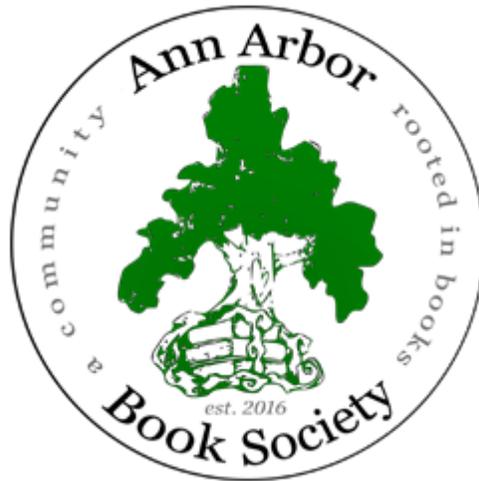


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September Newsletter

September Book Event Highlights

Friday, September 8th through Sunday, September 10th: [AAUW annual book sale](#), Washtenaw Community College Morris Lawrence Building, 4800 E. Huron River Dr.

Sunday, September 10th, 10:30 am to 5 pm: [Kerrytown BookFest](#) at the Ann Arbor Farmer's Market, 315 Detroit St. **(Be sure to stop by our booth to say hi!)**

Tuesday, September 12th at 7 pm: [Douglas Preston](#), author of *Lost City of the Monkey God*, at Nicola's Books, 2513 Jackson Ave.

Thursday, September 21st at 1 pm and 4 pm: [Fall Fairy Tea](#) at Crazy Wisdom Tea Room, 114 S. Main St.

Friday, September 22nd at 7 pm: [Celeste Ng](#), author of *Little Fires Everywhere*, at Literati Bookstore, 124 E. Washington.

Saturday, September 24th 10 am - 4 pm and Sunday, September 25th 1 pm - 4 pm: Friends of the Ann Arbor District Library [Back-to-School Sale](#), Multi-purpose Room at the Downtown Branch of AADL, 343 S. Fifth Ave.

Friday, September 29th through Sunday, October 1st: [Harbor Springs Festival of the Book](#), Harbor Springs, Michigan.

For more September book events, visit our [calendar](#) at [a2books.org](#).

What is Book Culture?

The culture of books is complex and varied. Like any collective manifestation of human intellectual achievement, it is difficult to pin down and classify. It resists taxonomy.

We try to follow its spanning chapters of technological history: the development of writing and the centuries of tablets, scrolls, codices, printing presses, e-books and beyond. We strain to look at it through the lens of history, religion, literature, economics, and material culture. We attempt to bind it by the modern paradox: do cultures make books—or do books make cultures?

But it resists. And perhaps this is the reason book culture has endured.

A book is both a symbol of knowledge and a vehicle for its transmission. It is both an inanimate object and the embodiment of voice. It can be both the source of tradition and authority and the resistance to tradition and authority. The written word possesses the power to open minds and to close them. It is no wonder why the book has had such a rich history belonging to the sacred, profane, celebrated, burned, and even the universal.

The Greeks recognized the interplay of this power and named it Hermes, the messenger of the gods and the mediator between gods and men. Besides being the inventor of language and speech, Hermes was also conveniently a liar, a thief, and a trickster. His messages were said to make people uneasy.

Borges recognized the occult nature in this power, noting the taboos that marked the early days of written language and the dangers that lay just beyond them. In his essay “The Cult of Books” he explored this notion through a labyrinth of textual history: through the fires threatening the Library of Alexandria, past the man named Caesar condemning the shameful memories of mankind, past a platonic dialogue where we hear the echo of an Egyptian fable—*books are like the painted figures that seem to be alive, but do not answer a word to the questions they are asked*, into a treatise of Clement of Alexandria and over the words—*the most prudent course is not to write but to learn and teach by word of mouth, because what is written remains*, into the accounts of St. Augustine, into the scriptorium, where we pause. The year is

384. There is a man in the room, bent over a codex. His eyes follow the lines of text, but his tongue does not move. By omitting sound, the “strange art he initiated, the art of silent reading, would lead to marvelous consequences. It would lead, many years later, to the concept of the book as an end in itself, not as a means to an end.”

It is difficult to think of reading silently as a strange art. Or to imagine why libraries and civilizations were burned. But revisiting our old taboos is often a useful exercise. In doing so we come to recognize the old magic of things made ordinary by the winds and wares of time.

There is a simple beauty in the creative interplay between text and context. A book is, after all, a tool and learning how to use our tools is what makes us human. The way we choose to use them is ultimately a matter of style.

There are millions of books on the shelves of Ann Arbor, waiting for a curious reader to rediscover what was almost lost or to renew what has been found and found again. And if it is true that our voices have been lost to us, then it is what we will work to regain because the culture of books can be one of uneasiness, and we should talk about that. The culture of books can be one of laughter and surprise, and we should talk about that. The culture of books can be one of indefinite perspectives, and we should talk about that. Examining book culture opens up a window onto the cultural, intellectual, and economic life of a community. And celebrating it as a community keeps it alive.

--Jaclyn Sipovic

Event Photo Highlight



Authors David Pratt, Patti Smith (complete in dinosaur PJs), and Ken MacGregor, before reading at Smith's event, Grown Folks Story Time, hosted by Bookbound Bookstore, Thursday, August 25th.

Watch Bookbound's calendar for another Grown Folks Story Time this fall!

Little Free Libraries

Ann Arbor is a book town for many reasons: award-winning bookstores, a nationally recognized public library system, and a world-class university attract and support readers and writers of all kinds. But it's not just these institutions that celebrate the written word. Community members, schools, and other organizations are spreading their love of reading with Little Free Libraries.

The Little Free Library was born in 2009 in Hudson, Wisconsin when Todd Bol built a one-room schoolhouse style box filled with books to honor his late mother, a school teacher and avid reader. Fast forward eight years and there

are now over 50,000 Little Free Libraries in over 70 countries! Because the philosophy of the Little Free Library is that every library belongs to the community, this growing non-profit organization is inspiring people to create access to books all over the world.

Fortunately, this phenomenon has reached Ann Arbor. With over 50 libraries registered on the Little Free Library map, it is likely there are many not registered, and certainly more to come. Each library is unique, and they all have stories behind them. And we'd like to know what they are! We have begun reaching out to hosts of these unique creations and will feature them as space allows in future newsletters. If there's a Little Free Library in your neighborhood you would like to know more about, let us know!

Visit the [Little Free Library website](#) for more information, including how you can make your own free library or buy one to support the non-profit. Listen to a recent segment of NPR's 1A, [Looking at Libraries](#), for the history and future of the Little Free Library movement, as well as libraries in general.

Welcome, Jaclyn!



We are delighted to welcome Jaclyn Sipovic to our team at the Ann Arbor Book Society!

Jaclyn has worked in libraries and on mountains for most of her career.

She has a Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature from the University of Michigan and enjoys reading and writing about the intersections of language, culture, ecology, and spirituality. After

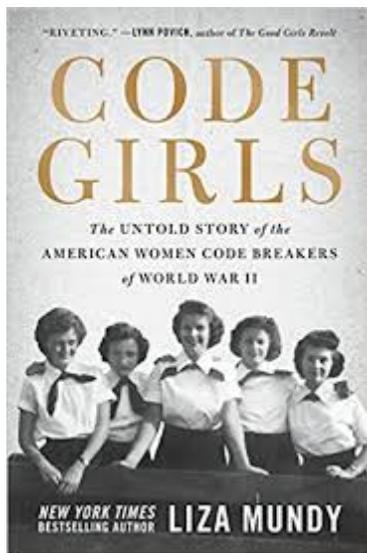
Little Free Library



Maria Murphy is an English teacher at Slauson Middle School. You can visit her Little Free Library at 810 Hutchins on the Old West Side.

spending some time working and walking along the Continental Divide from Mexico to Canada, Jaclyn returned to Michigan, where every day she is grateful for the abundance of fresh water and books.

On the Shelf



by Liza Mundy

Hachette, \$28

On sale October 10th

Code Girls: The Untold Story of the American Women Code Breakers of World War II

The story of the British women recruited as code breakers is fairly well known. After many books, a television series, and at least 2 movies, the women at Bletchley Park have been recognized for the part they played in ending WWII. However, until recently, no one knew much about the American women

When did you put up your library and where did it come from?

Maria: I put my library up 2 or 3 years ago. I ordered it from the Little Free Library website as a Christmas gift to myself from my family.

What inspired you to create one?

Maria: I am an English teacher who LOVES to read myself, and, maybe even more, to inspire a love of reading in young people - and older people, for that matter. I consider it a personal mission to put books in the hands of as many readers as possible, whether it's from my classroom or from a little library outside my house! I saw a library a neighbor on 5th had built which matched their own home, and I thought, "I NEED one of those!" Then, I started seeing them in other places all over A2, in Detroit, in Traverse City, etc. and did some research to find one.

Are there certain subject matters or age groups that your library has been geared towards?

Maria: Young adults and children (I teach middle schoolers), because I think the earlier we hook and inspire people to read, the more likely it is they will be lifelong lovers of reading. I like to have books that adults would like to read as well!

Have you received any feedback from users of your library?

Maria: Some. Kids often comment when they catch me outside. They

who played an equally important role. A few years ago, the files on these women were declassified, enabling author Mundy to tell their story.

As American men shipped out to fight in Europe or in the Pacific, the military realized the need to bolster their intelligence capabilities. As in Britain, the search for recruits began at the elite women's colleges, including Bryn Mawr, Wellesley, Barnard, and Radcliffe. Soon it became clear that the need was far greater than could be supplied by those schools. Since these workers would need to live together in cramped quarters and maintain strict secrecy, the ideal candidates would be young and unmarried. At that time, most public-school teachers fill that bill. So the military began reaching out to math teachers, German teachers, science teachers, librarians, and those who liked crossword puzzles and word games. Over 10,000 women came to work in the cryptography service.

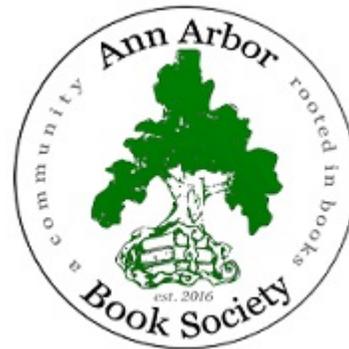
These women came to not only learn to crack German, Italian and Japanese codes, which changed daily, but to also test the Allied codes to make sure that those were unbreakable. The women had brothers, friends, and boyfriends engaged in battle, and they knew that their work was critical to saving lives. The stress was unbelievable, and there was little time away. They took their vow of secrecy seriously, and after the war was over, most never mentioned their service to their families.

The Americans' work was critical in the Pacific theater, crippling Japan's

like stopping at the library when on walks.

In what ways has your library enriched your life?

Maria: I find it fun to find good or unique books and magazines and share them with others. I've also found several books in my library that I can't wait to read myself! I've loved finding new libraries too - like the huge one outside of Bach Elementary School, or the cow-themed one outside Washtenaw Dairy!



Mark your calendars for the Ann Arbor Book Society's first fundraiser! Join us at Aut Bar on Tuesday, October 24th at 7:30 pm, for a special trivia night: Could You Have Passed the Borders Quiz? Suggested donation is \$10 at the door. All proceeds will go towards the printing of more bookstore maps.

Snapshot of the Past

fleet, and in catching the German's flat-footed at Normandy. Some of those cryptographers are still alive, and it is about time we gave them their due.

--Deb Leonard

*Executive Director of the Great Lakes
Independent Booksellers Association
(GLIBA) and part-time bookseller at
Literati*

Save the Date!

October 4th:

[Nancy Pearl at Nicola's Books](#)

October 6th-8th:

[Michigan Hemingway Society Fall
Conference](#)

October 8th:

[Jeffrey Eugenides hosted by Literati](#)

October 19th:

[Aunt Agatha's 25th Anniversary
Celebration](#)

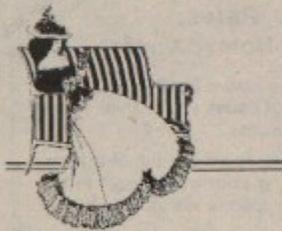
November 4th:

[David Sedaris at the Detroit Opera
House](#)

December 2nd and 3rd:

[Friends of AADL Book Shop Holiday
Sale](#)

**new
paperbacks
at
Borders**



Two Nations: Black and White, Separate, Hostile, Unequal
by Andrew Hacker.
BALLANTINE \$10.00.

Praying For Sheetrock: A Work of Nonfiction
by Melissa Fay Greene.
FAWCETT COLUMBINE \$10.00.

Wild Orchids and Trotsky: Messages from American Universities
Edited by Mark Edmundson.
PENGUIN \$12.00.

Stolen Continents: The "New World" Through Indian Eyes
by Ronald Wright.
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN \$12.95.

Secrets of Life/Secrets of Death: Essays on Language, Gender & Science
by Evelyn Fox Keller.
ROUTLEDGE \$11.95.

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parking validated

Agenda, February 1993. Courtesy of [AADL's
Old News site.](#)

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