

President's Notes

If you haven't "checked out" the Library's Museum Pass Program sponsored by Friends, now would be a good time to try it. There are six museums and one botanic garden included: The Guggenheim Museum, the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum, the Frick Collection, the Morris Museum, the Montclair Art Museum, the Newark Museum and the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. Each museum has something special to offer, and using the Museum Pass makes a visit affordable.

Close to home, Montclair is featuring "New Directions in Fiber Art," Morris has "A Cache of Kinetic Art: Simply Steampunk," and Newark presents "Wendy Red Star: A Scratch on the Earth." And of course, spring at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden is beautiful—treat yourself to a nice day out!

Many thanks to those Friends who stepped up to help with the RFID project at the Library. I volunteered in the Children's Room and was amazed at the variety of subjects included in the collection. Occasionally, I stopped to read one of the picture books or to flip through a beautifully illustrated volume. A very enjoyable experience.

Unfortunately, as I write this, we are still awaiting the final state approval to begin the grant process for the Library Bond Construction Act. With difficulty, I continue to keep faith that this will happen soon. Maybe there will be good news by the time of our Annual Meeting on April 29.

-Laura Nial, President

SPRING BOOK SALE: APRIL 27-28

This spring we are again inundated with wonderful books. Birders, golfers, gardeners, history buffs, home cooks, art lovers, mystery and fiction readers all will find something of interest at the sale.

Once again, CDs and DVDs are piled high. Despite having the one-day sale in February, the collections of children, tween and young adult books are overwhelming. A big "thank you" to our stalwart volunteers who steadfastly carry on despite the risk of an avalanche!

All of the work is worthwhile when we see you leaving the sale with armloads of books. Don't forget to bring your family, friends and neighbors with you to the sale.

- **Saturday, April 27: 10 - 5**
- **Sunday, April 28: 11 - 5**
(Bag of Books Sale: entry through back door by parking lot only)

-Laura Nial and Rae Paltiel, Co-Chairs

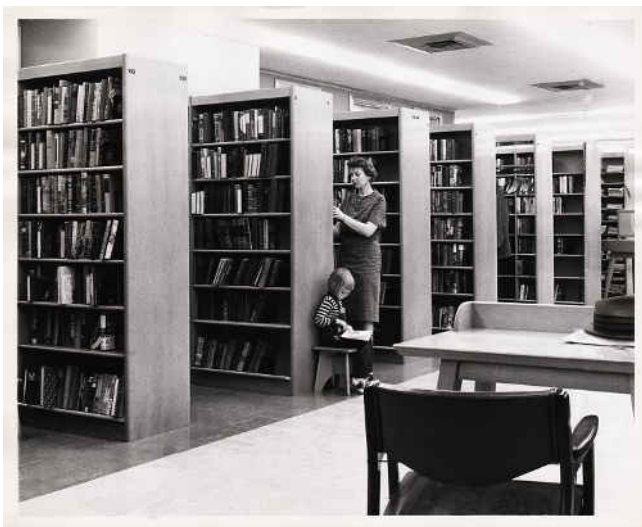


HILTON UPDATES & UPGRADES

In January 1959, the current Hilton Branch building opened its doors for the first time. This was only the latest in several transformations for the branch.

The Hilton Branch originally started out as a Reading Club, organized in March 1882. In 1889, the Reading Club established itself as the Hilton Public Library Association, with Andrew J. Van Ness as its first librarian.

Van Ness donated his personal collection of some 1,000 books to the Library Association. Then in 1922, the Township Library was incorporated, and the Hilton Library became the Hilton Branch. Both town libraries in Maplewood were now free for residents.



The Hilton Branch changed physical locations as well. Before moving 60 years ago to its current home at 1688 Springfield Avenue, the Hilton Branch was in the Hilton Firehouse building, taking over the first-floor recreation room. The branch later moved to the second-floor hall of the firehouse.

In 1956, the Township Committee decided to erect the current building for the Hilton Branch. The ground breaking was in 1958, and the dedication took place in May of 1959.

We will be celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Hilton Branch at 1688 Springfield Avenue on Saturday, June 1, from 10 am – 2 pm. There will be a story time, music, cake, and more. Please join us!

-Irene Langlois, Hilton Branch Head

LIBRARY BOOKBAGS!

We have Friends of the Maplewood Library tote bags available in an eye-catching design. They're just \$3 each at the Main and Hilton front desks.

Come to the library to pick one up and carry your books in style!

Q&A: SALIMAH LATHAM

I sat down with Salimah Latham, Library Assistant in the Children's Room at the Maplewood Memorial Library, to learn some more about her. If you've ever visited the Children's Room on a Monday or a Tuesday, then you've likely been greeted by her friendly smile behind the desk.

How long have you worked at the library? What do you do in the Children's Room?

I have worked in the Children's Room since May 2018. I am a Library Assistant. Primarily, I work at the circulation desk checking in and checking out material. I also make library cards for new patrons and assist the librarians in finding materials in the catalog and on the shelf. I help patrons with the digital resources. I was surprised to find out that we have access to *Consumer Reports*, online language learning through Rosetta Stone, and the historic Maplewood files.

**What is your favorite thing about working in the library?**

The first thing that comes to mind is that we have two libraries in our town. I love that we have this place to come to as a place of knowledge and refuge. I think of the *Reading Rainbow* theme "I can go anywhere...take a look, it's in a book." That's what I love. Reliable sources of information are so important, and the library provides that for everyone.

Many patrons are not aware of these free resources, and I truly enjoy sharing that information with them. It is so satisfying to share the benefits that come with the library's BCCLS and REBL affiliation. I love the programs that the Maplewood Library puts on for our patrons. I have so many good memories from time spent as a patron in the library.

How has the library changed over the years?

I love the fact that we have apps and digital downloads at the tips of our fingers. We have apps like Hoopla, which I use the most. I also use Libby to borrow e-books. RBDigital allows me to read my favorite magazines on my device without a wait. There is not much wait time or even any at all.

What do you do when you're not here? Hobbies?

I wear many hats: local real estate agent, Music Together music teacher, volunteer at my son's school library, and PTA activities. I spend my free time visiting museums, at musical and cultural events, and reading mysteries.

What else would you like to share with us?

A Maya Angelou quote that sums up everything I enjoy about life: "My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style."

-Amalia Butler, Children's Librarian

TRIBUTES

Friends' Tribute Cards make wonderful gifts to honor a lover of books or the Library.
Stop by the front desk at Main or Hilton for more info.

MUSIC AND ART IN THE TEEN ZONE

This fall and winter we have seen a huge spike in teens using the library, which has been fantastic! Maplewood Middle School and Columbia High School students have been coming to the library after school and even on weekends to do homework, meet friends, and attend programs, including two great programs we hosted this fall sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

Eight teens registered and attended three sessions of our DJ 101 program. These teens had the opportunity to learn from a professional DJ and use state-of-the-art equipment and software while learning basics like song construction, timing, beats, and so much more. Since the program has ended, many of those kids have been asking me if we can do it again, and others have heard about it and expressed interest! Now that we own this DJ equipment we hope to continue to offer this program as well as allow teens to exercise their creativity on their own time by partnering with the Middle School and bringing equipment to the Create Space at Hilton when not in use for a program.



We also jazzed up our Teen Zone while hosting a program. After school we took photos of some of our regular teens and printed and transferred the photos onto large canvases. Our teens then decorated and painted around the images to make them really “pop” as artwork on our walls. We were able to replace our retro Teen Zone sign and make the space reflect the patrons who use it. The teens have loved seeing themselves up on the wall and have asked if we can do this program again to share more faces, or rotate out canvasses as new teens start to use the space.

The Friends funding for special programs has been a bright light for this fall’s teen zone schedule!

-Emily Witkowski, Teen Librarian

ANNUAL MEETING...WITH MUSIC!

When this year's annual meeting is held on Monday April 29, the evening will include a very special guest performance by the Silvertones Flute Ensemble.

Following a brief business session, this group of accomplished women musicians who frequently perform at local concerts, schools, and public events will present selections from classical and popular flute repertoires, along with comment about their instruments. Think folk/jazz/Broadway/Mozart!



The annual meeting is at 7:30 pm in Memorial Hall at the Main Library and is open to the public free of charge. Light refreshments will be served. Please join us for this interesting and entertaining evening.

-Anne Smith, Program Chair

RFID: WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS

Maplewood Library has once again taken on a project to help improve our service to the public. And once again, we could not be doing it so well without the help of our Friends!

In an effort to ready the library for self check-out kiosks this spring, we are placing radio frequency identification (RFID) tags in our adult and children's book collections.



Imagine the self check-out scanner you see at Target or the grocery store—it's the same thing, now at your library!

Despite our enthusiasm for the project, we faced a daunting task: Adding RFID tags to everything in our collection. With over 75,000 books at the Main Library alone, we had to ask all staff members to

contribute time during their already busy days and asked pages to help during their shifts, but we still weren't moving as quickly as we needed to in order to meet our deadline.

Enter you: our amazing Friends. With one email, we had just enough wonderful volunteers from the Friends of the Library on hand to help us with this project. Now the adult books are all done, and Hilton Branch is next in the RFID process.



Thanks to our Friends and your constant support, you'll be using self check-out in both of our library locations soon.

-Amanda Eigen, Head of Library Services

ESL GRANT HELPS CHANGE LIVES!

The Community Library Adult Literacy & Career Pathways grant program, offered by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJ LWD), has made a difference in the lives of thousands of adult learners at libraries throughout the state.

An article on *I Love Libraries Nj* reported that the Hilton Branch was one of three NJ libraries to receive a grant this year:

In Maplewood, the grant funding provided by the state allowed the library to revive an ESL program that had been cut due to a lack of funding. Irene Langlois, manager of the Hilton Branch of the Maplewood Library, said that, before the cuts in 2014, 65 students attended ESL classes every session.

"We had countless requests for the return of the service from the public. If anything, the need for ESL classes had increased," said Langlois.

With funding beginning in 2016 from Nj LWD, Maplewood has not only restored ESL classes, but has been able to assist students in many other ways.

The impact these classes have on their students, the families of those students, on the communities in which they live, and on society overall truly cannot be measured.

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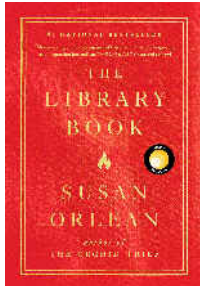
friends@maplewoodlibrary.org

Newsletter Editor: Brian Glaser

BOOK REVIEWS

The Library Book
by Susan Orlean

On April 29, 1986, *The New York Times* front page reported typical fare: the postponement of mobster John Gotti's trial; a warning from Sen. Bob Dole that



the federal budget was in trouble; and a photograph of President Ronald Reagan and his wife Nancy waving goodbye as they embarked on a trip to Indonesia. It was also the day that Roger Clemens made history when he became the first pitcher in major league baseball to strike out 20 batters in a nine-inning game.

A few days before, the world's worst nuclear power plant accident occurred at the Chernobyl plant in the Soviet Union. This story was to dominate the headlines for weeks and months in the spring of 1986.

That is probably why few people know of a fire at the Los Angeles Public Library that reached 2,000 degrees and burned for more than seven hours. By the time it was extinguished, it had consumed 400,000 books and damaged 700,000 more. In *The Library Book*, Susan Orlean chronicles the fire and its aftermath to showcase the larger, crucial role that libraries play in our lives. Her graphic details about the fire itself and the attempts to save the books describe a harrowing scene.

Orlean's extensive research included interviewing many of the library's staff (past and present), members of the LA fire department, arson investigators, and others. She portrays some remarkable characters, like Charles Lummis, who traveled from Ohio to Los Angeles on foot in 1884 to work at the *Los Angeles Times* and later became City Librarian at the Los Angeles Public Library.

She also uses the library as a lens to track Los Angeles' growth: the impact of the Great Depression, Prohibition, and World War II; questions about the importance of historical preservation; and the the library's ever-changing role in society. *The Library Book* isn't really a story about a library that was destroyed so much as a tribute to libraries and why they endure.

-Nancy Denholtz

Special Gifts

November 2018 through March 2019

We appreciate the generous gifts contributed by the following donors. Thank you all.

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-Rae Paltiel, Membership Chair

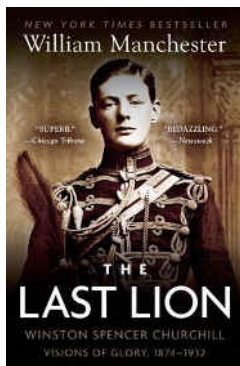
BOOK REVIEWS

The Last Lion; Winston Spencer Churchill: Visions of Glory 1874-1932
by William Manchester

The Last Lion is the first of three volumes by William Manchester examining the life of Winston Churchill. This volume covers Churchill's childhood, his military career, and his early period as a statesman in several of the highest positions in government leading up to 1930.

To set the stage for the story, Manchester describes Great Britain during Churchill's early years, when the Empire was at its peak of power and apparent security. Using personal letters, memoranda, journals, and newspaper accounts, Manchester adds vivid detail.

On a personal level, we discover that due to family financial problems, Churchill was required to find a career, unique from his aristocratic peers who were used to living off of their families' wealth. We learn of his life-long battle with depression, something he referred to as his "black dog." He had an interest in the military, and he pursued a career that combined writing and military action.



Taking advantage of connections provided by his mother, he was able to go where the action was. He saw battle in Afghanistan and Sudan, and he sent accounts to the newspapers that catapulted him into the nation's consciousness. When he was a POW in the Boer War and escaped, he became a national celebrity. He would write for the rest of his life, including articles, stories, and books. He

served as First Lord of the Admiralty

at a time when the British Navy was unrivaled on the seas. During World War I, he was blamed for the disastrous Gallipoli campaign and lost his position in the government, but he would remain a force to be reckoned with in British politics. This volume ends after Churchill is hit on a New York street by a car going 30 mph. But through all his troubles, we know his greatest time is yet to come.

The Churchill most people are familiar with is an almost mythic figure, the indefatigable opponent of Adolf Hitler. But this first volume tells us how the man who took on that role was formed by world events and the adventures he experienced as a young man.

-Bill Donovan

My Sister, the Serial Killer
by Oyinkan Braithwaite

My Sister, the Serial Killer is a compelling debut novel by young Nigerian writer Oyinkan Braithwaite. The novel is narrated by Korede, older sister to Ayoola. Korede is a nurse in a Nigerian hospital, and Ayoola is a serial killer.



Korede's story begins in a somewhat funny but also terrifying way. "Ayoola summons me with these words—Korede, I killed him. I had hoped I would never hear those words again." Ayoola has killed her third boyfriend and calls on Korede each time to help her clean up the mess. Korede knows that "three and they label you a serial killer." She's looked up that fact on Google. She realizes that Ayoola and her admiring beaux have a serious problem, but she rushes to Ayoola's side with blue sponge, mop, and bleach in hand. "I bet you didn't know that bleach masks the smell of blood."

Korede is a loner; she's quiet, practical, caring. Her only true friend is a comatose patient in whom she confides Ayoola's misdeeds and her own criminal cover-ups. (Later in the story, when this patient awakens from his coma, Korede has an additional problem.) Ayoola is beautiful, attractive to men, impulsive to say the least, and seemingly without conscience. She claims self-defense each time, but Korede is doubtful. Yet, Korede loves Ayoola and always comes to her rescue. She knows that her sister is a menace to men, but can't stop herself from protecting Ayoola—that is, until Ayoola sets her sights on Tade, a doctor in the hospital where Korede works and on whom Korede has a crush. It's then that Korede's instincts to take care of Ayoola are tested, and she faces a dilemma: keep her younger sister out of jail, or keep the man she longs for alive.

The provocative title and the opening lines immediately grabbed me, and the short chapters and crisp writing kept me reading. This is a hard-to-put-down novel, with satirical commentary on Nigeria's corruption, dark comedic scenes interspersed with gore, and mainly amusing commentary on the nature of men. I was intrigued by the sisters' relationship—Ayoola, oblivious to her actions, confident that Korede will get her out of a sticky situation; Korede, somewhat jealous of her beautiful carefree sister who manages to attract one man after another, but always willing to play the part of the older, loving sister—and the possible reason for their different personalities.

-Rae Paltiel

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Every day we open our doors to the public. We do not ask for people’s names. We do not ask where our patrons come from. We never ask why someone enters our buildings.

It’s simple: The Maplewood Library is free and open for all.

Our mission is to build community and enrich the quality of life throughout Maplewood by bringing together diverse people, information, and ideas. Close to 1,000 people enter our library every day. It is in this spirit that we launch our new logo:



As poet Rita Dove so eloquently said, “The library is an arena of possibility, opening both a window into the soul and a door onto the world.”

-Sarah Lester, Director



JOIN OR RENEW



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Friends of the Maplewood Library support many of our wonderful Library’s offerings and programs, and we rely on your help to do this! If you are already a member for 2019, thank you so much. If you have not renewed your membership or joined yet, please do so. We need you!

Please make checks payable to Friends of the Maplewood Library.

Mail to: PO Box 183, Maplewood, NJ 07040

- Membership for calendar year 2019: Individual - \$15
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YES, I would like to help with Friends’ Book Sales.