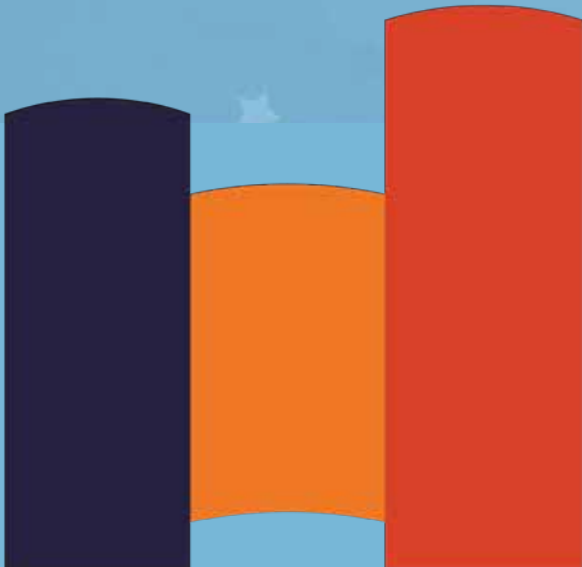


#HPL250



250 YRS
**HARTFORD
PUBLIC
LIBRARY**



“The Library is really the heart and soul of the social services in the city, it’s the heart and soul of who we are as a city. I think that we have the best library in the United States, and I have faith that this library will continue to evolve, continue to grow and continue to be on the cutting edge of libraries nationally.”

Hartford Mayor Arunan Arulampalam

250

YEARS



In 1774, the Hartford Library Company was formed and offered its subscribers access to over 700 books, an impressive collection for the time.

And now, 250 years later, Hartford Public Library continues to offer access to impressive collections and is a leader in defining the urban library experience in the 21st century.

Community is at the heart of HPL. Helping people connect to information and opportunities is our foundational value and continues to underpin all of HPL's programming and services.

The spirit of innovation continues today through unique programs and experiences featuring The American Place, the Digital Library Lab, HPL Studios, YOUmedia and the ArtWalk, with more to come.

HPL is a critical component of Hartford's social, cultural, educational and economic infrastructure. Our community trusts and relies on our passionate, dedicated and talented staff who ensure that HPL creates barrier-free access to services and information—for all.

Here's to 250 years. We're just getting started.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Bryant S. Quinn".

Cover: Celebrating HPL's milestone year are (from left) Wanda Seldon, HPL board member Patsy L. Mundy and Violette Haldane.





A BRIEF HISTORY OF HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY'S HISTORY spans 250 years. We can trace its very beginnings to the Library Company, organized in 1774. Started by a group of city leaders, its roster included the names of: Jonathan Brace, Jeremiah Wadsworth, Daniel Wadsworth, George Bull, Elisha Colt, Theodore Dwight, George Goodwin, Chaunev Goodrich and Thomas Y. Seymour.

The Library Company served as a subscription company and opened with some 700 books. The library's Hartford History Center holds the original handwritten catalog dated 1795, the first published catalog dated 1797 and more than half of the original 700 volumes. The Library Company flourished into the early 1800s. It changed its name to the Hartford Library Company in 1799 and met in the Grammar School House, once located



where the east end of the Municipal Building is today. Its first librarian was Solomon Porter, a Yale graduate and principal of the Grammar School.

In 1838, Henry Barnard, a distinguished educator, rallied a group of young men together interested in providing a venue for lectures and debate. So began the Young Men's Institute, later chartered as the Hartford Young Men's Institute, a private association. The Hartford Young Men's Institute invited Hartford Library Company subscribers to join with them, offering them lifetime memberships. Library



*Catalogue of the Books belonging
to Hartford Library Company.*

<i>History & Travels.</i>	<i>N^o. of Vol.</i>	<i>N^o. of each Volume.</i>
<i>Beloe's Herodotus</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1 @ 4</i>
<i>Buchanans History of Scotland . .</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>5 @ 6</i>
<i>Bruce's Travels</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7 @ 12</i>
<i>Boussingault's Travels</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>13</i>

company members agreed and brought to the Young Men's Institute their collection, one that had blossomed from 700 books in 1774 to 3,000 volumes in 1838.

In 1843, Daniel Wadsworth offered the Young Men's Institute a stake in what he hoped would become the cultural center of Hartford. Members accepted and, in 1844, the Young Men's Institute moved into the new Wadsworth Atheneum, eventually sharing space with the fine arts gallery, the Watkinson Library, the Connecticut Historical Society and the Hartford Art School. In 1875, the Young Men's In-





stitute hired Caroline Hewins as its head librarian. She was 29 years old. She held the position for 51 years, until her death in 1926.

The Young Men's Institute's lecture series was well attended. Guest lecturers included Oliver Wendell Holmes, Horace Greeley, Dr. Horace Bushnell, Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Samuel Clemens, Charles Dudley Warner and Ralph Waldo Emerson. But, by the late 1870s, the popularity of a lecture series began to diminish and the institute noted: "We have a library, not an institute; its members are, at





least half of them, ladies; and the men belonging are old as well as young; being therefore, not alone for the young, not alone for men, and not an institute but a library, it seemed time to call it by its right name." In 1878, the private institution applied for a name change and became the Hartford Library Association.

By the late 1800s, the people of Hartford recognized the need for a free public library. An agreement was struck between Atheneum occupants about property ownership and a request for funds went





out to city residents so that the building could be modified with a new library wing added to the back of the original structure. Funds were also needed to pay for the ongoing maintenance of what was to become a new public literary and fine arts center.

More than 2,000 people donated money to the Atheneum expansion project. Hartford native Junius Morgan pledged \$100,000 from London; his son, J.P. Morgan, pledged \$50,000 from New York; other large donors included Lucy Morgan Goodwin and her sons J.J. Goodwin and the Rev. Francis





Goodwin; the Keney brothers; and, Hartford banker Roland Mather. Contributions were made by the employees of Colt's; Sigourney Tool; Case, Lockwood and Brainard Co.; Atlantic Screw Works; and, many other city factories. School children contributed nickels and dimes – the complete list of donors, printed in the April 1, 1890 issue of The Hartford Courant, showed West Middle School kindergarteners contributing \$2.90.

Within two years from the start of the campaign, the city raised an amazing \$406,000. More amazing still, all was collected except for \$145. On September 15, 1892, with the city appropriating tax monies





for free library service, the doors of the new public library were opened.

On the first day, 388 names were registered; by day ten, 2,160 names were entered. According to the library's 1893 annual report, 101 people were counted as waiting at one time to borrow a book in the first month of the library's opening. On May 3, 1893, by a special act of the general assembly, the library's name was formally changed to Hartford Public Library (HPL). The library today operates under the original charter granted to the Hartford Young Men's Institute in 1839, with subsequent amendments. Seventy percent of

the library's operating costs now come from city appropriation.

Today, Hartford Public Library's Downtown Library sits a stone throw from where the Library Company first began. From the Grammar School to the Wadsworth Atheneum, to the move to 500 Main Street in the 1950s; and today, with the expansion of its branch system and Downtown renovations, HPL stands firmly at the forefront of redefining the urban library experience in the 21st century. ■



BOOKS THROUGH TIME

250 YEARS OF READING

View the digital
exhibit:



tinyurl.com/3sdm4xmt



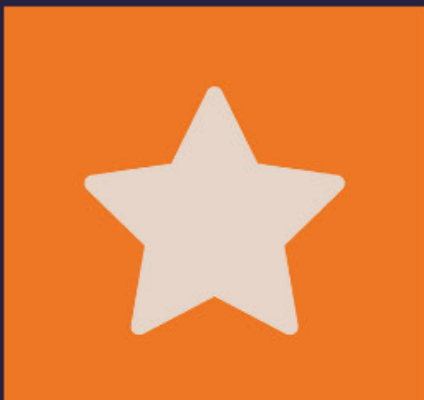
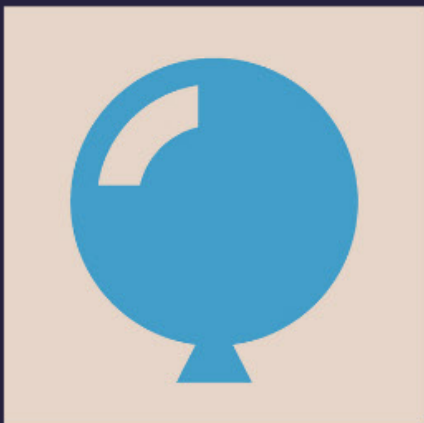
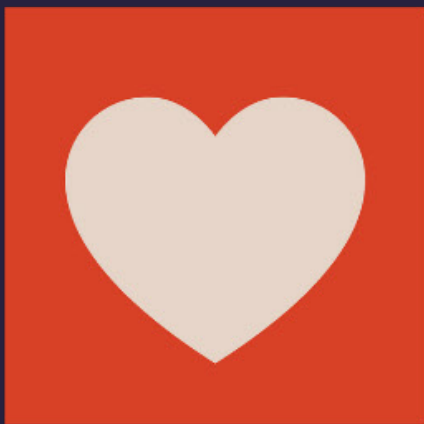
250 YRS
HARTFORD
PUBLIC
LIBRARY



HAPPY BIRTHDAY



HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY 250 YEARS





**COMING
SOON**

HPL 250th Scavenger Hunt

In celebration of the Hartford Public Library's 250th anniversary, you are invited to participate in a scavenger hunt that highlights notable attractions, events, and people throughout the city.

Use the card below to guide you through the activity. When you finish, visit any of our branch locations to enter for a chance to win a grand prize! See more details on the back.

Come and join the hunt!

Submit completed cards by August 17, 2024 to an HPL branch location to become eligible for a chance to win grand prizes of \$100 and \$50 gift cards.

You can find the clues for each location on the back of this card.

1 Ancient Burying Ground	2 Frederick Douglass Historical Marker (Corner of Main & Gold Sts)	3 Visit Campfield Branch Library (Find historic photo displayed in window)	4 Visit Downtown Library (Find historic photo displayed in window)
5 Connecticut State Capitol Grounds	6 Visit Park Branch Library (Find historic photo displayed in window)	7 Monument to the Puerto Rican Family (Corner of Vernon & Washington Sts)	8 Visit Ropkins Branch Library (Find historic photo displayed in window)
9 29th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry Regiment Memorial (Entrance of Old North Cemetery)	10 Bushnell Memorial (Trinity St side)	11 Bushnell Park (Corning Fountain)	12 Visit Barbour Branch Library (Find historic photo displayed in window)
13 Visit Dwight Branch Library (Find historic photo displayed in window)	14 Visit Albany Branch Library (Find historic photo displayed in window)	15 Wadsworth Atheneum (Front door facing Main St)	16 Circus Fire Memorial (Behind the Wish School at 350 Barbour St)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Contact info: _____

Here's how to win!

1. Visit the locations found on the front of the card.
2. Answer all questions below for the corresponding locations.
3. Once complete, visit any branch location to verify answers and win a prize.

All completed cards will also be entered into a drawing for grand prizes of \$100 and \$50 gift cards. Please submit completed cards by August 17, 2024 to an HPL branch location to become eligible.

Visit locations on the front of this card to answer the corresponding numbered questions below.

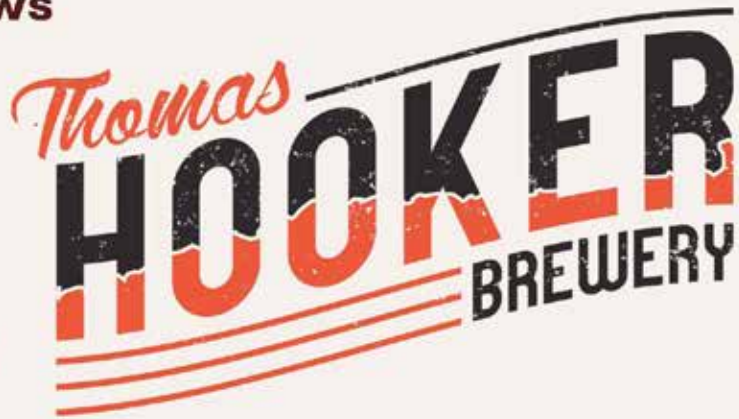
- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Name one of the "African Americans presumed to have been buried here." | 9. How many members of the regiment are known to be buried in Old North Cemetery? |
| 2. When did Frederick Douglass give his first speech in Hartford? | 10. Who is the statue of by the West Stage entrance door? |
| 3. What was the name of the Hartford baseball team pictured here? | 11. Who were the city's first inhabitants? |
| 4. What Hartford landmark is shown in the photo? | 12. Name the game being played in the photo. |
| 5. The cannon is from what civil war battle? | 13. Where is the trolley headed? |
| 6. What cultural heritage is being celebrated in the photo? | 14. What cultural heritage is being celebrated in the photo? |
| 7. What musical instrument is shown in the sculpture? | 15. Who was Commissary General of the American Forces in the War of Independence? |
| 8. What Hartford landmark is shown in the photo? | 16. On what date did the Circus Fire Memorial open? |

save the date
SEPTEMBER 19, 2024

CHEERS TO

250 YEARS OF HPL

with **Books & Brews**



\$15

**NEW PRODUCT
ALERT!**

Show your love for HPL with our new tote!
Use it for your HPL haul, a picnic in one of
Hartford's lovely parks or your weekly grocery run.

Available now at your favorite HPL Branch.



100% cotton tote with a gusset bottom and reinforced handles

Thank you!

HPL is seeking 250 donors for the 250 Challenge!



DONATE HERE

To pledge, contact
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groncari@hplct.org

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Donna and Samuel Stout
Deidre and Frank Tavera
Alexandra Wahl
John Wirzbicki

**as of 4/30/24*





Caroline M. Hewins, Librarian of the Hartford Public Library from 1875-1926, was a pioneer in the development of the children's book field. Her death occurred in 1926. The Horn Book, Inc. is publishing "Caroline M. Hewins, Her Book."

First LADY of the LIBRARY

CONTINUING THE LEGACY OF CAROLINE HEWINS

THIS FALL, HPL will publish a book of its own, a children's picture book dedicated to the life and work of Hartford Librarian Caroline M. Hewins. Written by HPL Public Services Director Marie Jarry and illustrated by Natalie Curtis, a Library Assistant at the Camp Field Branch, the colorful children's book documents Hewins' life and her work in Hartford.

Under Hewins' stewardship, HPL went from a private subscription association to a free public library. Hewins forged relationships with the city's public schools and laid the foundation for

dedicated children's collections and services in public libraries across the country. She was the first woman to speak on the floor of the American Library Association Conference and the first woman to receive an honorary degree, in 1911, from Trinity College, then an all-male school.

"I was introduced to Caroline Hewins when I came on board as the Director of Youth and Family Services in 2016. After learning about her life and work, I thought to myself, 'somebody has to write a book about Caroline to celebrate her accomplishments,'" said Jarry.



THE POWER OF COLLABORATION

A staff meeting to plan events for the Library's 250th anniversary made Jarry's dream possible. The Public Services Director proposed writing a children's picture book about Caroline Hewins as a way to commemorate the 250-year milestone.

"I thought a picture book in tribute to Caroline would be a perfect addition to the 250th festivities," said Jarry, a former second grade teacher and children's librarian. "I have read lots of picture books to children over my career and always dreamed of writing my own. This was the perfect opportunity to make that dream a reality."

Writing the book took Jarry a little over a year. Once done, she began her search for an illustrator. She didn't need to look far. HPL attracts talented

staff and Natalie Curtis, a Library Assistant at HPL with a background in art and illustration, eagerly agreed to collaborate.

"I majored in animation throughout college, but I also minored in art history. I've always had an interest in library, museum and archival work, so I ended up applying to many libraries and museums in the area after I graduated. At the time, I did not feel quite ready or qualified to enter into the extremely competitive and fast-paced animation industry," said Curtis. "I was extremely excited for the opportunity to work for HPL - first as a floater, then as Camp Field's part time assistant, and finally as Camp Field's full-time assistant. I think that, in a lot of ways, my technology/digital design skills can be very useful within the library space, so I am glad to have found a happy medium between my two interests and skillsets."

INSPIRING OTHERS

“Caroline accomplished things that people thought were not possible at that time. I hope they come away knowing that persistence and belief pay off. I also hope they realize what an important part Caroline and HPL played in the development of Library services to children,” said Jarry.

“I hope that readers can see a bit of themselves in Caroline and take to heart her endless perseverance, kindness and determination to do good in the world. She was an incredible role model and library advocate — one that I know our readers can look up to,” said Curtis.



Marie Jarry

WHAT TO EXPECT

The picture book tells the life story of Caroline M. Hewins, from her youth in Roxbury, MA as a bookish child to the founding of a scholarship in her name for people who plan to specialize in library work with children.

FALL LAUNCH

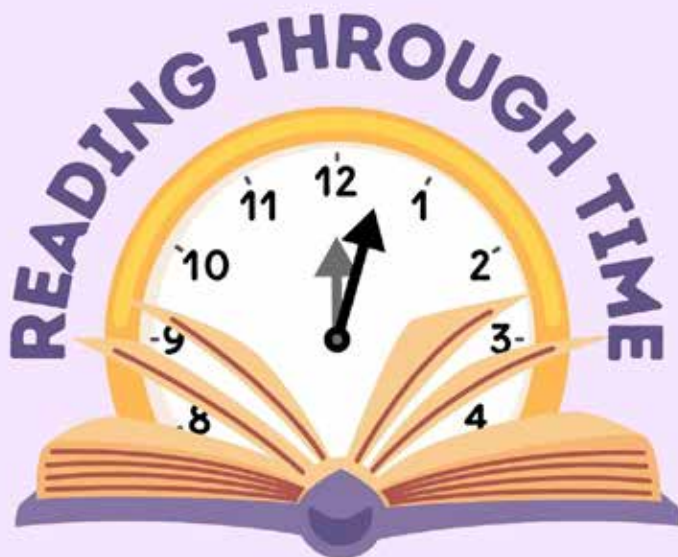
Caroline Hewins: First Lady of the Library will be out this fall! A book launch is planned for early October. ■



Natalie Curtis

Saturday, June 1st

*save
the date*



Summer learn kickoff and
250th Anniversary Parade

Save the Date!

11.7

Hartford Public Library
takes you

beyond words



connecticut museum
of culture and history

CONNECTICUT'S BOOK SHELF

*Books you know
Stories you don't*

On view through
October 13, 2024



PLAN
YOUR VISIT



ALSO ON VIEW:

We're Game! Sports and Community | through July 14, 2024

One Elizabeth Street, Hartford, CT | 860-236-5621 | connecticutmuseum.org



REFLECTING ON
250 YEARS OF
SERVING AS A
BEACON OF
CULTURE,
EDUCATION, AND
COMMUNITY
CONNECTION.



250 YRS
HARTFORD
PUBLIC LIBRARY



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GENERAL COUNSEL

250

YEARS

“It has been an honor to be part of the Library’s 250th anniversary committee, whose task it was to build programming and celebrations to recognize this special milestone - our 250th anniversary. Throughout the last year of planning, we thought of the best ways to get the community involved in such a remarkable achievement. A Library system that is older than the country itself, in a city that is celebrating its own 400-year anniversary in 2035. It has been extraordinary to be part of the planning for such a significant event in our city’s, and state’s, history.

“Now I look forward to seeing many of you at the many upcoming events this year. And I also look forward to Hartford Public Library growing and evolving in the future. My hope is that the Library will be a beacon of light in the community for generations to come, that it will be a model urban library.”

David Barrett, HPL Board Chair



Library Card (A Persona Poem)

On the occasion of the 125th anniversary of the opening of the Hartford Public Library, 1893. For Caroline Maria Hewins, "First Lady of the Library."

For you. . .for everyone. . .for anyone in this community:

Factory worker, immigrant, refugee, student, child;
laborer, cook, mother; whatever your day off, whatever your sabbath;
without regard to age, gender, color,
previous condition of servitude.

There is no charge for you to join this special club.

Imagine. . .All these words and stories, all these worlds: For you.

Each day of the week. . .this card is your passport.

Your word is all the bond you need

to hold, to hear, to read, to touch a book;

to share (with someone special)

a song, poem, picture, vision: a world.

Worlds wheeling within worlds: a healing, a common wealth.

Coda:

We come together
as those who gathered before us,
for the common good,
for all.

We come together in fellowship.

We commune in this common room, around this common table.

— Kate Rushin

This poem's first public reading was delivered at Hartford Public Library's Beyond Words Fundraising Event on December 7th, 2018.

PHOTO CAPTIONS

PAGES 4-5

HPL President & CEO, Bridget E. Quinn, leads story time during the pandemic, 2020

PAGES 6-7

TOP LEFT: Library staff at the Wadsworth.

TOP RIGHT: Catalogue of Books , Hartford Library Company, 1795.

BOTTOM LEFT: Hartford Public Library, 1927.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Children studying at Blue Hills Branch. Hartford Times photo by Wayne Carter. March 25, 1971.

PAGES 8-9

TOP LEFT: Camp Field Library, June 15, 1937

TOP RIGHT: Florence Yoder.

BOTTOM LEFT: Librarian Elizabeth Angelo reaches for a book, 1951.

BOTTOM CENTER: Bookmobile, 1920s.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Drive-up window at the Downtown Library.

PAGES 10-11

TOP LEFT: Conchita Gonzalez, the part time assistant librarian at the Park Street branch of the Hartford Public Library, leading mask making activity, 1979. Donated by Lucy Fuentes.

TOP RIGHT: "Two youngsters look into the new Hartford Public Library branch that will be opening soon (pronta apertura) in the city's North End. The Ropkins branch, which was burned out during civil disturbances 10 years ago, will feature books on black heritage and Hispanic culture." Hartford Courant photo by Michael McAndrews, March 18, 1979.

BOTTOM LEFT: Park Branch Library. Donated by Lucy Fuentes.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Library window display.

PAGE 12

"Louise Cote find the soon-to-close Dwight Branch Library a cozy place to relax and study." March 14, 1971, Hartford Times photo by Ellery G. Kington.



250 YRS
HARTFORD
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

500 Main Street
Hartford, CT 06103



250 YRS
HARTFORD
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

in your neighborhood

- 1** DOWNTOWN LIBRARY
500 Main Street
- 2** ALBANY LIBRARY
1250 Albany Avenue
- 3** BARBOUR LIBRARY
261 Barbour Street
- 4** BOUNDLESS LIBRARY @ RAWSON
260 Holcomb Street
- 5** BOUNDLESS LIBRARY @ WEST MIDDLE
44 Niles Street
- 6** CAMP FIELD LIBRARY
30 Campfield Avenue
- 7** DWIGHT LIBRARY
7 New Park Avenue
- 8** PARK STREET LIBRARY @ THE LYRIC
603 Park Street
- 9** ROPKINS LIBRARY
1750 Main Street