

## Who Do You Think You Are?

### A Bounty of Answers Awaits at the Library

Who are your ancestors? When were they born, and where did they live? The answers to these and other questions about your family tree may now just be a few computer clicks away at Mount Prospect Public Library, thanks to a growing array of online resources that have fast become the go-to tools for ancestral sleuthing.

“What we want to know about our families hasn’t changed, and the basics of genealogy remain the same,” says Anne Shaughnessy, Genealogy/Local History Librarian at MPPL. “What has changed dramatically over the last several years are the tools and how we go about finding information.

Technology and the computer have given us access to more and more information, making the process of finding certain records or documents so much easier and faster, too.”

Fueled by this explosive growth of online historical records and the popularity of television shows, such as *Who Do You Think You Are?*, genealogy now ranks second only to gardening as the most popular hobby. As reported by the *Wall Street Journal*, more than \$2.3 billion was spent on genealogical products and services in 2012, according to a market research study by Global Industry Analysts.



Genealogy volunteers Jan O'Keefe, Nancy Reese, and Zoe Mather.

At the Library, patrons can readily tap into this trend by utilizing the vast genealogical resources available—all of them free. Online resources include *Ancestry Library Premiere Edition*, *Heritage Quest*, and *Family Search.org*, the historical records database of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

“*Ancestry Library Edition* is a collection of databases, including U.S. Census reports, immigration records, ship records, directories, and military records. It’s all there in one place,” Shaughnessy explains. “*Ancestry Library Edition* can only be accessed from inside the Library but, if you were to purchase the *Ancestry* edition for your home, it would cost roughly \$300 a year.”

Other costs-and time-saving genealogy resources available at the Library are found in the many reference books, periodicals, and files lining the shelves of the Harold Weary Genealogy Room. The collection features an extensive grouping of books on Illinois history. There are also microfiche and microfilm of several newspapers: *Daily Herald*, *Chicago Tribune*, *New York Times*, *Mount Prospect Journal*, *Mount Prospect Times*, and *Prospect Day*.

Best of all, there are Library staff and a team of volunteers including Jan O'Keefe, Nancy Reese, Zoe Mather, Marie Panzica, and Adeline Kruse who are eager to assist.

“Really what you are doing with genealogy is being a detective or a mystery solver,” says Nancy Reese, an experienced genealogist who volunteers in the Harold Weary Genealogy Room two mornings each week. “You have to have a lot of curiosity, ask a lot of questions, and then dig in and begin looking for the answers.”

Turn to page 4 for more on Genealogy.

## Teens Get Stacking With Book Spine Poetry Challenge



If you’ve ever looked at a stack of books and thought that the titles themselves told a story, you may be a natural book spine poet! During April, teens in grades 6-12 made free verse poems out of the titles on book spines, then took photos and submitted them to the Library.

The project got a jump start when MPPL Teen Librarian Barbara Fitzgerald visited Lincoln Middle School to help create a cart of reference books for a research project. But she also shared her idea for the Book Spine Poetry project with teachers, and they thought it would offer a creative way to teach their students about poetry.

“I loved the idea, and thought it would be another great ‘hook’ to teaching my poetry unit,” said teacher Robin Brantman.

Her students used more than 50 poetry books from the school’s Learning Resource Center. *Teen Ink* magazine, a newspaper written by high school students, also inspired them.

“Our LRC director, Michelle Walsh, did a fabulous lesson on spine poetry as well,” Brantman says.

“Working with the students in a school setting is a great way to see their creativity and excitement,” says Fitzgerald. “I was amazed at the energy the kids showed during this project.”

School outreach is a big part of Fitzgerald’s job at MPPL, and she enjoys the chance to collaborate with teachers to help students learn.

“The school and local library connection plays a great role in education,” says Brantman.

The Lincoln students’ efforts were a great jumping-off point for other Mount Prospect teens to contribute their found verses. You can view all the teens’ creations in the alcove near the Teen Zone on the second floor. Many of them are also on the Library’s Instagram photo-sharing account (mpplteen), and some students have posted the poems to their own accounts with the hashtag #mpplspinepoems.



**SPECIAL PULLOUT  
SECTION**  
Save for Future  
Reference





# Our 70th Anniversary

## How We've Changed—and What's Remained the Same

In 1943 a referendum created the tax-supported Mount Prospect Public Library. Throughout 2013 we are celebrating 70 sensational years of serving the community—and noting all the changes that have taken place. From a few stacks of hardcover books to downloadable files read on a device with the swipe of a finger, and from a quiet reading place to a lively center of activity, the Library has kept up with the times. But some things don't change, including our commitment to serving you and to bringing the community together. Enjoy this trip through our archives—and look forward to many more years ahead.



### The Building

The first Library building (below) was built at 14 E. Busse Avenue on land purchased with money donated by organizations and from individual gifts.



### The Neighborhood



Northwest Highway looking east from Route 83 in 1960 (above) and 2013 (below).



The Library's current building (above) was constructed in 1976 with one floor. The planners' foresight assured the structural integrity to withstand a second floor being added, which was done nearly 30 years later in 2004. In 2009, the first permanent second location, known as the South Branch, opened at Busse and Algonquin Roads.

### The Lobby

An undated photo (above) shows the central area of the Library, including the reference collection, reading area, main stacks, and reference desk. The changes over the years are apparent in a 2011 photo. (right)





## Youth Services



Youth Services circa 1965 (above) and 2011 (left).

Today, one-third of all Library program attendees are here for youth storytimes.

## Library Staff



(above) Head librarian Irma Schlemmer (in white dress) and Mabel Laubenheimer (second from the right) are joined by unidentified staff in this 1962 photo.

(below) Staff honored for service in 2012 include Keary Bramwell, Christopher Amling, Patricia Smolin, Steven Browne, Annette Mika, Carol Capra, Donna Szwed, Carolyn Zintak, Nasreen Moolji, Jan Penner, Elaine Ball, Eva Kalbarczyk, Cynthia Dieden.



As patron needs have increased, Library staff are becoming more expert in specific areas.

## Celebrations

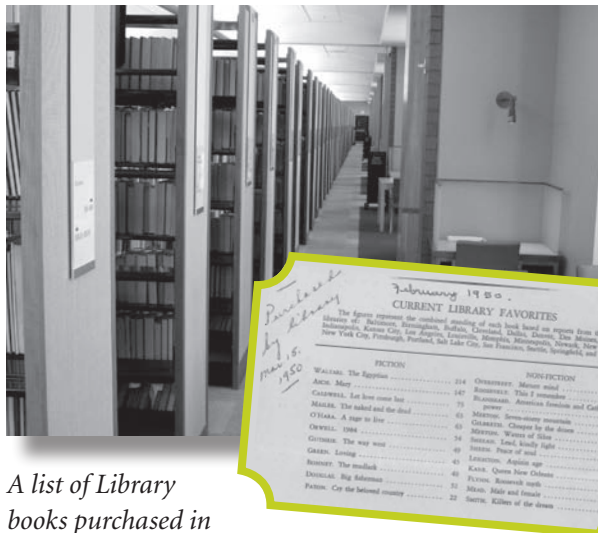


(above) Shown at the Library's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in 1968 are (left to right) Irma Schlemmer, Gerald Sullivan, Meta Bittner, and Mary Jo Hutchings.

(right) A winner and his basket during the party marking the fifth year in the new Library building.



## Resources



A list of Library books purchased in 1950 would fill just one of the over 1,600 shelves available now.

## Mount Prospect Library Foundation



(left) Today the Foundation's fundraising efforts include annual appeals as well as a twice-yearly raffle. Patrons make their selections for the Fall Classic Raffle in 2012.

(right) A librarian's notebook from 1940 shows the results of a fundraising drive.

Receipts from Drive 10/29/40	
Mrs. H. H.	\$40.25
" " " "	19.30
" " " "	22.40
" " " "	48.50
" " " "	3.50
" " " "	23.45
" " " "	26.25
" " " "	20.25
" " " "	13.15
Amer. Leg. Aux.	14.00
" " " "	3.00
Mrs. H. H.	13.50
Mrs. H. H.	14.35
Mrs. Cunningham	4.00
V. F. W. Aux.	2.00
Catholic Women's Club	2.00
	252.90
Expenses	2.00
Gifts	25.00
	\$229.90

## Friends of the Library



(left) The Friends host four book sales annually at the Main Branch and one at the South Branch.

(right) Commemorating National Library Week in 1966 are (left to right) Virginia Liston, Mrs. Jack Perz, Mrs. Gil(Isky) Liebenow, Mrs. Thor Rune, and Mrs. Robert Zebroska.



Stay tuned for the next 70 years!

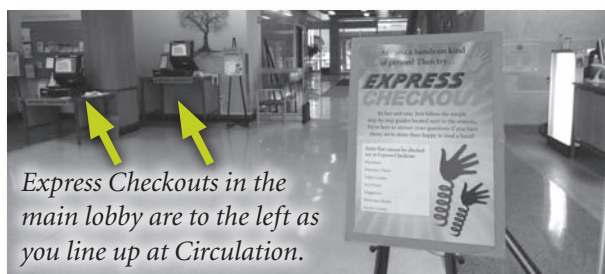


# Move On Up to Express Checkout!

If you've been wondering how the Express Checkout works, just ask! Circulation staff have been in the Lobby to demonstrate Express Checkout for patrons, offering one-on-one tutorials.

"Patrons who had never used Express Checkout thanked staff for showing them how and commented on how easy it was," said Head of Circulation Kathy Murray.

In 2012, the average monthly checkouts on the three Express Checkout stations was 12,500. With a little personal attention, that number jumped to 22,195 for March 2013.



Express Checkouts in the main lobby are to the left as you line up at Circulation.

Staff have been showing patrons how easy it is to use, leading them through the simple onscreen prompts. You don't even have to open the books, and the machine can handle a stack of books at once.

Along with checking out books, CDs, and DVDs, you can access information about your Library accounts and conveniently pay fees and fines using credit or debit cards. You will have to visit the Circulation Desk to pick up any holds.

Our circulation is up and patrons are keeping the staff busy. Express Checkout can be a great way to make your visit to the library easier, but remember that it is a convenience for you. You can always choose to visit the Circulation Desk.

Along with the two Express Checkout stations in the Lobby, there is one in Youth near the Duck Bench. As with any MPPL service, never hesitate to ask someone for assistance.

## How to Express Checkout

- 1 Scan your card under the red light.
- 2 Review your account information. Touch **OK-Continue** to begin.
- 3 Place your items on the white square.
- 4 Watch as your items are checked out.
- 5 Remove your items. *Go back to step 3 if you have more items.*
- 6 Choose your form of receipt.
- 7 Unlock any DVDs and CDs.
- 8 **IMPORTANT:** Open all AV cases to confirm they are unlocked and the items are in their cases.
- 9 Touch **DONE** to finish.

# Discovering Family Tree Takes Root at the Library

Five years ago when Mount Prospect resident Patrick Seaman stepped into the Harold Weary Genealogy Room at Mount Prospect Public Library, little did he realize he was about to embark on a sweeping, ancestral adventure. The then 30-something, who had previously dabbled in genealogy, was interested in learning more about his father's side of the family. He began assembling assorted documents and recording bits of information in a notebook, which, at that time, contained details on three generations.

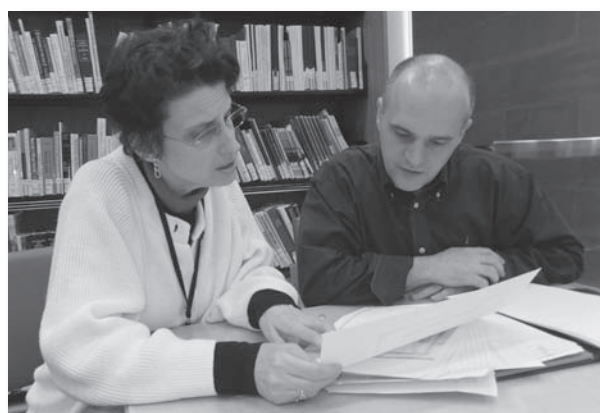
"I knew the names of my grandparents and great-grandparents, but I couldn't break that barrier," Seaman recalls, "It was frustrating because I was curious and wanted to know more. It was the name of my great-grandfather H.G. Seaman which led me to the Library."

And it was at MPPL that Seaman first met Genealogy/Local History Librarian Anne Shaughnessy. Shaughnessy quickly launched Seaman on his quest to locate the ancestors of H.G. She introduced Patrick to our vast collection of genealogy resources, including the online tools *Heritage Quest* and *Ancestry Library Edition*.

"Anne sat with me at a computer, and it was remarkable the cornucopia of information that I had never seen before," Seaman recalls, the sense of discovery still fresh in his voice. "It was the first time I saw the Census, and it was so easily accessed right there online. It was really, really remarkable."

With a few clicks of the computer, Seaman was hooked. He spent hours at the Library traveling back in time, meticulously tracking his family tree through the documents found in *Ancestry Library*

*Edition*. From his home computer, the father of four accessed *Heritage Quest*. He recalls how each evening, once the kids were in bed, he'd spend hours combing through online records, "all of it free with my Library card." Along the way, he continued to share his progress with Shaughnessy, relying on her counsel when the trail went cold.



Anne Shaughnessy and Patrick Seaman

"Anne found references and connected me with historical societies in Pennsylvania, which were central to my finding other lines," Seaman says. "I still did the legwork, but Anne would point me in the right direction."

Soon the Seaman family story began to grow rich in detail and volume. He discovered Thomas A. Seaman, son of Harry, had fought in the Civil War. Thomas was injured at the Battle of Fair Oaks, Virginia, in 1862. This injury not only caused his great-great-grandfather to walk with the aid of a cane for the rest of his life but forever changed the course of Seaman family history. At Anne's suggestion, Seaman wrote to the U.S. Archives and

received an inch-thick stack of Civil War pension material on Thomas.

"After injuring his leg, Thomas could no longer work on the family farm in Pennsylvania, so he was forced to look for work elsewhere," Seaman explains. "The Census of 1880 recorded his occupation as a 'compounder of liquors,' which sounds like a job you could do sitting down, as opposed to the farm."

"I'm not exactly sure what that means. He must have added water to liquor," Seaman jokes, "But nonetheless, it was a job, and that's what brought him here."

Stories like these were just the beginning. Through a combination of time, patience, and detective skills, Seaman continued to document and grow his family story. Today his hours of research fill eight three-ring binders with information and documents covering 10 generations and more than 500 ancestors. He traces his family's roots all the way back to yet another Thomas Seaman, who first arrived in America from England in the 1680s.

"The Library was absolutely a gateway for me," Seaman says. "I don't think I'd have accomplished what I did without MPPL's resources. In many ways, it was like going to college. You have this education, and then you can go out on your own and continue to learn."

"My wife thinks I'm such a geek, but it really is thrilling," Seaman adds. "You search and search for a piece of information about your family and, when you finally find it, you experience such a rush."

Start your own search today! Call the Library and ask for the Reference desk for help.

