



Library Update

Brewster Ladies' Library Association

March 2006

Researching and Writing *The Widow's War* Sally Gunning, Author and Library Volunteer



As my novel *The Widow's War* hits the presses and the kind words roll in it occurs to me that more than a few kind words are due the Brewster Ladies' Library. This being my first venture into historical fiction (the novel is set in Brewster in 1761) I knew I had long hours of research before me. What I didn't expect was that so much of it could be done via my hometown library. My first stop was the Cape Cod reference shelf, where I found all the old faithful Cape histories by Freeman, Kittredge, Deyo and Paine, as well as less obvious selections like *The Whale*, which contained engravings of a 1763 shore whaling expedition that brought an important part of my story to life as the words alone could not have done.

Next I turned to the library's CLAMS system and soon the books were flying in from all over Cape Cod. Yarmouth sent a copy of their Vital Records that contained the factual evidence behind a key piece of my tale; Sturgis sent *Liberty's Daughters* in which I found extracts from women's diaries from the era and area; Eastham sent *Our Own Snug Fireside* which walked me through the labor-intensive eighteenth century woman's day; Wellfleet sent *A Woman's Dilemma*, about Mercy Otis Warren, but for the next few searches CLAMS ran dry.

(Continued on page 3)

Critical Praise for *The Widow's War*

"Quietly compelling . . . Gunning paints the ethical, emotional, and financial dilemmas of her refreshingly adult characters in surprisingly lively shades of gray." — Kirkus Reviews

"Merging historical fact with riveting fiction . . . This is historical fiction at its best; highly recommended." — Library Journal (starred review)

"Provocative . . . Gunning infuses the story with suspense and intrigue [and] resists easy generalizations and stereotypes." — Publishers Weekly

In spite of her recent acclaim, Sally continues to volunteer at the Library Information Desk and to contribute to the Brewster community in many ways.

Congratulations Sally and Thank You!

From the BLL Library Director, **Suzanne Teuteberg**



Chris Kenney's column this month discusses the private/public structure of the Brewster Ladies' Library. I would like to complement his column with a few comments about the unique funding relationship created by this

private/public structure.

The Town of Brewster generally funds approximately 79% of the Library's operating budget and the Brewster Ladies' Library Association funds the remaining 21%. On an annual basis, the Association raises nearly one third of its funds through a series of fund-raising events.

The largest and most successful of these fund-raising events is the **Annual Library Book Sale**, which this year will begin on **Monday, August 7th**. The Association will also be sponsoring a **Library Yard Sale on Saturday, October 7th**.

These key fund-raising events have several things in common. Both sales are almost completely dependent on people in the community donating good quality books and items to be sold. Both events also take many, many hours of volunteer time prior to the events themselves for sorting, pricing, and setting up displays. And both sales require many volunteers on the day of the sales to direct traffic, help customers, work as cashiers and baggers, and even provide baked goods for the bake sales that accompany each event. Without volunteers in every step of the process, these two fund-raising events would not be possible.

I would like to thank all of you who support the Association fund-raising efforts, efforts critical to the annual operating budget of the Library. When you are doing your spring cleaning, please set aside books or items that might be appropriate for next summer's sales.

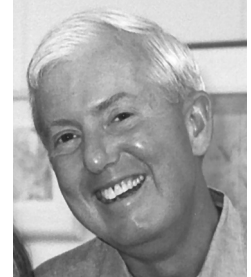
From the BLLA Board President, **Chris Kenney**

Private/Public Libraries

Questions are sometimes asked about the structure of the Brewster Ladies' Library as a private non-profit organization. In fact in New England generally, and Massachusetts specifically, it is not all that rare. Since public libraries had their origins in New England during the 19th century, it is not surprising that many public libraries were founded privately. Many remain private and most, like the BLL, have entered into private-public partnerships in order to provide better services in an increasingly complex and expensive world. Statistically, out of all of the public libraries in Massachusetts, 66 are what is known as "Association/Corporation Libraries", that is, under private non-profit control.

Here in Massachusetts, all public libraries are under the exclusive control of library trustees — no matter how the board is assembled. Massachusetts law establishes the sole authority of the Board of Trustees over all library operations. This was done to protect libraries as unique entities which are responsible for representing all points of view and "whose mission is to provide full access to the entire world of information to everyone in the community." [M.G.L. 78]

Here in Brewster, the Brewster Ladies' Library and its Association have been very fortunate to enjoy an extremely productive and harmonious relationship with the Town for more than thirty years.



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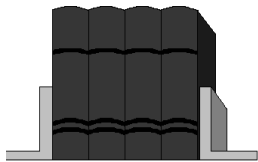
The Widow's War (continued from page 1)

Not to worry. My next stop was the Circulation Desk and Nina Gregson. Nina tapped into the off-Cape interlibrary loan system and found such gems as *The Otis Family in Provincial Massachusetts*, *Behind the Frontier – Indians in Eighteenth Century Eastern Massachusetts*, and *Peaceable Kingdoms – New England Town in the Eighteenth Century*. Pure gold, all.

All this reading brought on more questions, of course, so back I went to my old friend — Reference Librarian Kathleen Remillard. She pointed me to an ancient, enormous dictionary not five feet from her desk that answered my first dozen questions. (What is “shalloon?” What does it mean to “grave” a sloop? What is a “progue?”) I needed a specific article on James Otis. Kathleen told me where it was and how to get a copy. I needed some information on Massachusetts’ unique version of English common law regarding widows. Kathleen quickly put her finger on a piece called, *Widowhood in Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts*. Not bad!

One of the first things people ask me when they read *The Widow's War* is, “How long did all the research take?” It took about three years to research and write the book. I don’t want to think about how long it would have taken without the Brewster Ladies’ Library.

Sally Gunning



A New Reference Resource

The Brewster Ladies’ Library has recently purchased the *Cape Cod Republican* newspaper on DVD, published in Harwich, Massachusetts during the tumultuous years of the Civil War, from 1862-1864. The project was jointly sponsored by Brooks Free Library and the Harwich Historical Society with support from the Charitable Foundation of the Cape Cod Five Cents Savings Bank.

From a historical perspective, newspapers can provide very valuable information. They contain marriage and death notices; national and local news describing political and social matters of concern; school events and church functions; advertisements listing local businesses; and anecdotal stories. In fact, the *Republican's* editor, J. W. Emery, states in the first issue that the newspaper would be “devoted to the Political, Social, and Industrial interests of the People among whom it circulates.”

This is an important addition to the library’s resources as it opens a window into the past giving the reader an important perspective on the intellectual and social consciousness of a community in a time of great change. Stop by the Reference Desk to view this DVD of the *Cape Cod Republican*.



MUSICAL PERFORMANCES

Sunday, March 12 at 2:00 p.m.	Billy Hardy and Beth Sweeney with Irish Fiddles
Saturday, March 18 at 10:30 a.m.	Gordon Brooks/Susan Godoy with a Mid-Morning Musicale
Saturday, April 8 at 10:30 a.m.	A Music Circus – an Introduction to Musical Instruments <i>All ages welcome</i>
Saturday, April 22 at 10:30 a.m.	Gordon Brooks/Susan Godoy with a Mid-Morning Musicale
Saturday, May 20 at 10:30 a.m.	Gordon Brook/Susan Godoy with a Mid-Morning Musicale
Sunday, May 21, 2006 at 2:00 p.m.	Paul Nossiter’s Original Dissonance Band <i>A jazz performance</i>

All performances will take place in the Library Auditorium and admission is free.



February 14th, Valentine’s Day, was also Amnesty Day at the Brewster Ladies’ Library. For one day, patron’s had a chance to clear their records of overdue fines. The main purpose of Amnesty Day was to encourage patrons to locate those long overdue books and return them to the library shelves for use by other borrowers. In exchange for having fines waived, patrons were requested to bring in canned goods or non-perishable food items to be donated to a local food pantry.

All in all, the day was a success. A number of books were returned, a generous amount of food was collected, and many patrons were happy to be “fine-free” at the library!

Library Resources for the Visually Impaired

The Brewster Ladies' Library has approximately 1,500 titles of Large Print books located in the non-fiction area. Titles written by particularly popular authors are automatically sent to the library whenever these authors publish a new book. Additional large print book titles are also available and can be requested through CLAMS (<http://www.clamsnet.org/>) and/or through the Virtual Catalog (http://www.clamsnet.org/HTML/English/virtual_catalog_link.html).

The *New York Times Large Print Weekly* can be found in our collection. Also, an easy-to-use reader which magnifies any text or hardcopy item — book, magazine, photo, checkbook, etc. — is located in the Reference area.

If you prefer to listen to books on either cassette or CD the library has approximately 275 titles and we are routinely purchasing audio books on CD's. In the very near future, it is hoped that the Brewster Ladies' Library through CLAMS will be able to provide many, many additional audio book titles which will be downloadable to MP3 players directly from the internet.

Another wonderful resource is the Perkins Braille and Talking Book Library (1-800-852-3133). You may borrow books and equipment from this library if you are legally blind with a vision of 20/200 or less or a visual field no greater than 20 degrees, your vision is corrected but you cannot see well enough to read with comfort for extended periods of time, you cannot hold a book or turn pages due to a physical disability, or you are certified by a medical doctor as having a reading disability that has a physical basis which prevents you from reading standard print.

Join the Brewster Oral History Project

The Brewster Oral History Project is a collection of taped interviews of people who have been willing share their experiences relating to the history and social life of this town. The late Roz Gage, for example, shared the adventure begun when she and her husband found a cache of bootlegged whiskey in the sand on a Brewster beach. Cathy Kroeger has related stories of her great-great-grandfather's seagoing days in the heyday of the Brewster ship captains. Mary Louise and Ruth Eddy have reminisced about their childhood summers in Brewster, when they joined their grandparents.

These are only a few of the highlights from the interviews you can enjoy by borrowing any one of these oral histories. But, we are aware that this collection is far from complete. We are looking for additional interviewees who would like to share their memories of Brewster. Also, we are hoping to recruit volunteers who would act as interviewers.

If you would like to become part of this Oral History Project, please call Sue Marcus at 508-896-8228.



Book Discussion Group

The Book Discussion Group meets on the second Tuesday of each month and is open to all. Simply read the selected book and be willing to share your thoughts with others.

March 14	1:00 pm	<i>Lost in the Forest</i> by Sue Miller
April 11	1:00 pm	<i>Gilead</i> by Marilynne Robinson
May 9	1:00 pm	<i>Never Let Me Go</i> by Kazuo Ishiguro
June 13	1:00 pm	<i>The Great Gatsby</i> by F. Scott Fitzgerald



Publication Notes

- This issue marks the last issue to be edited by Mary Ducharme. Mary started doing the layout of the *Library Update* in February of 2000. Since September of 2005, Mary has been serving as both the editor and the layout staff. As I reviewed the last six years of the *Library Update*, I can see what an immense contribution she has made to this publication. I also want to personally thank Mary for her willingness to share her insight and professional expertise as we worked on the publication of my first three issues of the *Library Update*.
Thank you, Mary.
- The June issue of *Library Update* will be combined with the publication of the Library's *Annual Report* published in early July. The format will be similar to that of the *Annual Report*. This is being done to avoid the redundancy of the content found in both publications due to the close proximity of the publication dates and it will also provide some cost savings.

Book Sale Room

The not-to-be-missed **Book Sale Room** is located on the lower level of the Library. It is open when the Annual Book Sale event is not in operation, or from early September through mid- July. One can find several hundred "slightly used" books and videos, restocked on a weekly basis. The offerings can be readily browsed by topic, including: biography, travel, mysteries, history, gardening, cooking, children's, etc.! Each item is tagged with its' price and all proceeds directly benefit the Library.

Health Education Series

A series of intriguing health education talks will be held at the Library on Tuesday evening's beginning in April. A sampling of the topics includes:

Laugh and the Whole World Laughs with You

Medications: Prescription, Over-the-Counter, and Herbal

What Your Mother Never Told You about Posture

Caring for Parents and Children at the Same Time: Something I Never Anticipated

Looking Good, Feeling Good – Inside and Out

Funding for these programs has been provided by Elder Services of Cape Cod and the Islands. All programming is being coordinated through the Brewster Council on Aging.

Details regarding specific dates/times will be forthcoming on the Library's website (<http://www.brewsterladieslibrary.org/>) or by calling 508-896-2737.

Children's Programs

Ongoing Events

Story Hour - ages 2 -5 - Wednesdays at 10 a.m.
Stories, songs, crafts and a snack

Toddler Time – ages birth to 3- Fridays at 10 a.m.
Stories, free play and a snack

Monthly Craft Programs – ages 5 and up - Tuesdays at 4 p.m. Sign- up requested.

March 14 Luck of the Irish craft program

April 1 Spring craft program

May 9 Mother's Day craft program

Teen Programs

The homepage on the computers located in the Teen Room is set to the website entitled *My Own Café* (myowncafe.org) which is a teen website created by the Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Library System with funding from federal grants and administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. *My Own Café* is a place where teens can find out what other teens in nearby communities are talking about, listening to, reading, playing, watching and doing. It is also a place to post and find information and to get help with research.

Award-Winning Children's Literature

To some, the first sign of spring is a crocus blooming or the start of baseball's spring training. To children's book lovers it is National Library Week (April 2-8) and the awarding of the Caldecott and Newbery medals for excellence in Children's Literature.

The Caldecott medal, named for illustrator Randolph Caldecott, is awarded annually by the American Library Association to the artist of the most distinguished American picture book for children. This year's winner is *The Hello, Goodbye Window*, illustrated by Chris Rascha and written by Norton Juster. This is the story of everyday love and a little girl's visit to Grandma and Grandpa's house.

The Newbery medal, named for bookseller John Newbery, is also awarded annually by the American Library Association for the most distinguished contribution to American Literature for children. This year's winner is *Criss Cross* by Lynne Rae Perkins. The book follows the lives of four 14 year olds in a small town on their own crossroads. Using a variety of styles including song lyrics, haiku and prose, this is a book in which nothing happens and yet everything happens.

Check out the library displays during the month of April for all the books which received the Caldecott and Newbery medals.

Please consider donating books, videos, audiotapes, CD's and DVD's to the **Annual Book Sale** which will begin on the first Monday of August or August 7th this year. The deadline for donations will be July 15th as all materials need to be processed for the sale. This is the largest annual fund-raising event for the Library and we are dependent on your donations! Thank you.

Dates to Remember

March 11	9:00am – 3:00 pm	Family Fun Fair at Nauset Middle School. Sponsored by the Cape Cod Children’s Place. Look for the Librarian’s table and make a bookmark to receive a free book.
March 11	1:00 pm	Petticoats at Sea: a storyteller’s performance about 19 th century women’s life at sea. Family program.
March 18	9:00 am	Green Eggs and Ham Pancake Breakfast. The Cat in the Hat will visit and Dr. Seuss will read his favorite story. Sign-up requested.
March 28	7:00 pm	Claire Cook author of <i>Must Love Dogs</i>
April 1	1:00 pm	America’s First Ladies of the Opera a mediated presentation by Dr. Norman Reiss (Director, Cape Cod Opera)

“Brewster in Bloom” Library Events

April 28	2:00 pm	Springtime gardening program – presented by the Cape Cod Cooperative Extension
April 29	2:00 pm	Children’s sing-a-long with Cathy Weidhaas
April 30	Noon – 5:00 pm	Library Open House w/ refreshments
	3:00 pm	Nauset High School Honors Chorus

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