

2001 MORRILL MEMORIAL LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT

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The highlight of 2001 was the opening of the renovated Morrill Memorial Library. We invite all Norwood residents to come to their “new” library facility.

Library renovation transformed a building that was a showpiece in 1898 into a building that is again a showpiece in 2001. From the outside, the building appears little changed, but extensive interior changes have given the library a beautiful and more cohesive look, a new meeting room, a new elevator, more comfortable and efficient use of space, and updated mechanical and wiring systems.

Funding for the project came from a combination of public and private sources. Town appropriation accounted for 55% of the cost with additional funds from a State Grant administered by the Board of Library Commissioners, Library Trust funds administered by the Norwood Board of Library Trustees, a grant from the Simoni Foundation and State Aid to public libraries. Representative John Rogers and Senator Marian Walsh were instrumental in securing funding for the library grant. Individuals, businesses and civic organizations also made significant donations. These are being used to add finishing touches including furniture, computer equipment, signs and landscaping. Look for more changes ahead in 2002. The Library Trustees thank the members of the Permanent Building Construction Committee for overseeing the library renovation.

We are grateful to the School Committee, Administration and the High School for making space available to the library during renovation. We also thank the **Recreation Department**, the **First Congregational Church** and the **Norwood Historical Society** for donating space for programs and storage.

The temporary library facility at Norwood High School closed on April 14, 2001 and the Morrill Memorial Library reopened on June 11, 2001. A rededication ceremony was held on Saturday, June 16th. Norwood residents joined Library Staff, Trustees, Senator Marian Walsh, Deborah Bornheimer from the Board of Library Commissioners, members of the Board of Selectmen and the Permanent Building Construction Committee and James McBain, lead architect for Childs Bertman Tseckares to celebrate the event. The Baystatesmen barbershop group provided lively musical accompaniment.

The second half of 2001 began a process of enjoyment and readjustment for Norwood library users and staff. Circulation of library materials during the second half of the year was more than double the figure for the first half of the year. 710 new library cards were issued in July and August alone.

During the year use of the library soared by all measures.

- 9,745 people used library computers.
- 16,000 reference questions were answered.
- 4300 books were borrowed from other libraries for Norwood library users.
- 1576 children attended story time sessions and participated in the summer reading program.
- 92 adults were trained in how to use the Internet.

Changes in Library Service go beyond simple adjustment to the new building. Access to the world outside the library walls via both the Internet and through expanded delivery services gives library patrons an overwhelming array of ways to access information.

Most library activity now has an electronic connection. Whether you love computers or hate them, use them or ignore them, computers now are integral to library service. In Norwood and at 40 other libraries around Boston, automated library service is provided through the **Minuteman Library Network**. Membership in this cooperative provides current records of all materials circulating and who has them. It also provides a description of all items owned by this library and the other 40 Minuteman libraries, up to date information on what items are available where, and a method for anyone either in the library or at home to request them. Altogether the Minuteman Network provides 5.8 million items, free, at your fingertips.

Sharing is the way libraries in Massachusetts stretch their resources. Automated catalogs, such as Minuteman, linked via the Internet, provide a new tool to make this possible. If the 5.8 million collection in the Minuteman Library does not have what you want, check the [Virtual Catalog](#). Provided by the Board of Library Commissioners and the Metrowest Regional Library System, the Virtual Catalog allows you simultaneously to search the holdings of Minuteman, the Boston Public Library, the University of Massachusetts libraries in Boston, Dartmouth and Lowell, the U. Mass medical school, Wellesley College and the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole. More libraries will be added in the year ahead. A book requested on line will be delivered to your home library in a matter of days.

The Library reaches out to you – in PERSON -

Children's Services were expanded to meet new demands. A lap sit story time for toddlers was begun as well as some evening story times and additional sessions during the week for preschoolers. During the summer 681, Norwood children participated in the statewide reading program *First of All...Read*. 451 students completed the program, reading an average of 23 books each.

The Literacy Volunteers, a program now 18 years old, provides free and confidential tutoring in Basic English and English as a Second Language. Since the move back to the library, this program has increased in number of volunteers and of people seeking tutoring services. 27 new tutors were trained in the fall of 2001 and two additional conversation groups for ESL students were added. In the new library space for three private tutoring rooms and a nearby area for computers and support materials is a real asset to the program.

The Outreach Department provides services to people unable to visit the library or unable to use its resources without assistance. The Outreach Librarian delivered 4600 items to people in their homes, in nursing homes, at the Senior Center and at Senior housing facilities during 2001. In addition programs were presented at Temple Shaare Tefilah and the Norwood Historical Society. A flourishing book group meets on the second Friday of the month at the Senior Center. The group made a trip to Fruitlands Museum to supplement their reading.

Serving People With Disabilities is the goal which prompted Outreach Librarian Beth Goldman and Literacy Volunteer Coordinator Bettina Blood to apply for and receive a two-year \$20,000 Library Services and Technology Grant administered by the Board of Library Commissioners. Their focus is improving library services for people, regardless of their age or disability, through the purchase of equipment and software including two adaptive computer workstations running Kurzweil 3000 software to assist learning disabled and visually impaired patrons. In addition the grant provides for staff and public training in use of the equipment. There will also be programs offered to increase awareness of and sensitivity to people with disabilities.

- On the INTERNET –

The Morrill Memorial Library web page is posted on the Town of Norwood's website: www.ci.norwood.ma.us/library. It provides a calendar of activities, a list of collections and services and a monthly list of all new library acquisitions. With just a few keystrokes you can reserve that new best seller you just heard about on TV. It also provides a link to the Minuteman Library Network (www.mln.lib.ma.us) and its resources.

- And through our FRIENDS!

The Friends of the Morrill Memorial Library were reorganized after a period of inactivity during renovation. A new slate of officers began working together in September. A book sale held in November was very successful. Funds raised were used for programs for children and adults while raising awareness in the community of what the library can provide. The Friends are planning several interesting events during 2002. Increasing their membership is a primary goal for 2002.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS OF 2001

- ◆ **Literary Lunch**, the third annual reading and discussion program for 6th graders and Senior Citizens just keeps getting better. It again partially was sponsored by a grant from the Boch Betterment Fund and run by Outreach Librarian Beth Goldman, Junior High Librarian Mary Ann McGowan and classroom teacher, Margaret Ransom. All participants, young and old, enjoyed the conversation and a delicious lunch provided by the Junior High cafeteria staff.
- ◆ **Big Dig**, a slide lecture by David Kruh was presented in the fall. When will they finish it and how much will it cost? Inquiring minds packed the Simoni Room to get the scoop.
- ◆ **Mystery writers** Kate Flora, Jamie Katz and Toni Kelner let the audience in on how they create their characters.
- ◆ Back by popular demand the **Gerwick Puppets** charmed children and parents.
- ◆ Several local organizations began holding regular meetings at the library. We particularly welcome the Norwood Art Association and the newly formed Norfolk County Railroad Club.

Thanks to the organizations that supported library services and collections:

- ◆ The Women's Community Committee is the primary sponsor of the library museum pass program. They provided memberships for the Roger Williams Zoo, Plimouth Plantation, JFK Library, Museum of Fine Arts and Easton Children's Museum.
- ◆ The Guild of St. Timothy provided an additional Museum of Fine Arts membership.
- ◆ Boch Betterment Grant provided funds for computers in the children's department and partially sponsored the Literary Lunch.

Retirement changed the library community in 2001

Technical Services Librarian Shelby Warner retired after almost 13 years of service. Shelby was instrumental in the library automation process, creating a smooth transition to the Minuteman Library Network and later in offering computers for public use. We are happy to welcome Judith Koncz, our new Technical Services Librarian and two part time employees. Anne Francis, Technology Librarian, manages the library's computers and web page. Kelly Unsworth, Assistant Children's Librarian, focuses on toddlers and Young Adults.

After serving the Morrill Memorial Library and the people of Norwood for more than 30 years, Trustee, George Ruboy stepped down from the Board. Spanning parts of five decades, Mr. Ruboy displayed his love of the Town and the Library through hours of dedicated service, and he is greatly missed. Susannah J. P. Petro joined the Board in April 2001.