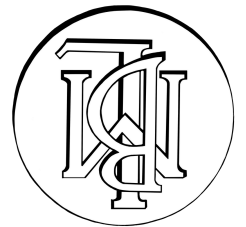


Bill Memorial Library
240 Monument Street
Groton, CT 06340



Bill Memorial Library

Groton, CT



2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT

The mission of the Bill Memorial Library is to meet the needs of the community in a welcoming and unique historic setting by stimulating imagination, providing the resources for lifelong learning, inspiring young patrons, and connecting to the online world.
Revised Oct. 2020, Board of Trustees

From the Director's Desk

Hello Readers and Library Lovers,
This year we are pleased to bring back the beautiful views of Groton Heights from our new windows. You may recall that our reference windows looked like the one to the right, above. With a Neighborhood Assistance Act grant from Groton Utilities, we were able to replace and restore our windows. See the difference in the photo to the right, below. I think you'll agree that the change was needed and the work was worth it! Not only are the new windows crystal clear, they are also energy efficient. We are grateful to Groton Utilities for partnering with us to get this done.

When a community comes together, beautiful things happen!



Wendy Connal, Library Director



Wendy Connal, Library Director, doing some intergalactic networking



Before



After

Library Trustees FY 2023-2024

Janet Downs - President
Lea Doran - Vice President
Jackie Massett - Secretary
Michelle Doty / Robert Zuliani - Treasurer
Mark Oefinger - Asst. Treasurer

Robyn Hoffmann
Bernadette Kunkemoeller
Kenneth McBride
Christy McElroy
Naomi Otterness

Jason Rusk
Jill Rusk
Dane Stevenson
Elizabeth Swindell
Robert Zuliani

2023- 2024 Donors

The Bill Memorial Library receives 19.3% of our annual operating budget from the Town of Groton. As a small private library that is free and open to the public, we rely 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 that the Bill Memorial Library provides.

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Virginia Ager	Gretchen and George Gauthier
Jo Aldred	Larry and Barbara Gerrish
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Joellen Anderson	Todd Gipstein
Anonymous	The Goodman Family
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Leslie Forbes	Jane and Kenneth Moriarty
Jill Frost	
Barbara Frucht	
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DONATIONS GIVEN IN MEMORY OF:

Keith Busiere
by B. Jean Connal

Margaret Orkney
by Nancy Orkney Hileman

Naomi Otterness
by Mary and Richard Mancini
by Ivan Otterness

Lance Rockefeller
by Meryl Rockefeller

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by Mary and Richard Mancini

BUSINESS DONORS

Breezeline

Charter Oak Federal Credit Union

Levine Insurance Group LLC

Paul's Pasta Shop

Pfizer Foundation

W. R. Allen & Co., Inc.



Library Founder, Frederic Bill

2023-2024 VOLUNTEERS

We are grateful for the talent and energy that our volunteers generously donated to the Library. Many hours were spent on maintenance projects, fundraisers and programming that enriched the Library's services to our community. Thank you!



Saber
Guild
Kessel
Temple
Padawan
Training

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Avery-Copp House
Chelsea Groton Bank
Children First Groton
City of Groton
City of Groton Parks & Recreation
City of Groton Police Department
Connecticut Humanities
Friends of Fort Griswold
Girls Who Code
Groton Public Library
Groton Public Schools
Groton Utilities
Joyce Hedrick
Pat Mandell
Geoff McLean
Kimberly McLean
Mystic and Noank Library
nErDcampCT
PACT - Police and Community Together
Riverfront Children's Center
Rotary Club of Groton
John Steward
The Saber Guild Kessel Temple
Submarine Force Library & Museum Assn.
Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition
Stop & Shop
Thames River Heritage Park
Town of Groton
Town of Groton Human Resources
Trillium Garden Club
Erica Benvenuti, RD, UCONN EFNAP + SNAP
Waterford Public Library

VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers put in well over **2000** hours helping the library this year!

Landon Avery	Eileen Johnson
Brian Bergman	Aditya Joshi
Sophia Cabral	Bernadette Kunkemoeller
Beverly Callahan	Darlynea LePage
Scott Carle	Stephanie Maiolo
Ruth Connal	Jackie Massett
Andreas Connal-	Ken McBride
Nicolaou	Christy McElroy
Wendy Connal-	Eric McElroy
Nicolaou	Mark Oefinger
Nathan Detmer	Beverly Platts
Anuja Dharmadhikari	Christine Post
Marsha Dietrich	Bill Pratt
Lea Doran	Paige Robinson
Michelle Doty	David Rose
Janet Downs	Jason Rusk
Aiden Dunlap	Jill Rusk
Charlie Ebbinghaus	Mercedes Sebastian
Eri Gold	Dane Stevenson
Jordyn Hartman	Elizabeth Swindell
Robyn Hoffmann	Barbara Tarbox
Tim Jackson	Rob Zuliani

Grants Awarded	Funding for:
Mystic Woman's Club	Books
Neighborhood Assistance Act / Groton Utilities (continuation)	Energy-efficient windows
David Rose - Jacqueline B. Nixon Award	Staff development

FRIENDS OF THE BILL MEMORIAL LIBRARY

We get by with a lot of help from our Friends!
The Friends of the Bill Memorial Library is made up of dedicated volunteers who are integral to the success of many library events, including Summer Fun programs. The Friends host several events of their own as well, including the Artisan Market, and collaborate with local libraries for activities like Edible Books. We thank them for their many years of hard work and amazing programs!



April Indoor Artisan Market



Jacqueline B. Nixon Community Service Award winner David Rose with his wife, Shirleyann Dunbar-Rose



Marigolds for Mom masterpiece



Jolabokaflod wrapped books

SPONSOR A SUMMER READER DONORS

Thank you for making a difference!

2023-2024 Library Budget

Income	
Endowment Draw	\$205,272
Fundraising/Other	45,365
Town of Groton	<u>60,000</u>
	\$310,637
Expenses	
Personnel	\$205,973
Library Supplies	22,009
Technology, Supplies & Programming	17,575
Building & Grounds	22,605
Other Operating Expenses	<u>42,545</u>
	\$310,637

Alexander Atkinson
Charlotte Barnum
Marsha and Steve Dietrich
Lea Doran and Gail Cueto
Michelle Doty
Janet Downs
George M. Drakeley
Susan and John Durham
Robyn Hoffmann and
Brent Eugenides
Timothy Jackson
Jonathan Johnson, Jr.
Joseph Kane, Jr.
Bernadette and Paul
Kunkemoeller
Carole Mackin

Jackie Massett
David and Erin McBride
Kenneth McBride
Christy and Eric McElroy
Jane and Kenneth Moriarty
Ed and Mary Namolek
Kate and Dan Nelson
Fritz and Lynn Poppe
Jill and Jason Rusk
Deborah and Bill Sanford
Andrea and Anthony Skiff
Duncan and Lolly Stoddard
Patricia and Charles
Warrington
Beverly Washington
The Webster Family

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Children's programming was very active (and interactive) this past year! Several children completed our 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program and are featured in our Children's Room. The continuation program, 500 Books Before Middle School, is taking off, with many school-age kids signing up and participating. We made use of our beautiful outdoor space for weekly Storytimes, popular Sing-Alongs with live music, and Summer Reading programs.



Touch a Piano Day at Music and Movement

2024 SUMMER READING HIGHLIGHTS

Over 45 kids PreK-Gr 5 were out of this world, actively reading and playing a fun space-themed version of our summer reading game, with a total of **1,102** days read, an average of **23** days read per child.

We hosted several programs for families, including animal programs by the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center and Tripledale Farms, comedy magic by Ed Popielarczyk, and extremely popular LEGO free play sessions.

SCHOOL-YEAR PROGRAM TOTALS

Ages Birth to 5: 97 Programs
Attendance: 2,803 Attendees

Ages 6 to 11: 15 Programs
Attendance: 426 Attendees

Who had more fun, Miss Mary-Jane or the kids?

2023-2024 SCHOOL-YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

- Storytime was well-attended weekly, including sessions outside when the weather cooperated. Special guests included patient Jewel the greyhound, beloved library neighbor Clancy, and sweet Molly and Merritt (and their humans). Riverfront Children's Center hosted Miss Mary-Jane, and often made the trek to hear stories and music at the library.
- We continued the very popular weekly Music & Movement session and monthly LEGO Club gatherings. Music & Movement featured guest Freddie the Dog and several surprise visits by the talented musicians Brian Bergman, Marsha Dietrich, and Bill Pratt on multiple instruments.
- Halloween brought a silly spooky Storytime with costumes and crafts, and St. Patrick's Day had leprechauns leading the kids on a merry scavenger hunt!
- Erica Benvenuti, RD, of UCONN EFNAP + SNAP, taught kids how to cook several delicious, nutritious meals.



Summer painting program



The intersection of fun, creativity, candy, and science at a Crafting Code meeting of the Girls Who Code

ADULT VIRTUAL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Teens weren't the only ones benefiting from computer and virtual programming. We offered several in-person, virtual, and recorded activities for all ages, including:

- The Life of Col. William Ledyard (recorded; see the video on the website!)
- Building and Understanding Family Trees (virtual)

CO-SPONSORED WITH AREA LIBRARIES

- Mohegan Tribal History
- It's a Wonderful Life
- The Sinking of the Steamboat Lexington
- Social Security Myths and Realities
- Banking Scam Prevention



Several teens attended our Beginner Crocheting Programs

TEENS - SCHOOL-YEAR FUN!

Over 150 teens attended a wide variety of fun, informative, and creative programs after school, including:

- CD Scratch Art
- Pumpkin Book Craft
- Board Games and *Apples to Apples* Game Nights
- Perler Bead Magnets
- No-Cook Dinner with Pizza Wraps and S'Mores Popcorn
- Rock Painting and Marble Art Activities

We also offered virtual and in-person meetings of the Girls Who Code club to middle and high school students, which aims to make technology a more inclusive career. Coders worked independently to learn coding languages, made crafts that combined STEM and art (Peep catapults are tremendous fun!), and problem-solved together.

TEENS - SUMMER READING!

Over 30 teens joined us during the summer of 2024 to play games, learn about space, paint masterpieces on canvas, and make (and eat) cookie planets.



Alex and Mary-Jane visiting Earthlings at Family Day at the Submarine Force Museum

COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Coffee with the City of Groton Police
- Coffee with Senator Heather Somers
- Family Games Night with the City of Groton
- Juneteenth Celebration with the City of Groton

ADULT & FAMILY PROGRAMS

The Bill Memorial Library offered both in-person and virtual programming for adults and families. Our Food for Thought Book Group met monthly at Groton Townhouse. We began a new book club, called Something Else Entirely, which met to discuss speculative fiction, and interest continues to grow! The Icelandic tradition of *Jolabokaflod* was celebrated again with wrapped books and chocolates. Our staff members offered their expertise through the new Skill Library: patrons can book a help or learning session for various skills, crafts, and services, including notary duties, tech help, greener living, and beading and fiber arts. This past summer we also had quite a few poets submit limericks to our Limerick Challenge.

PROGRAM TOTAL FOR ADULTS AND FAMILIES

55 programs

1,811 in attendance!

FAMILY PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Ferncroft Opossums (pictured at bottom right)
- Dinovember
- Take Your Child to the Library Day Concert & Activities
- Chocolate Challenge
- Owls Among Us (pictured at right)
- Marigolds for Mom (or Any Special Person)
- Star Wars Day
- Seed Giveaway



ADULT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Qi Gong Series
- Green Cleaning
- Green Body Care
- Weeding 101
- The Life of Lt. Col. Ledyard (pictured at left)

ADULT SUMMER FUN!

Why should kids have all of the fun? Several all-ages programs were offered this summer, as well as the chance to win gift certificates to local restaurants and shops for reading and writing short book reviews.

- Introduction to Watercolor Painting
- CT Author Trail Talk with Ron and Roxanne Steed about their recent book, *Focal Points in France*
- Guided Meditation Class

