

Friends of The Ferguson Library, Inc.

Historic Timeline

**From the beginning
January 15, 1979**

Friends of The Ferguson Library, Inc.

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Preface

Although incorporated in January 1979, by the Trustees of the Library, and a board of directors named in June of that year, the Friends of The Ferguson Library, Inc., was not announced in the press until April, 1980. By then a membership drive was well underway and the Book and Author Luncheon was to be The Friends' first major program.

The information for this historic timeline has been taken from the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors. While ten meetings are scheduled each fiscal year, included herein are only those meetings during which decisions having a long-term impact were made.

At times the origin of a program can be traced from the time the idea was first proposed such as Adopt-A-Book, the Book Store and the Literary Competition. Other programs appear in the minutes only after having been "in the works" for some time. For example, the Staff Development Fund was already established by a grant made to the Library when the Friends voted to add money to it in 1983. We later took over funding responsibility for the entire program. A program's demise, however, is not always recorded -- Literary Lions, for instance, just disappears from the minutes.

Some disparities are apparent. For instance, the method of counting membership has varied over the years and did not become consistent until our records were computerized.

This abbreviated timeline is written as an introduction to the Friends for new members of the Board of Directors. A more complete version is in the History binder and even greater detail can be obtained from the actual minutes of the meetings. All the binders are filed in the Friends office.

Updated April 2024

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Foreword

How the Friends were Founded

In writing for one of our early (1988) newsletters, our first president, June Fahey, wondered where the concept of Library Friends originated. She found that according to *Friends of the Library Handbook*, Sir Thomas Bodley, a diplomat under Queen Elizabeth I of England, formed a library for Oxford University. He inspired some of his “honorable friends” to donate books thus forming the concept of library benefaction. Many of our libraries today, including the Ferguson, were started by private individuals. The formation of “friends” for public libraries is fairly new (among the earliest to involve an entire community was Detroit in 1942).

According to Marie Hurley, a long-time director of the Ferguson Library, several attempts were made to establish such a group in Stamford, but the time never seemed right. It wasn't until 1977 when plans were being made for an addition to the building that a proposal was made to a reluctant Library Board of Trustees. With the encouragement of the new director, Ernest DiMattia, the Trustees agreed to appoint a committee to look into the feasibility of establishing a Friends organization.

The committee discovered that Friends groups varied according to community: Some merely straightened books on library shelves, others as was the case in Greenwich owned the library building. After a great deal of thought the Trustees decided the primary purpose of the Stamford organization would be “to encourage and promote community participation and involvement in the activities of the Ferguson Library” and signed incorporation papers on January 15, 1979. The first official “Friend” was attorney Sam Cross who drew up our By-Laws.

And the rest, as they say, is history.

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- 1976 – 1978 At the encouragement of the Library Director, Ernie Di Mattia, the Board of Trustees established the Friends of Ferguson Library and acted as its first Board of Directors.
- 01/15/1979 **Certificate of Incorporation** signed.
By Laws adopted.
- 06/18/1979 Officers ratified and committees appointed.
- 11/07/1979 **Book and Author** luncheon proposed by board member Sue Pinchot.
- 12/05/1979 **Bus trips** to Russia, Egypt, and China sponsored.
- 05/07/1980 **Membership year** will be October - September, not fiscal year.
Logo adopted: "Hands" -- green and one color.
- 09/25/1980 **Book and Author** lunch will be co-sponsored by *The Stamford Advocate*.
First **bank account** opened with \$8,000.
- 01/06/1981 **Lillian Moran Memorial** award created. To be given annually at **Book & Author luncheon** (April 28, 1981).
- 05/05/1981 **Money market fund** opened. Savings account closed.
- 09/08/1981 **Children's activities** planned to use "Fergie" the bookworm designed by Roy Doty as a logo.
- 12/08/1981 **Tax Exempt Status** form filed with IRS.
- 01/11/1982 First **newsletter** published.
- 03/08/1982 Library's **circulating art collection** receives first of many donations.
- 01/10/1983 Library **Staff Development** program (funded by a grant) receives the first of annual donations.
- 03/14/1983 **By Laws** revised.
- 11/14/1983 **Gift Shop** proposed to sell used books. Idea tabled.
- 08/13/1984 **Membership perk** --book bags - navy with green printing/handle.
Stationery will be melon color with print in green ink.
Postage - we will keep a mail log and reimburse Library.
- The Connecticut State Friends of Libraries organization **awarded** our Newsletter first prize for best content and format of large city libraries.
- 10/10/1984 **Archives** begun with purchase of scrap book.

10/08/1984 **Essay contest** proposed.

12/10/1984 First **Book Sale** to be in June.

02/11/1985 **Business Book & Author Breakfast** to be held in March.

04/08/1985 **Bought** two glass cases for \$700 for Library's Exhibit Gallery.

09/09/1985 **IRS report filed by auditor** because of our large cash balance.
Newsletter to be printed in Library.
Gift Shop again proposed.

10/07/1985 **Membership year** realigned to coincide with fiscal year (July – June).
Children's program sponsored.

01/13/1986 **Great Decisions** program sponsored.
Books for New Mothers program approved to distribute books through St. Joseph and Stamford Hospitals. (Formally initiated 10/86.)

02/10/1986 **Policy:** Literacy Volunteers request for cash donation denied. We are not a philanthropic organization.
Second used **Book Sale** to be in April.

03/10/1986 **Juried art show** will be held in conjunction with Stamford Art Association, May 25-June 28.
Children's Program to be sponsored April 6.

04/14/1986 **Books for Babies** (proposed as Books for New Mothers) estimated to cost \$5000 annually. We will sponsor but search for supplemental funding. The expense of computers for Literacy Volunteers will be shared with **IBM**.

November 24, 1985, Friends won the J. C. Penney Co. annual Golden Rule **award** competition for community service.

12/08/1986 **Gift Shop** approved. Will sell sweaters, bookmarks, notecards.

02/09/1987 First **Great Decisions** seminar held.

03/16/1987 **Portable projection screen** given to Library as a memorial to retiring founding directors.

05/04/1987 **Gift Shop** grand opening celebrated May 3.

10/05/1987 **Answering machine** purchased for Friends office.

11/09/1987 **Ferguson Foundation** to be given \$5,000.

12/14/1987 **Books for Babies** – we are receiving many requests from around the country on how to start such a program.

04/94/1988 **Received** \$4000 from **IBM** for computer.

05/08/1988 **Bequest** -- Received \$2,000 from estate of Sonia Maguire for **children's programs**.

10/03/1988 Joined FOLUSA (Friends of Libraries - U.S.A.), national association, and **FOCL** (Connecticut Friends Association).

11/14/1988 **By-Laws** revised.
Received grant from **IBM** for installation of Lotus software.

02/13/1989 **Membership perk:** Starting in March members to get 10% discount on purchases over \$10.

01/08/1990 **Policy:** Fund raising is not our primary raison d'etre, but a resource for our programs.

02/05/1990 **Policy:** Library helping Sierra Leone. Friends participated by donating books and paying for shipping (later became **Friend-to-Friend** program).

03/12/1990 **Bequest** -- Received \$10,000 from will of Rose Thielen.

05/14/1990 **Memorial:** Contribution to Library collection made in memory of deceased board member's husband (later becomes **Adopt-A-Book**).

09/10/1990 **Memorial:** Book given to Library in memory of deceased Board member establishes pattern for new **Adopt-A-Book** program (see 9/91).
Bus tours are still showing a profit.

11/09/1990 **Purchased printing press** (cost estimated at \$11,750) for Library.

01/14/1991 Board approved **\$12,000** for **plate maker for press** and haulage.
Purchased an Amish quilt for \$350 for Lending **Art Collection** display.

02/04/1991 \$23,400 given to **Library** for printing equipment and CD Rom hardware.

09/16/1991 **Memorial: Adopt-A-Book** is name given to memorial program.
Three new **membership** categories added at high end (\$500+). Yearly membership is counted from time of payment.
Literary Lions. monthly lunchtime talks by local authors initiated.

11/04/1991 **Poet's Voice:** Joined with six area libraries to bring a poet to perform.
Newsletter is now quarterly.

05/11/1992 **FOCL award:** Friends won in the large Friends category presented by State Library Liaison to Connecticut State Friends, Mary Engels.

10/19/1992 **Laser printer** purchased.

11/16/1992 **Gift Shop** renamed Used Book Store.
Purchased a laminating machine, children's room carpet and adult services table.

01/11/**1993** Books donated to Girls Club. This is precursor to the **Friend-to-Friend** re-donation program. See also 2/90.

03/22/1993 **Book Store:** Request for part-time clerical worker denied.

09/20/1993 **Children's Room** Main Library. We gave \$5,000 for shelving.

11/15/1993 **Book Store** will expand into Library's newspaper wing in Spring.

10/17/**1994** **Bus tours** are still making money. **Literary Lions** phasing out.

05/07/**1996** Gift of **purple bus** to Library (cost \$58,000 to be delivered in January).

09/03/1996 **Literary Competition** will include Darien, New Canaan and Greenwich. **Bus** exterior design reviewed.

11/18/1996 **Book Shop:** Book nook will be added in January.

02/10/**1997** **Board Handbook** being written.

03/10/1997 New computer installed.

05/12/1997 During April and May 1,050 children were transported to the library on the **purple bus**.

12/02/1997 **South End Branch:** Donated \$400 for refreshments at opening of **South End** Library 12/04.

04/13/**1998** Participating in **Reading Aloud** program for seniors at Tandet Center.

08/31/1998 **Reach Out and Read** – participation in this pediatric literacy program approved.

10/06/1998 **Adopt-A-Book** reorganized.

11/09/1998 **Parade Balloon:** Spent \$5000 for Library balloon to be used in the November 22 Stamford parade.

02/08/**1999** **Book Store** to move when Starbucks opens in a corner of the Library. **Bus trips** will be stopped, participation dwindled, no longer profitable.

11/08/1999 **Book Store at TOR** approved

03/13/**2000** **Book Store at HBB** (formerly TOR) opened two weeks ago.

06/12/2000 **Book Store** is now the main provider of funds for our programs. Previously membership and bus trips were.

10/13/2000 **FOULSA**, in a recent article, credited us with the creation of **Books for Babies** program in 1986.

05/14/2001 Purchased **SoundWaters tile** in permanent recognition of Friends in community.

07/13/2001 **Great Decisions** and **Yakira Frank programs** in jeopardy due to lack of attendance.

09/10/2001 **Yakira Frank lectures** will not be funded in fiscal year 2001-2002.
The United Way gave an **award** to the Friends for its Books for Babies Project.

01/14/2002 **Library Collection** to receive an additional \$25,000 because of City budget cut.

05/13/2002 **By Laws** revised.

08/01/2002 **B&A Luncheon** -- Special Executive Committee meeting to discuss structure and future.

09/09/2002 **Web site** designed, but not implemented.

12/09/2002 New **logo** proposed (sketch of Library pediment/columns in light blue). Our **Web site** featured on Library's home page.

01/13/2003 **Books for Babies:** Lost source of books. Although books are being delivered to hospital, their further distribution to new mothers is in question.
New **logo** and colors approved.

02/10/2003 **Book Store:** Approved paid part time clerk to coordinate schedules for store volunteers.

06/09/2003 Friends received two **awards:**
 "Outstanding Friend" in the over 25,000 population category from FOCL (Friends of Connecticut Libraries), and
 "Retailer of the Year" from the Downtown Special Services District.
Book Store HBB branch expanded through purchase of new shelves.
Membership strategy revised to hold one annual drive in September reflecting calendar year membership.
Reach Out and Read distributed 2700 books this fiscal year through the Goldstein Children's Health Center.

10/13/2003 **Web site** has three e-mail boxes: Volunteers, store, events,

11/13/2003 **Friend-to-Friend:** To date we have re-donated 8000 books to 17 agencies some in Russia and the South Pacific via the Peace Corps.
Books for Babies delivery and distribution system has broken down. We are reassessing our options.

- 12/08/2003 **Donations** -- obituary of Thomas Hume, former President of Ferguson Board of Trustees, in *Stamford Advocate* stated in lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Friends.
Revised **By Laws**.
- 02/09/2004 **Art exhibits** and **Great Decisions** mentioned in the Connecticut section of *The New York Times*.
- 03/08/2004 **Adopt-A-Book** –program will be folded under the already existing Library program for memorial donations.
Great Decisions – we will continue funding but move administration of program to Library staff.
Art exhibits program suspended. Renovation of main library expected to close auditorium.
- 04/12/2004 **Permanent record** binders created: Legal Documents, History, By Laws, Board Procedures, Book Shop Procedures and Fiscal Year Record Book for both Board of Directors and Book Shop Committee.
- 05/10/2004 **Book & Author** Luncheon and 25th Anniversary of **Friends** celebrations to be combined. New format: One author, interview type.
Books for Babies was suspended this year. New brochure, books planned.
- 09/13/2004 **By Laws** revised.
Literary Competition to be limited to Stamford students next year. Regional events are counter to our mission.
- 10/11/2004 Usage of framed **art collection** (16 per month) is not compelling in Stamford (population 100,000). Discussion tabled on whether art should be sold as part of collectible sale and new art purchased.
- 11/08/2004 **Books for Babies** back on track. Overstock of books from previous program distributed through South End free to those with babies under one year.
Book Stores: Use of credit cards discussed. Purchase of cash register approved.
The scholarship program was re-worded to place more emphasis on courses that will enhance ability of staff to help Library.
- 01/10/2005 **Web site** updated to provide linkage to forms.
- 03/14/2005 **Reach Out & Read** – continued participation in question.
- 04/11/2005 **Book & Author** – As this event brings the Friends and the Library into the public eye, it was decided to carry it as an expense on our books.
- 05/09/2005 **Book Store:** *Connecticut Family Magazine* named the main book shop as one of the 50 coolest places in Connecticut.

06/13/2005 Voted to **fund library programs at 100%** rather than our traditional 75%.

10/10/2005 Three-year improvement plan at the **MB book shop** is complete. Additional construction necessary at the **HB shop**. Betsy Levinson, new member, offered to fund this at \$10,000 through her family's foundation. **UConn** Graduate School of Business is performing a study of the used book market using us as a model.

12/12/2005 **Ferguson Foundation** --Board approved a \$5000 donation.

02/14/2006 **Passport Office** --Gifted cart and \$200 for books and games.

04/13/2006 **Weed & Hollander** Memorial Branch -- Board approved gift of **\$50,000** to furnish the children's room.

06/12/2006 **Friends Office** has been enlarged and new furniture provided by the Library. Friends presented a \$2,000 check to the Library President to use at his discretion for **staff recognition**.

11/13/2006 **Work Hours** that Friends devote to Friends/Library will be recorded retroactive to July. **Strategic Planning** meetings start. **Information Technology** committee to interview software vendors. **Membership perk:** 10% discount at Starbucks shop in main Library.

02/12/2007 Weekly **phone monitoring was** instituted.

03/12/2007 **Book & Author** luncheon cancelled for Spring 2007 as no author has been signed on.

Technology: Software purchased: Volgistics, Donor Perfect, and Constant Contact. Hardware purchased: color laser Printer.

05/14/2007 **Mission statement** revised to "Its mission is to promote community support for the priorities, programs and activities of the Ferguson Library."

06/11/2007 **Collection enhancement** – gave \$20,000 to Library. Voted to sell paintings and prints in the **art lending collection** and give proceeds to Library.

09/10/2007 An **electronic newsletter** rotating among Board President, Book Shop Manager, Volunteer Coordinator and Friend-to-Friend chairman started. Printed quarterly newsletters discontinued.

10/08/2007 **Granted** Ferguson Foundation **\$50,000 to support Library's materials collection.**

- 11/12/2007 **Policy:** No proxy voting.
Friend-to-Friend: “Adopted” Stamford native serving at clinic in Iraq – sending monthly boxes of books.
Memberships now accepted on-line.
- 12/10/2007 **Community participation:** Children’s book sale held in April on lawn of Weed by Springdale 8th grader as his community service project.
Art collection being disbanded. Prints to be sold at Foundation Gala.
- 02/11/2008 **Community participation:** Middle schooler at K-LH-T chose as his community service project the collection of books, DVDs, etc., for our Book Shops.
IT Committee established to train board members on computer use. Credit card transactions can be entered directly into a database.
- 03/10/2008 **Policy:** To solve the problem of duplicate solicitations for membership, large donors will automatically be given membership.
Procedure: A person need not be a board member to work with the Friends board/committees.
Purchased computer and printer for Book Shop.
- 04/14/2008 **Bequest:** Andrew Gale, who has had a paid membership for many years, left the Friends a bequest in his will. The will must go to Probate.
Literary Competition: Xerox moved out of Stamford causing us to lose their usual \$5000 grant to this program.
Book and Author Luncheon: *The Stamford Advocate* has been sold and will no longer co- sponsor The Book & Author Luncheon.
- 06/09/2008 **Budget** -- \$60,000 from this year’s budget put into reserve to be given to the Library next fall when Board decides how to designate its use.
- 06/19/2008 Emergency Executive Committee (of both those in office until 6/30 and those to take office 07/01) meeting called to discuss the possibility of paying a person to direct the activities of the **Book Shops**.
- 09/08/2008 **Book Store** management – Book store volunteer hired as independent contractor primarily to handle Collectible Sale. \$4000 approved to purchase POS system for stores subject to feasibility study
- 03/09/2009 The Andrew **Gale bequest** appears to be a large one. His sister, who is contesting the will, has died. Discussion of naming film series “The Andrew Gale Film Series” or naming the auditorium for him is under consideration.
Letter and petition signed by 16 HB volunteers objected to Friends paying \$5000 for balloon in DSSD Parade.
- 06/08/2009 Andrew **Gale’s** niece named new executor of his estate.
- 09/14/2009 Received \$3000 **donation** from Purdue Pharma.

10/12/2009 **Investment Committee** formed to handle Gale bequest.

The name of Book Shop changed to **Friends Book Shop at Ferguson Library**.
Proposal made to change Book Shop’s mission statement from:
“Rescue and re-circulate books in our community, sell quality used books at modest prices, and provide unsold books free to community institutions” to “We sell quality used books at reasonable prices to provide financial support for the mission of the Friends of Ferguson Library.”
Contract signed with BASIL for POS (point of sale) system for shops.

11/09/2009 Friends gave \$40,000 **gift to Library**.

12/14/2009 Mutual Distribution Agreement for **Gale estate** estimated at 1.4 million signed.
New mission statement for **Book Shop** adopted.
Logo committee for Book Shop working with Perkins Eastman design firm.
Move into new space for shop December 9 and 10.

01/11/2010 \$1500 bonus voted on for **Book Shop** Manager.
\$1000 given to Library for HB branch anniversary celebration.

02/08/2010 New manager for **HB Shop** appointed.
Collectible Sale in main Shop suspended for three months.
Fairfield County Community Foundation selected as **investment** management firm for Gale estate.
Revised **By Laws**, which include Investment Committee, distributed.

03/08/2010 Several hundred books were delivered by **Friend-to-Friend** to American Friends of Kenya.
First distribution of \$450,000 received from **Gale estate**.
Policy: Spending Policy approved.

04/12/2010 **Policy:** Refund Policy amended to abolish all refunds on media in the shops.

05/10/2010 New **logos** for Friends and Book Shop approved.
Book Shop announced their committee is permanently stopping the Collectible Sale.
Investment: \$250,000 invested with FCCF.

06/14/2010 At end of fiscal year 1,898 books for babies donated, membership is at 504 (down 3.5% from last year), 17 matching grants received (6 less than last year).

09/13/2010 **Book Shop**, main - Point of Sale (Basil) system installed during summer.
New **LOGOs** designed for Friends and Book Shop
Legal name, Friends of The Ferguson Library, Inc., to be used in future.

10/11/2010 **Logo for Book Shop** accepted.

- 12/13/2010 \$956,000 to date from **Gale estate** invested with the Fairfield County Foundation.
- 01/10/2011 **Compensation** committee appointed to develop system for organized approach to paying employee (Book Shop Manager).
- 02/14/2011 **Friend to Friend** program eliminated after unsuccessful attempt to locate chairman.
Friends Conference Room (bubble room outside Friends Office) to be dedicated to Andrew Gale, and a biography written for distribution at movie series sponsored in his name.
- 03/14/2011 **Author Series** created from Book & Author Luncheon to be sponsored four to six times during fiscal year. Commercial bookstore to sell books.
- 05/09/2011 First **Author Series** meeting held May 12th, charged \$15, commercial book shop sold books. We earned \$4,000+.
- 06/15/2011 **Investment and Library Donations:**
Final total from Gale estate is \$1,056,577. Of this \$200,000 was given to the Library. In addition \$20,000 from Fairfield County Community Foundation received and given to Library. Long term bond with Morgan Stanley sold for \$40,000. \$20,000 of this was given to the Library and \$20,000 put into reserve for Library for next fiscal year. In addition to the cost of Library Programs (\$173,564) a total of \$75,238 was donated to the Library this fiscal year:
As of June 30th
- | | | |
|------------------------------|----|----------------|
| Cash balance | \$ | 92,592 |
| Deposited to FCCF | | 856,577 |
| Net FCCF investment activity | | 77,718 |
| Morgan Stanley balance | | <u>178,563</u> |
| | \$ | 1,205,450 |
- The Executive Committee was designated to prepare a report on how much reserve would be required to keep the Friends afloat should there be no income for an entire one- to three-year period.
- 10/10/2011 **Special Operations Task Force** charter amended to include how to acquire and retain Assistant Mgr. at HB and how to operate without an Assistant Manager there.
Free Books - Since the demise of Friend-to-Friend in February 2011 it became increasingly apparent that we had to clarify that no Board member may take books for their pet projects. This was made clear in a policy which is still in full force and effect.
- 01/09/2012 The Board approved the **hiring of a Volunteer Coordinator** to recruit, train, and motivate volunteers for the two Book Shop locations. The Volunteer Coordinator reports to the Book Shop Manager. Nancy Lewittes was hired to fill this position on 03/05/2012
- 02/13/2012 **Staff Enhancement** (renamed Scholarship Fund) – board approved a \$2,500 grant to assist Library Staff to purchase electronic items to assist Library patrons in their use.

- 03/11/2012 **Special Operations Task Force** – lengthy discussion of cost to Friends of hiring two additional paid employees.
Library Public Opinion Survey, sponsored by Friends, is underway.
- 04/12/2012 Hiring of **Assistant Mgr. for HB** approved.
- 11/29/2012 The **Executive Committee voted to extend the contract of Volunteer Coordinator Nancy Lewittes** through December 2013 with a change in status from Independent Contractor to employee of the Friends.
- 04/2013 The **Harry Bennett branch of the Book Shop** received a major remodeling, to create a more inviting environment, and to simplify and improve the flow of books into the shop.
- 04/25/2013 The first **Book and Author Tea**, hosted in the setting of the Harry Bennett branch, was a great success. This event required full participation from the Friends Board with major support from the Book Shop Manager and the library staff.
- 07/01/2013 **The Book Shop Manager, Cynthia Grohoski resigned.** Volunteer Coordinator Nancy Lewittes picked up some of the managerial functions until a new manager could be hired.
- 09/2013 Responsibility for overseeing personnel, management and policy issues regarding the Book Shop was moved from the Friends Board to a member of library administration, George Nichols. **The Book Shop Advisory Committee was created** to collaborate with the library administration in addressing significant issues concerning the Book Shop. Permanent members of this committee are the Vice President and Treasurer of the Friends.
- 01/2014 **Severia Drake was hired to manage the Book Shop**, reporting to George Nichols.
- 05/2014 **A booklet commemorating the 35-year anniversary** of the Friends was created and distributed at the Book and Author Tea.
- 06/2014 Library President, Ernie DiMattia passed away, but his legacy lives on. Because of his recommendation, the Friend's bylaws were changed to include a subgroup of citizen advisors.
- 11/2014 The Friends used \$60,000 from the Gale Fund to purchase the **"Purple Bus"** ... this will replace the old bus and will be used to transport children to the library.
- 06/2015 The annual **literary competition**, which recognizes excellence in student writing, celebrated its 30th year.
- 06/2015 The **membership brochure** was revised with updated format, photos, and new membership categories. We currently have about 270 members.

- 10/2015 The first annual **Literary Pub Crawl** was held. The goal of broadening the demographics and increasing awareness of the Book Shop, the Library, and the Friends was met.
- 2015-2016 The Friends largest source of income is the **Book Shop** – both at Main and Harry Bennett. Revenue this year was nearly \$150,000, up slightly from last year.
- 01/2017 For the first time, the Library added a check-off box to its annual appeal brochure, to allow people to join the Friends by that method.
- 2016-2017 **Total support given to the Library** from the Friends, including a distribution from the Gale Fund, was \$130,000.
- 09/2017 The special **give-away promotion** to public and private school teachers was revised. At the beginning of the Fall 2017 school year, teachers can register to receive up to five free books in the \$1-\$3 range per month.
- 10/2017 The Stamford Advocate’s Sunday Supplement included a story and photo of The Friends’ activities.
- 04/2018 The **Literary Competition** had 450 student entries with 80 winners. This year, for the first time, prizes consisted of gift certificates from our Book Shop instead of gift certificates from Barnes and Nobel.
- 06/2018 A **membership meeting** was held at the Harry Bennett Branch. All volunteers of the Friends’ book shops were given free memberships to the Friends.
- 2017-2018 **Total support given to the Library** from the Friends, including a distribution from the Gale Fund, was \$109,000.
- 2017-2018 The **Author Series** raised over \$7,000 for the Friends. Authors this year included Martin Philip, Jim Lakey, Ariana Trigiani, and Lisa Genova.
- 10/2018 The Fourth Annual **Pub Crawl** took place with 160 participants, raising \$2400.
- 05/2018 The **Books for Babies** Committee gave a total of 2,390 books to the babies born at Stamford Hospital.
- 02/2019 **First Mini-Golf** event/fundraiser held at the Harry Bennett Branch. It was a great success raising \$13,000. It was a huge success and a lot of fun.
- 05/2019 Friends hosted **CrimeCONN**, an event created by the Mystery Writers of America. Including book sales, the event raised over \$3700 for the Friends.

- 06/2019 2nd annual **membership meeting** was held. All received a 40th anniversary booklet commemorating the **40-year anniversary** of the Friends. At this time, the **Memorial Garden** at Harry Bennett was dedicated to Joe Sexton, Ernie DiMattia and Elmire “Sam” Hammock.
- Total support given to the Library** from the Friends, including a distribution from the Gale Fund, was \$110,000.
- 09/2019 **Bookshop** participated in the Arts and Crafts on Bedford Street...\$4,000 was realized.
- 10/2019 **Annual Literary Pub Crawl** took place.
- The Friends’ bookshops collaborated with a **book fair** at the Long Ridge School.
- 02/2020 2nd **Mini-Golf** event at Harry Bennett branch. Great success earning a profit of \$10,000.
- 03/2020 **COVID-19 pandemic** swept our city, our state, our country, and the world. Every facet of our organization was affected. The Ferguson Library was closed from mid-March through mid-July.
- Payroll Protection Program (PPP)** loan of \$15,000 was obtained that enabled us to continue to pay our employees.
- A few **Author Series** events were held via Zoom.
- 35rd Literary Competition** – 79 winners; awards ceremony cancelled, but every winning entry was published on our website.
- The Ferguson Friends Against Racism (FFAR)** committee was formed to support Stamford’s “Call to Action” and pledged to work together to reduce racism in our city.
- Total support given to the Library** from the Friends, including a distribution from the Gale Fund, was \$99,870.
- 2020-2021 Friends meetings held via zoom due to the continued COVID-19 restrictions.
- Total support given to the Library** from the Friends, including a distribution from the Gale Fund, was \$99,000.
- 11/2021 Our **Bookshop** responded to the Governor’s “Emergency Afghan Evacuees Program” by donating books, CD’s and other media to newly arrived Afghan families.
- 04/2022 **Ms. Ann Sexton**, a four-time President of the Friends was recognized for her almost 40 years of service to the Friends by receiving the Ferguson Award from the Library’s Board of Trustees. The Board Room of the Ferguson Library was named the “Ann M. Sexton Board Room”.
- 05/2022 **By – laws** were revised amending terms of voting directors (Article IV, Section 3) and qualifications of directors (Article IV, section 4)

- 06/2022 Our **FFAR** committee received the Focused Project Award 2022 from the Friends of Connecticut Libraries.
- Our **Author Series** offered nine virtual and hybrid free events featuring numerous best-selling authors.
- 06/2022 The Friends partnered with the Library and the Pollinator Pathway Consortium to update the **memorial garden** at the Harry Bennett Branch.
- 06/2022 **Library Support:** During this year, the Friends contributed \$137,000, a 38% increase over the prior year. This positive variance was largely due to a resumption of “near normal” bookshop operations.
- 10/2022 The **Freedom to Read** committee was created to educate ourselves and the community about the many challenges we face regarding the banning of books across the country and in Fairfield County.
- The Friends Board adopted an **anchor statement** reflecting its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- A bi-lingual “Welcome to the Library” note is now included with each book distributed with our **Books to Babies** program.
- Our 6th **Literary Pub Crawl** was held.
- 12/2022 The **FFAR** committee hosted Carmen Hughes, (IDEA- Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility Officer for the city of Stamford.)
- 02/2023 Library **Mini-Golf** returned for its 3rd year with a new vendor.
- 2022-2023 **Author Series** back to in-house events. David Baldacci, Fiona Davis (twice), Andrew Morton, Jacques Pepin, Andrew McCarthy and Alka Joshi were among the featured authors. New 2-tier pricing used – one for members of the Friends, and a higher price for non-members, encouraging Friends membership.
- Total support given to the Library** from the Friends, including a distribution from the Gale Fund, was \$99,177.

