



Member Spotlight: Beryl Tushingham

Born in Bristol, England and later living in Wiltshire, Beryl remembers the days before, during and after World War II.

She graduated in 1947 from a Church of England college, just in time to help with the considerable teacher shortage following the war, and recalled that class sizes often exceeded 50 children and that teaching equipment was in short supply.



In 1952, she and her husband Norman, a naval architect who was recruited by the Canadian Navy, sailed to North America, where a train ride from Halifax to Montreal further introduced them to this new world. She recalls an incident on the train where, in search of a bathroom, she blundered into a luxurious empty bedroom, complete with its own corner bathroom. Emerging from it, Beryl found the bedroom occupied by a bishop and several young priests! Fortunately, all involved found the incident amusing and continued to laugh about it every time they moved about on the train journey.

Over the next 28 years, Beryl and Norman lived in Ottawa, Halifax, New York, New Jersey and California. Following Norman's death in 1980, family problems resulted in a move back to England, where Beryl settled in Warminster and where, she says, her life calmed down and she was finally able to explore her origins.

One of these explorations was to the nearby estate of Longleat, home of Lord Bath (who died of Covid-19 this past spring at the age of 88). Like many neighbors, Beryl's father had fished in the lakes on the extensive property, and Beryl enjoyed many picnics on the grounds.



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Travel was once again part of Beryl's life in 2014, when she, her daughter Sue, and granddaughter Lucy, sailed for the US on the Queen Mary, a journey made a bit more difficult by Beryl's broken hip, which happened shortly before the departure. However, she notes, Sue is a nurse, which made the trip much more comfortable than it might have otherwise been. (In a side note, Beryl added that the family's three

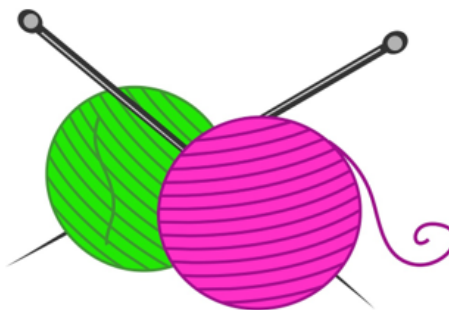
horses and four cats traveled by air and arrived safely at Newark Airport!)

Today, Beryl and her cat Sylvie live in a Kinderhook apartment. She is the substitute organist at nearby St. Paul's Church, and notes that she also enjoys sewing, knitting, concerts, other cultural events, learning about early American settlers, and watching the BBC News, History and Smithsonian channels on TV.

With many good and interesting stories to share, Beryl welcomes the opportunity to meet more neighbors and NNCC members.

Hands On

Calling all knitters and crocheters! Our little group called "Loving Hands" meets every Wednesday morning from 10-11:30 at the Maranatha Church in Chatham-1965 Route 203. Look for the lawn sign to know you are in the right place.



We are enjoying our time chatting more than knitting (!), enjoying the weather outside with our own cool drink, or safely distancing inside in the appreciated air conditioning. Members, non-members, and volunteers are all welcome!

If you have any questions, leave a message for Donna Rich on our NNCC phone-518-392-0191.

NNCC Member publishes children's book



Former NNCC Board Member Jennifer Birckmayer recently published a delightful children's book about the North Chatham Library.

Designed by

Marcel Parrilla and illustrated by Chloe Moore, the book is titled "The Little Library That Moved Down the Road."

The idea for the book arose from a conversation Jennie had with her friend, George Vollmuth. "I learned that over the course of more than a hundred years the library was moved three times to the yards of people who had each agreed to take a turn as librarian," she says. "I thought it was an incredible account of the efforts of a small community to care for and preserve a library, and I wanted to show young readers that libraries are made by communities—they don't just spring into being."

In the book, Jennie has two fictionalized children—Eliza and Jack—participate in the dramatic and challenging community efforts to move the small building by horse and hay cart to its present location on the corner of Route 203

in the North Chatham hamlet. She says that she, along with the equally talented illustrator and designer, worked on the book for three years, “slotting in the work between other activities.”



When asked about the audience for “The Little Library that Moved Down the Road,” Jennie encouraged families to use the book as a read-aloud opportunity, since there is not only a local history lesson contained in its pages, but also “a lot more to discuss.”

Though, at present, copies of her book are available at both the North Chatham and Kinderhook libraries, Jennie is working on also being able to sell it. You can email her at jmb25@cornell.edu for more information about both the book and a possible online discussion via Zoom.

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Neighbors of Northern Columbia County

Our website is:
northerncolumbia.helpfulvillage.com

Our phone number is:
518.392.0191

Our mailing address is:
PO Box 582, Valatie, NY 12184

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