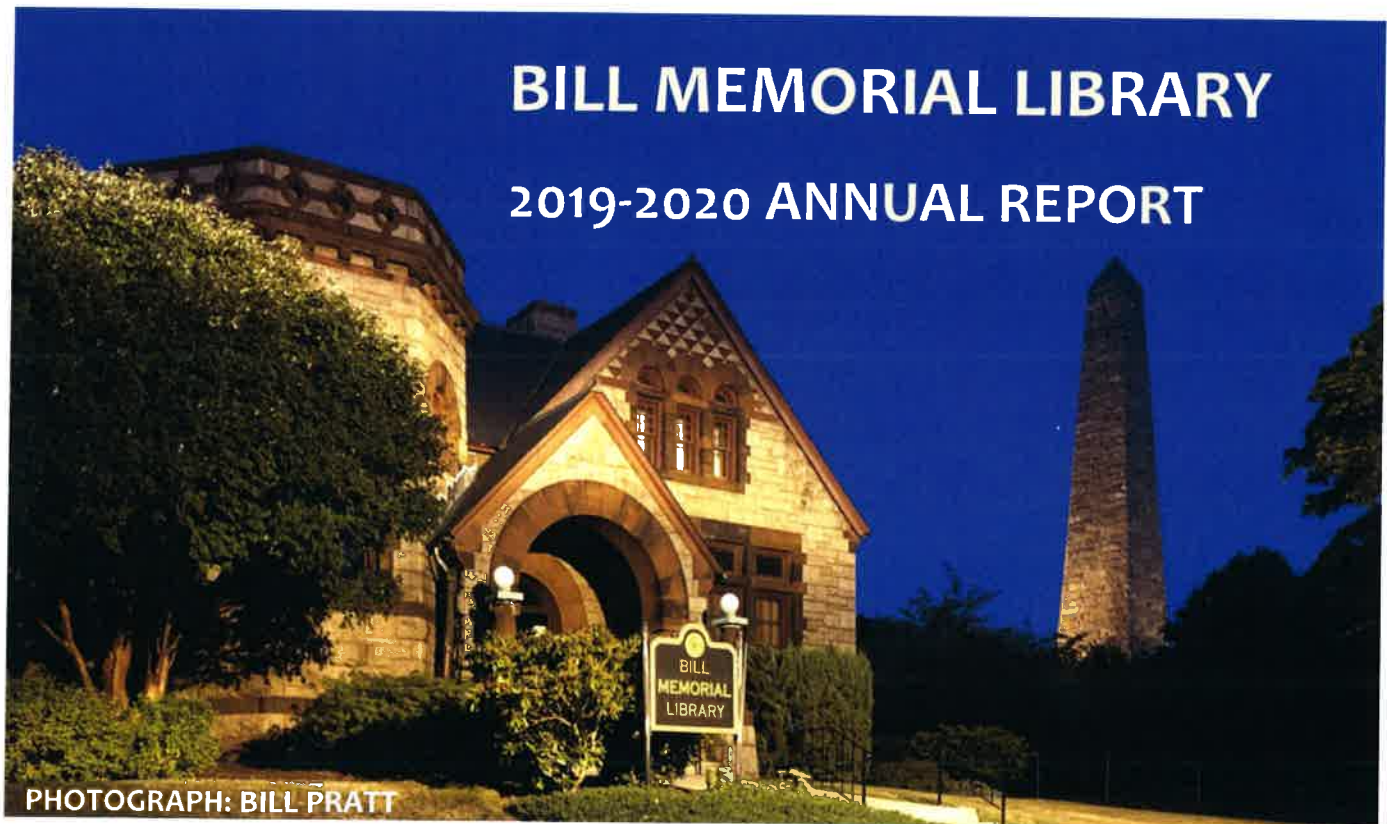


Bill Memorial Library
240 Monument Street
Groton, CT 06340



BILL MEMORIAL LIBRARY

2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

PHOTOGRAPH: BILL PRATT

The mission of the Bill Memorial Library is to meet the changing needs of our community in a comfortable and unique historic setting by stimulating imagination through reading, viewing and listening for pleasure; providing the resources for lifelong learning; inspiring young readers; and connecting to the online world. Revised July 2014, Board of Trustees

From the Director's Desk

“We have been fortunate in being open as usual each library day. The schools being closed so long the boys especially spent hours in the library reading.” Semi-annual report of the librarian of Bill Memorial Library from Oct. 11, 1917 to April 9, 1918.



I found the above quote as I looked back through the minutes of the library Board of Trustees to see if the library had closed during the flu pandemic of 1918. While there was no mention of the flu pandemic or a closure during that time, there were many mentions of the First World War. One of the Trustees, Miss Betsey B. Larrabee, oversaw Bill Memorial's participation in the American Library Association's War Finance Committee project "to raise . . . a million dollars for a million books for a million soldiers." The ledger for that project is still at the library.

Needless to say, Bill Memorial Library, which celebrated its 130-year anniversary this year, has seen many changes throughout its history. When the reference room was added in 1907, the large glass picture windows—a common sight nowadays—were innovative for that time. Still visible are the fittings where blackout curtains were installed during World War II. Perhaps sometime in the future, people will come across our recently installed removable plexiglass shields in the attic and see them as interesting artifacts from 2020.

Bill Memorial Library has also seen many changes to its role in the community. While it was founded as a subscription library, it went to a free library model in 1893. In the winter of 1898-1899, the books were re-cataloged to make them easier for patrons to find, using the Dewey Decimal System, the very latest in library classification.

When we look through the lens of our long history, we gain some perspective on today's challenging times. Previous librarians and trustees have been acting and reacting to changing times for 130 years. Why should our role today be different?

Sincerely,

Wendy Connal, Library Director



(Clockwise) Board members Jackie Massett, Janet Downs, Robert Zuliani, Mark Oefinger, Barbara Frucht, Lea Doran, Dane Stevenson and Barbara Tarbox.

All of our Board Members dedicate many hours to the library.

Library Trustees FY 2019-2020

Janet Downs	President
Barbara Frucht	Vice-President
Jackie Massett	Secretary
Robert Zuliani	Treasurer
Mark R. Oefinger	Asst. Treasurer
Lea Doran	
Jane Giuliani	
Conrad Heede	
Bernadette Kunkemoeller	
Kenneth McBride	
Christy McElroy	
Naomi Otterness	
Dane Stevenson	
Elizabeth Swindell	
Barbara Tarbox	

2019-2020 Donors

The Bill Memorial Library receives 9% of our annual operating budget from the Town of Groton. As a small private library that is free and open to the public, we are dependent on public contributions for a large portion of our annual budget. We are thankful for the financial support of so many in the community who value the programs and services the Bill Memorial Library provides.

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Virginia Ager
Jo Aldred
Roger Allen
Joellen Anderson
Anonymous
Anonymous
Martin P. Artale, Jr.
Elaine Atad
The Barnett Boys
Charlotte Barnum
Dom and Sherry Bassi
Joseph and Susan Bennett
Richard and Jane Bucklin
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Milly Carlson
Robert and Phyllis Champagne
Peggy Criscitiello
Steve and Marsha Dietrich
Lea Doran and Gail Cueto
Janet Downs
Don and Jean Doyle
George M. and Sheila Drakeley
John and Susan Durham
Mary Falvey
Don and Liz Fernald
Marge Fondulas
Lucy and George Forcier
Barbara Lee Franciosi
Barbara Frucht
Marc Frucht
Larry and Barbara Gerrish
Mark and Patrice Granatosky
Conrad Heede
Robyn Hoffmann and Brent Eugenides
Jim and Marge Hollister

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Ann E. King
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Robert and Karen Neild
Kate and Dan Nelson
Ellen and Horace Newbury
Lian Obrey
Sheila and Dan O'Donnell
Barbara A. Nagy and Mark R. Oefinger
Lana J. Orphanides
Ivan and Naomi Otterness
Jim and Christine Parizo
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Kevin and Carmella Prendergast
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David Rose and Shirleyann Dunbar-Rose
William G. Ryan
The Salemma Family
Bill and Deborah Sanford
George and MaryAnn Scully
The Skiff Family
Mary-Jane and Peter Stanley

Duncan and Lolly Stoddard
Hans Stukenbrok
Elizabeth and Archie Swindell
Harold and Barbara Tarbox
Charles and Patricia Warrington
Richard White
Grace N. Woodruff
Robert L. Zuliani

BUSINESS DONORS

Charter Oak Credit Union
Groton Utilities
Paul's Pasta Shop
Pfizer Foundation
Thames Valley Communications

Memorial Donations

Gifts made in honor of a loved one

Arnold W. Avery

By Susan A. and John H. Durham

Susan Bennett

By Joseph Bennett

Mary Ferrell

By Bernard F. Baker

Hali and Gerry Keeler

Members of Marine Draftsmen's
Association



Library Founder Frederic Bill

2019-2020 VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers make things happen! We are grateful for the talent and energy so many in the community donated to the Library. In spite of fewer opportunities due to the shutdown and limited services, we still had **60** people graciously donate their time and efforts to the library:

Teens

Kaleigh Allen	Haley Murray
Ted Allen	Angelina Palardy
Musharraf Atik	Paulie Perez
Rory Badeaux	Avery Rembish
Arfa Begum	Isabelle Roode
Zoe Braco	Dylan Sheffer
Drusilla Burdo	Brooklyn Steed
Samantha Chaix	Tyler Steed
Aurora Clinton	Kevin Tran
Clare Connal-	Mary Ann Trant
Nicolaou	Clare Ward
Apphia Cui	
Alyssa Dreesman	
Ryan Floyd	
Connor Harris	
Arabella Hatfield	
Katie Houghton	
Natalia Lallis	
Samantha Maiolo	
Gabriela Manuel	
Micaela Manuel	

Adults

Jannatul Anika	Conrad Heede
Sheryl Atencio	Timothy C. Jackson
Annie Baxter	Eileen Johnson
Ed Berryman	Shawn Johnson
Sara Bramlett	Colleen King
Scott Carle	Emily Lavoie
Abby Casey	Sierra Libby
Bob Casey	Natalie Livingston
Emily Casey	Christy McElroy
Ruth Connal	Gideon McElroy
Amy Havens	Molly McElroy
	Christine Post
	Bill Pratt
	Keaton Sanborn
	Dane Stevenson
	Luke Tedeschi
	Helga Tolles
	Gail Yeo



(L) Volunteer Timothy Jackson refurbished our outdoor library bench.



Beautiful holiday wreaths created for the library by the Trillium Garden Club.

2019-2020 Community Partners

Avery-Copp House
 City of Groton
 City of Groton Police Department
 Connecticut Humanities
 Girls Who Code
 Groton Animal Foundation
 Groton Public Schools
 Groton Public Schools Summer Food Service Program
 Groton Utilities
 Lyman Allyn Art Museum
 Pro Bono Partnership
 Riverfront Children's Center
 Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition
 Thames River Heritage Park
 Town of Groton
 Trillium Garden Club



The Friends' annual Cocoa & Crafts event featured alpacas and woolen items from SixPaca Farms.

FRIENDS OF THE BILL MEMORIAL LIBRARY

The Friends of the Bill Memorial Library is made up of volunteers who are integral to the success of many library events including Summer Reading. In addition, the Friends host several events of their own as well as supporting the library and the library staff.

Anyone can join the Friends—we invite you to be a part of this wonderful group of library supporters!



We took advantage of the closure to do some much-needed building maintenance



The library had the winning entry for “Community Organization” for the City of Groton’s Scarecrow Trail

Grants Awarded FY 2019-2020

Chelsea Groton Foundation	STEM programming
Community Foundation of Eastern CT	Neighbors for Neighbors: physical distancing modifications
CT State Library, the CT State Historical Records Advisory Board, and the National Archives' National Historical Publications and Records Commission	Traveling Archivist Implementation Grant
Pfizer Foundation	STEM programming

2019-2020 Budget

Income

Endowment Income	\$205,272.00
Fundraising/Other	20,750.00
Town of Groton Municipal Funding	<u>25,000.00</u>
	\$251,022.00

Expenses

Personnel	\$165,459.00
Library Materials	19,513.00
Technology, Supplies & Programming	17,493.00
Buildings & Grounds	27,307.00
Other Operating Expenses	<u>21,250.00</u>
	\$251,022.00

TEEN PROGRAMS

Coordinated by Colleen King, the library offered many special programs prior to the temporary closure. In addition, the library held a Girls Who Code club (which was able to continue virtually), provided outreach to Groton Public Schools (including a weekly book club at West Side Middle School), and held LEGO Mindstorm Coding with classes from the Riverfront Children's Center.



LEGO™ Lab



Girls Who Code

(L) Teen Librarian Colleen King celebrates Harry Potter on Take Your Child to the Library Day



POPULAR TEEN PROGRAMS INCLUDED -

- Desktop Zen Gardens
- Literary Pumpkin Patch
- Festive Folds: Holiday Origami
- Pal-entine's Day: A Celebration of Friendship
- LEGO Lab
- Virtual/Augmented Reality Workshops

Teen Advisory Board members spent the night in the library along with Director Wendy Connal and Board Members Christy McElroy and Dane Stevenson.



(Above) The Haunted Library was planned and executed by the teens.



TAB MEMBERS -

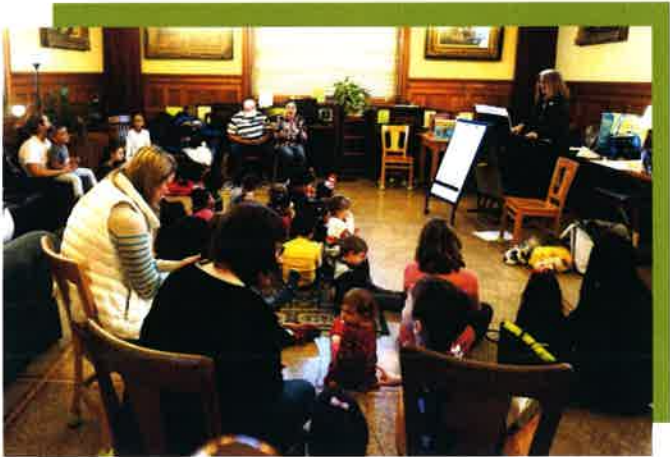
Musharraf Atik
Arfa Begum
Zoe Bracco
Aurora Clinton
Connor Harris
Arabella Hatfield
Natalia Lallis
Samantha Maiolo
Avery Rembish
Mary-Ann Trant

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Prior to the library temporarily shutting our doors, our all-ages Story Time, which includes music, puppets and other interactive elements, was held weekly throughout the year and was well-attended. We featured several special music programs for children and hosted an art series led by the Lyman Allyn Art Museum. We continued our partnership with The Riverfront Children's Center by hosting their classes for story times. Books on autism were added to our Parenting Shelf. Children's book circulation continues to grow as families take advantage of our expanding and current collection.



Children's Librarian Mary-Jane Carle



Musical Story Time

2020 Summer Reading Sponsors

This summer members of the library Board of Trustees personally donated gift cards to use as prizes for our Summer Readers. We appreciate their generosity.

2020 SUMMER READING HIGHLIGHTS

Due to restrictions in place for COVID-19, we needed to think outside the box for Summer Reading, so we took it outside! We designed activities that utilized the library's beautiful grounds as well as social media and that family members could complete together.

- Participants (birth through grade 5) were given Summer Reading packets filled with fun activity sheets and reading challenges to complete for raffle tickets to our prize giveaway, plus free books and coupons.
- We distributed 60 Summer Reading packets, with some families opting to download the materials from our website.
- We passed out over 80 Grab 'N' Go Craft Bags.
- We began a StoryWalk™ on the back lawn that continues through the fall.
- Families tracked the wanderings of Gnorman the Gnome through our Facebook page.



Our StoryWalk™ was a hit among our families this summer.

ADULT & FAMILY PROGRAMS

The Bill Memorial Library is committed to offering a variety of quality programming for all ages. Popular programs bring families to the library and introduce them to the many wonderful books, materials, services and other resources we offer. While in-person programming came to a halt mid-March, the library offered virtual programming and will continue to do so for as long as necessary.



Trench Art collection of Martin P. Artale, one of the community displays featured in our museum case.



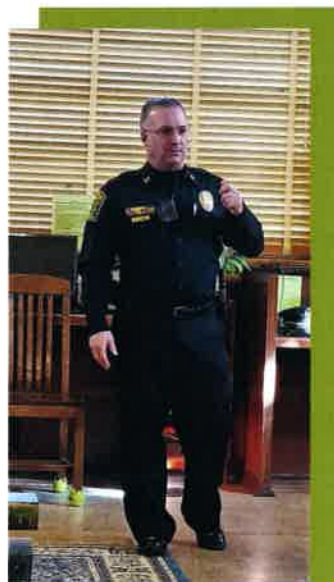
The library transformed into Hogwarts on Take Your Child to the Library Day (thanks to Emily Casey and her family for the amazing decorations).



(L) One of the younger fans to visit the library on Star Wars Reads Day.



Some of the many trick-or-treaters who visited the library on Halloween to show staff their costumes and receive a treat.



Lt. Eric Jenkins,
City of Groton Police Dept.
Common Grounds Community Café.

PROGRAMS THIS YEAR ~

Connecticut Authors Trail with Christopher Wigren
Common Grounds Community Cafes
Star Wars Reads Day
Halloween Trick or Treat at the Library
Take Your Child to the Library Day :
Celebrate Harry Potter!
Meet Sarah Margu: Child of the Amistad
Virtual Program: Frances Manwaring
Caulkins: First Historian for the
Town of Groton