

1996 ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE MORRILL MEMORIAL LIBRARY

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TEN YEAR UPWARD TREND IN LIBRARY CIRCULATION

	ITEMS LOANED	INCREASE	
1996	276,347		
1995	262,285	1 YEAR	5.3%
1991	231,642	5 YEARS	19.2%
1987	181,284	10 YEARS	52.4%

RENOVATION

The grant application for renovating the Morrill Memorial Library was approved by the Board of Library Commissioners on September 19, 1996. Funding for this and 20 other projects will be provided by a bill which was filed by Senate Majority Leader Thomas Norton and is co-sponsored by Representative John Rogers and Senator Marian Walsh. We are confident that this legislation will be passed soon. The project will be presented to Town Meeting in the spring of 1997.

The state grant will entitle the town to approximately 1 million dollars toward the 2.6 million dollar library renovation. The proposal updates the 100 year old building so that modern library service can be provided. New services will include interactive public work stations, graphical internet access and multiple electronic databases.

Library departments will be reorganized for comfort, convenience and accessibility. New wiring will accommodate the required equipment. A meeting room seating 80 people will be located in the Plimpton Wing. Heating, ventilation and air conditioning will be updated. All four levels of the building will be utilized completely allowing increased services without expanding the structure.

The library building itself, donated to the town by George Morrill in 1898, will be celebrating its 100th birthday soon. The building is a treasure badly in need of repair. The stone work and tile roof need immediate work to prevent further deterioration. As part of renovation all of these problems will be addressed.

LIVING HISTORY

A series of programs designed to bring history to life attracted varied audiences to the library during the course of the year. Author and radio personality, Bill Littlefield fascinated sports aficionados with his stories of athletes from decades gone by. Ted Zalewski's impersonation of Teddy Roosevelt drew rave reviews and, during Women's History Month, Norwood's own Edie Honeth depicted Louisa Adams. Teenage girls, among many others, were enthralled as Jan Turnquist portrayed Louisa May Alcott. Finally, those wishing to explore their ancestry, attended a workshop presented by David Dearborn of the New England Historic Genealogical Society.

The popularity of these and other programs was only limited by the facilities available. The proposed renovation will include a meeting room large enough to accommodate larger audiences without disrupting the rest of the library.

CURRENT ACTIVITY

1996 was a busy year at the library. A record 275,000 items were borrowed. The items people want are becoming more varied every year. Nearly one fifth of the library's circulation consisted of non-print items including videos, books on tape, CDs, CD Roms, and music cassettes.

The Friends of the Library and the Norwood Community Television Corporation have generously supplemented the funds available to purchase additional videos and books on tape. A program to lease unabridged books on tape was partially funded by the Friends and has proved an instant hit, giving library patrons a constant source of new titles.

Services for people of all ages were increased to meet demand:

- Preschool story time is now offered weekly, year round
- A record number of children participated in the summer reading club
- More than 8200 items were delivered to shut-ins by the library's Outreach Department
- The adult literacy program helped more than 200 people learn to read, speak and write English so they could become better citizens, parents, and employees

Another new service provided by the Friends is an assistive listening device for anyone who needs help in hearing programs being offered. By using a simple unobtrusive, compact receiver and amplifier any program can become more enjoyable.

The Women's Community Committee of Norwood continued to be among the library's most faithful supporters. Again they provided library memberships to the New England Aquarium, Massachusetts Audubon Society, Museum of Fine Arts and Kennedy Library. These memberships provide bargain entertainment to hundreds of Norwood residents.

NEW TECHNOLOGY

Internet access is available on all public terminals through the Minuteman Library Network. The Minuteman Internet interface provides service including text, but no graphics. Offering graphical user internet service to the public is a goal for 1997. The library is working with the town computer department to provide this service.

Through the Minuteman Network library users have access at home or in the library to 750,000 titles and 3,500,000 items. They also can search an index of 1400 general periodicals and medical journals some with full text. Minuteman offers a Community Information database which includes, free of charge, information about a variety of services, clubs, and agencies located in the member towns.

The library has two CD ROM work stations. One in the children's department has interactive encyclopedias and children's stories. The other, in the adult department, has several years of the Boston Globe on CD ROM. Each work station is attached to a printer.

Technology is available to provide many other reference tools on CD ROM or through the internet. In order to do so, however, the library's wiring must be updated and the building itself reorganized. Offering reference sources such as the Massachusetts Annotated Laws and Code of Regulations on CD ROM will mean that the library needs LESS space for

books, but MORE space for computer work stations. The proposed renovation anticipates and plans for this change in the way the building will be used to begin it's second 100 years of service to the Town of Norwood.