Sturgis Library Collection Development Policy

MISSION STATEMENT

Sturgis Library, a historic public library in the village of Barnstable, is dedicated to providing services and resources to meet the needs of a contemporary community while preserving and promoting Cape Cod history. The library:

- Supports the lifelong pursuit of personal, vocational, cultural, and intellectual enrichment.
- Fosters literacy, curiosity, and creativity in library users of all ages.
- Promotes the free exchange of ideas and serves as a community meeting place.
- Offers a gateway to emerging technologies and informational databases, which enhance traditional resources.
- Serves as a regional archive and research center for the study of Barnstable County, history, genealogy, and maritime culture.

LIBRARY ASSESSMENT

Sturgis Library is one of seven independent public libraries in the Town of Barnstable. Each of the seven libraries has its own unique collection strengths and provides materials to the community based on differences in their collection policies, their budgets, and the needs in their own Village. As part of the CLAMS network, we all provide materials to the wider Cape Cod community and add material to our collections keeping the broader community needs in mind.

Sturgis Library plays a dual role in providing quality public library service to a small contemporary community, while also preserving and making available the historical and genealogical resources to users across the country. A keen awareness of the importance of both these roles is reflected in our mission statement, our long-range plan, and this collection development policy.

SELECTION RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Library Trustees delegates the authority and responsibility for selection and management of all print, non-print, and electronic materials to the Library Director and appropriate Library staff members. Selection and management of the materials in the Library's collections are shared among the appropriate staff, who shall use this collection development policy as a guide to the growth and management of all Library collections.

SELECTION RESOURCES

Staff members consult professional book review resources including *Library Journal, Publisher's Weekly, Horn Book, New York Times* and *Boston Globe* book reviews, *BookPage*, as well as publisher's catalogs, periodicals, websites, and other professional and popular resources.

SELECTION GOALS

General Collections

- To provide our patrons with a wide variety of print and nonprint materials for entertainment, inspiration, and lifelong learning.
- To provide diverse materials, reflecting many points of view, for patrons of all ages.
- To balance up-to-date and popular materials with a core collection of recognized classics and key works in a variety of subject areas.

Special Collections and Archives

- To provide patrons and researchers with comprehensive and reliable published and original primary source materials on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and New England history, genealogy, and maritime trades from the earliest settlement of the country to present day.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Items added to the collections are done so based on one or more of the following criteria:

- Well-reviewed by known review sources
- In demand or recommended by Library users
- Appeal and relevance to community interests
- Authority and reputation of the author
- Literary merit
- Accuracy and timeliness
- In keeping with our mission
- Need in relation to scope of collection
- Format suitable for Library use
- Price and availability of funds
- Availability from another Library or source (i.e. Interlibrary Loan, Commonwealth Catalog, etc.)
- Importance as an historical record
- Space considerations

COLLECTION POLICIES

General Collections

- We generally refrain from purchasing or collecting textbooks, toy or pop-up books, abridged or condensed books, professional titles, and foreign language books.
- We may limit or cease purchase of outmoded nonprint formats (i.e. VHS format videos, cassette tapes, LP records) in favor of newer technologies, once that new technology is firmly established. We do not generally collect movies in Blu-Ray format unless a very popular title is only published in Blu-Ray.
- We do not generally purchase self-published works. See more on this policy on page 3. An exception is self-published family genealogies. See more on page 4.
- We strive to provide materials that have lasting value to the collections; therefore, we avoid purchasing multiple copies of books on the fad of the moment or the hot topic of the day.

Adult, Young Adults, and Children's Collections

Library materials will be added to the collection where it is deemed by professional Library staff to be most appropriate. In general, material is added to the following collections:

- Children's Collection – Includes books, magazines, nonprint, and electronic titles geared to children ages birth through grade 6.
- Young Adults collection – Includes books, magazines, nonprint, and electronic titles, geared to young adults in grades 7 through 12.
- Adult collection – Includes books, audio books, magazines, nonprint, and electronic titles geared to older teens and adults.

The staff and Trustees of the Sturgis Library are not responsible for the reading, viewing, or listening choices of children and young adults using the resources offered by the Library. Responsibility for these choices rests with the child's parent or legal guardian.

Self-Published Materials

Self-published books will be considered for admission into the collection under the following conditions:

- The title has received at least one positive review from a trade publication. The following review sources will not be considered: Self-written reviews, un-sourced reviews, reviews from friends and family.
- The book has been edited by an editor or professional literary agent.

Library staff members selecting the material may also choose to evaluate the merit of the book as an addition to the collection.

At any time, Library staff members have the right not to add self-published titles to the collection if in his/her opinion the work is of poor quality or has not been edited properly. Self-published titles that are added to the collection that do not circulate for one year will be weeded.

School & Student Curriculum

We will collect and purchase materials to support the curriculum of the Barnstable Public Schools and Cape Cod Community College, except for textbooks. We also support the needs of area preschools, private schools, and homeschoolers.

Internet and Electronic Resources

- We will provide unfiltered dedicated and wireless Internet access to the public free of charge.
- We will provide access to research databases provided by the CLAMS network, through the Massachusetts Library System (MLS), and through the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). In addition, we will subscribe directly to databases that support our mission and comply with our selection criteria. Due to the expense associated with providing electronic resources, renewal will be assessed on an annual basis.

Special Collections

- Our special collections' focus is Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and New England history, genealogy, and maritime trades from the earliest days of the settlement of the country to present day. We also collect material directly related to our two "founding fathers," John Lothrop and William Sturgis. In the case of John Lothrop, this may include material on his life in England and the history of his religious pursuits; in the case of William Sturgis, this may include material on the Northwest Fur and China trades. We do not generally collect historic maritime or genealogical materials with no connection to New England or Cape Cod. Our Special Collections include the following:
    - **Cape Cod Collection** – This collection consists primarily of circulating non-fiction titles about Cape Cod. Books by Cape Cod authors on other topics will not be collected here but will be incorporated into our other collections. This collection also includes a small reference collection of reports and other timely material about Cape Cod for ready reference purposes.

- **Kittredge Collection** – This collection was started with a gift of books and other material from the personal library of Henry Crocker Kittredge, maritime researcher, author, and educator from Barnstable Village. This collection consists of circulating and reference materials on primarily maritime subjects, and also of materials related to the life of Henry Crocker Kittredge and his father George Lyman Kittredge.
- **Lothrop Collection** – This collection includes noncirculating materials on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and New England genealogy and history. We have a small collection of materials on genealogical research in other countries, particularly the Nova Scotia area of Canada, which has many connections with Barnstable. We appreciate the work of genealogical researchers and will accept gifts of self-published genealogical works if they meet our collection guidelines. Due to space considerations, we do not generally accept donations of large family tree charts. We do not generally collect material unrelated to New England genealogy and history.
- **Sturgis Library Archives** –This collection includes rare and one-of-a-kind documents such as early deeds from many of the towns on Cape Cod, ship's logs, whaling journals, manuscripts, family histories, diaries, letters and correspondence, cemetery records, photographs, historical documents, maps and charts, and other materials. Historical materials related to the founding and development of the Sturgis Library are also kept here. We actively collect materials, through donation or purchase, within our collecting subject areas of Cape Cod history, maritime subjects, and genealogy.

GIFTS & DONATIONS

General Collections

Sturgis Library accepts gifts of books and nonprint materials for its general collections. The Library will add titles based on the same criteria used for purchase of materials. Donors may request a donation acknowledgement card to be used for tax purposes (see appendix). While we are not able to provide donors with an estimate of the value of donated material, we can direct you to appropriate resources to obtain estimates (see Book Appraisal Resources in appendix). The Library reserves the right to make all decisions regarding the addition of gift material. Donated materials not added to our collections may be put out for sale in our Book Shop or may be donated or sold to another organization or individual.

Special Collections

Sturgis Library accepts gifts of materials for its special collections and archives with the understanding that this is often unique and/or one-of-a kind material and donated to the Library for the use of researchers. The Library Director is happy to work with donors to discuss gifts to the special collections and archives and will provide donors with a deed of gift form (see appendix) for donated items. While we are not able to provide donors with an estimate of the value of donated material, we can direct you to appropriate resources to obtain estimates (see Book Appraisal Resources in appendix). The Library reserves the right to make all decisions regarding the addition of gift material. Donated materials not added to our collections may be donated or sold to another organization or individual.

CONTROVERSIAL MATERIAL

The Library collects a variety of materials for all age groups, diverse tastes, and varying viewpoints. Sturgis Library is a proponent of the American Library Associations Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement. (Both are appended).

The Library does not label controversial material or restrict its use in any way. R rated movies are labeled with the letter R for informational purposes only. No other rating labels are applied to Library materials.

CHALLENGES & REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION

Barnstable residents who object to the addition or exclusion of an item in the Library's collection may address the matter to the Library Director, PO Box 606, Barnstable, MA, 02630 or (508) 362-6636, or via email at sturgislibrary@comcast.net.

A reconsideration form and more information on the reconsideration process are appended to this Collection Development Policy.

Once reviewed by Library staff and the Library Director, the request will be reviewed by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. The Board has final say on request for reconsideration matters.

WEEDING/DEACCESSIONING

General Collections & Special Collections

The staff of Sturgis Library regularly weeds or deaccessions material from the collections based on the following criteria:

- Poor condition
- Out of date or obsolete information
- Multiple copies owned
- If circulating, the item has not circulated within a certain time period
- Duplication in subject area
- Lack of space

Titles will be considered for deaccessioning and replacement on a case-by-case basis and will be discarded or offered for sale in our Book Shop or for sale or donation to another organization or individual.

Archives

It is extremely rare that material in the archives is weeded or deaccessioned. Items will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Library Director and may include:

- Items previously added to the archives that are not central to the library's mission and collection policy
- Duplicate items
- Items that may more appropriately reside at another library or at another organization

APPENDIX

RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

The Board of Trustees of the Sturgis Library considers all materials selected under this Collection Development policy to be constitutionally protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. If a Library patron claims that an item is not constitutionally protected, the burden of proof rests with the patron.

The Board of Trustees recognizes the right of individuals to question materials in the Library's collection. Whenever a patron objects to the presence or absence of any Library material, the complaint will be given hearing and consideration as follows:

- All complaints will be referred to the Library Director, who will discuss the matter with the complainant and clarify the Collection Development policy. Contact the Library Director at PO Box 606, Barnstable, MA, 02630, 508-362-6636, or via email at director@sturgislibrary.org.
- If not satisfied with the Library Director's explanation or actions, the patron may submit a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form (see the following page). This completed form will be shared and discussed with the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. A decision will be made regarding whether to add or withdraw the material within a reasonable amount of time, with written reasons for the decision conveyed to the patron. If the patron is dissatisfied with the Committee's decision or the written reply, he or she may appeal the decision in person to the subcommittee. The subcommittee, after receiving testimony from the patron, other interested parties, and from the Director, will decide whether Library policies have been followed and whether to add or withdraw the material in question. The Executive Committee has final say on request for reconsideration matters.
- Materials subject to reconsideration shall remain on the shelf and available circulation pending final action.

Sturgis Library
Reconsideration of Library Materials Form

Name: Date:

Phone number: Email Address:

Mailing Address:

Please provide the following information about the item you'd like to see reconsidered.

Title:

Author:

Format (Book, periodical, movie, music, game, etc.):

Publisher & Date:

Other:

I recommend that this title be (check one):
☐ added to Sturgis Library's collections.
☐ removed from Sturgis Library's collections.

Are you filing this request (check one):

☐ as an individual ☐ on behalf of a group or organization called _____

Please list your reason(s) for filing this request, including any concerns you may have about its subject matter. You may other side to provide additional information:

_____
Signature Date

Book Appraisal Information

You can get information on the value of your used and rare books through the following sources:

ONLINE RESOURCES
See what comparable titles are selling for:

http://www.abebooks.com

http://www.bookfinder.com

http://www.alibris.com

http://www.amazon.com

BOOKSELLERS & APPRAISERS
Get a professional appraisal of your book's value

Brattle Book Shop, Boston 617-542-0210

Isaiah Thomas Books and Prints, Cotuit 508-428-2752

Parnassus Books, Yarmouth Port 508-362-6420

Titcomb's Book Shop, East Sandwich 508-888-2331

DEED OF GIFT

NAME OF DONOR and contact information:

DATE AND DESCRIPTION OF DONATION
(Attach appraisal or accompanying information if available)

DISPOSITION

☐ **Items to be added to archival collections**
☐ Items to be considered for sale or donation to other institutions. Proceeds from any sold items would benefit the Sturgis Library.
☐ Other (describe)

The Sturgis Library reserves the right to determine the appropriate disposition for donated materials. If the donor has specific preference for the Library to considers, please list them here:

In consideration of my interest in helping to preserve historically significant information and in making this material available to those interested in the subjects discussed, I herein donate legal title to and transfer the following rights to the Sturgis Library: to reproduce the copyrighted works in copies; to prepare derivative works based upon the copyrighted work (including electronic works, including but not limited to any other media which may not yet exist); to distribute copies of the copyrighted work to the public by sale or other transfer of ownership, or by rental, lease or lending; to perform the copyrighted work publicly; and to display the copyrighted work publicly. I also certify that I am the legal owner of this material and that I may only transfer those rights to which I am entitled.

Donor or authorized agent Date

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 24, 1996.

The Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

   Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

   Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

   No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

   To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

   The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

   It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they

wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

   The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.