

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT

The Beaman Memorial Public Library brings people and information together. The Library enriches the community by providing print and electronic resources, a community gathering space, and opportunities for personal growth and development.

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The purpose of the Beaman Memorial Public Library Collection Development Policy is to provide staff with a guideline for day-to-day acquisition and withdrawal decisions, resource allocation, and long-range planning of collection needs in accordance with the Library's mission. It is a tool for communication with library users about such decisions and a framework for responding to community needs and interests.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Board of Library Trustees has overall responsibility for the Library's collection. Collection development and management activities are administered by the Library Director and implemented by the staff.

PRINCIPLES

The Library is dedicated to the free and open distribution of ideas and is a government-funded agency. The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution insures that ideas cannot be restricted by the government. It is, therefore, the responsibility of libraries to provide the wide range of ideas, opinions and information necessary for the functioning of a democratic society.

The Library is dedicated to free and open access for all. No restriction is placed on the use of the library's collection based on age, race, sex, nationality, educational background, physical limitations, or any other criteria that may be the source of discrimination.

The Library is dedicated to protecting individuals' rights to decide for themselves and for their own children which library materials to use. The Library will not restrict what is added to the collection, or base decisions on what to remove from the collection, based upon a desire to protect potential users from the contents of the material. The Library strongly encourages all parents to establish guidelines for their own child's use of library materials.

The inclusion of any item in the Library's collection does not constitute an endorsement by the Library or the Town of the item's contents.

The Board of Library Trustees upholds the principles of intellectual freedom as stated in the American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights" and "Freedom Read Statement" (see

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

West Boylston is located in Worcester County, bordered by Worcester and Shrewsbury on the south, Holden on the west, Sterling on the north, and Boylston and the Wachusett Reservoir on the east. West Boylston is about 7 miles north of Worcester, 18 miles south of Fitchburg, 41 miles west of Boston, and 185 miles from New York City.

The Town is 13.85 square miles in area with a land area of 12.90 square miles. Our current (2014 DOR est.) population of 7,779 already outstrips the MISER (Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research) population trend estimates for the Town (7,477) in 2010. With this increase the population per square mile is now approximately 603. Perhaps most significant in terms of this policy is the fact that the median age for West Boylston is consistently higher than the state median in each of the last two censuses.

The Town has an independent public school system with one school building housing Pre-K to Grade 5 and a second housing Grades 6 to 12. Both schools have been renovated and expanded within the last twenty years. The latest figures for the total school population 945 with students petitioning the district for admittance under the State's School Choice program. Salter College, a private institution of higher learning, offers men and women comprehensive training and preparation for careers in business, healthcare, computers and culinary arts. Numerous other colleges and universities are located nearby in the city of Worcester and its environs.

PATRON NEEDS AND LIBRARY SERVICES

The Beaman Memorial Public Library serves people of all ages and interests, placing special emphasis on individual services and responsiveness to patron requests. In addition to basic services the library offers a wide variety of adult, teen, and children's programs in response to community needs and interests.

The Library serves as a community center by providing facilities for group meetings, offering a location to post and advertise community events, and by collecting community and public service information for our patrons. The library also serves as a computer technology center, providing the resources needed by staff for provision of excellent reference services, and direct access for patrons to a variety of technology resources that support their information needs, complement home electronic resources, and ensure access to individuals who otherwise have none.

Other services to the community include: outreach efforts to various book groups, homebound

individuals, and residents of the local nursing home; a vibrant summer reading program for persons of all ages; entertaining and informative activities; and, materials in support of independent learning. The Library collaborates with the local school system's summer reading requirements and supports the schools by providing materials that complement curriculum needs. Attention is given to independent learners and support is provided for home-schooling families.

The Friends of the Beaman Library provide the library with museum passes which allow residents and Friends members free or discounted museum admission. The Friends select which museum passes the library will receive and particular passes are subject to change on an annual basis. These passes may be reserved in advance. The Friends also fund the majority of programs put on by the library for the community.

THE CONCEPT OF COOPERATIVE COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

C/W MARS (Central/Western Massachusetts Resource Sharing) is a multi-type automated library consortium that facilitates efficient resource sharing and rapid access to information for users of its member libraries. C/W MARS has over 140 member libraries, including public, academic, special and school libraries, which circulate more than thirteen million items annually. This consortium offers a shared online computer system and combined collections of more than nine million items.

In 2014, the Beaman Memorial Public Library borrowed 7,122 items through Inter Library Loan, and 7,997 local items were lent to other libraries through the same process. A daily delivery service, provided by the Massachusetts Library System and funded by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, delivers materials to patrons of libraries across the state. MLS also provides links to other library consortia and networks to obtain materials not found in the C/W MARS database.

Inter Library Loan, however, is not a substitute for the development of adequate collections based on the needs of a library's service area and patrons. When areas in the collection are inadequate to meet regular patron demand, purchases will be made to correct the situation rather than repeatedly relying on interlibrary loan.

The Beaman Memorial Public Library cannot expect to fill every patron request from its own shelves. Libraries are being used more than ever before, and more materials are being published in more formats. The purpose of cooperative collection development is to assist this library in responding in a timely way to patron demands for materials that lie outside of the current collection.

ACCESS TO OUTSIDE RESOURCES

The Beaman Memorial Public Library makes use of a variety of outside resources to directly or indirectly supplement the collections. In most cases patrons use these materials as part of the regular collection and are not required to submit a special request. In some cases, such as interlibrary loan services, the patron must initiate the request for additional resources.

OTHER LIBRARIES - Through regional and statewide lending programs (Inter Library

Loan and patron placed holds) the library has access to the collections of various types of libraries. Residents of West Boylston must speak to a librarian to initiate such requests and to learn the best way to acquire materials.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY – The BPL serves as a library for any resident of the State of Massachusetts. Residents may apply over the Internet for an eCard with access to all online resources including eBooks, movies, audio file, magazines, and more. Residents of the State may also apply for a full service card at any Boston Public Library branch.

MASSACHUSETTS TRIAL COURT LAW LIBRARIES - These state-supported libraries maintain extensive collections of legal reference sources. The Law Libraries are open to the public, providing legal reference services and legal research assistance. The closest law library to West Boylston is located across from the Worcester Court House at 184 Main Street, Worcester.

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES - In some cases a librarian may refer the patron to a specific government agency to directly obtain authoritative and up-to-date information. The library staff will use the Internet or print directories to refer patrons to a specific agency. There are times, however, that a referral is not necessary such as when the information needed can be found online or in a printed reference source.

MASSACHUSETTS LIBRARY SYSTEM - The Beaman Memorial Public Library makes use of a variety of resources and services offered by MLS. Such services include reference support, professional consultation, training and staff development opportunities, on-line information services, and program support.

MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS - The MBLC maintains extensive online databases to support reference services to residents of the State as well as an extensive professional collection for use by librarians.

INTERNET RESOURCES - In response to current technologies and changing needs of the community, the Beaman Memorial Public Library endeavors to develop Internet-accessible collections, resources, and services that meet the cultural, informational, recreational, social, and educational needs of the people of West Boylston. It is within this context that the Beaman Memorial Public Library offers access to the Internet. Patrons are encouraged to make use of this free Internet service.

ACCESS TO INTERNET RESOURCES

The Beaman Memorial Public Library does not monitor and has no control over the information accessed through the Internet, nor does the library have complete knowledge of or control over what is available through the Internet. Information on the Internet may be reliable and current or it may be inaccurate, out-of-date, or unavailable at times. Patrons need to be good information consumers, questioning the validity of the information they find. Each individual user is the

ultimate judge of the appropriateness and value of material accessed via the Internet.

The Library maintains a website which provides information about services, programs, and policies. Links to other websites that have been deemed useful (such as Town department listings), educational (such as databases), or entertaining are also available.

As part of overall reference services, the library staff evaluates many Internet sites and marks those it deems especially useful to patrons and staff.

The Beaman Memorial Public Library offers computers for patron use. Internet access for adults is not filtered while access on computers in the Children's Room and the teen area are equipped with filtering software. Wireless access is available in most areas of the Library. This access is not filtered or protected in any way.

DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

The Beaman Memorial Public Library collection is constantly evolving with nearly 93,000 items: 63% adult, 30% children's, and 7% YA titles. The library subscribes to 80 periodicals, and 25 electronic subscriptions and collections. The library owns 2,130 audios, 3,386 DVDs, 70 CD-ROMs and other computer discs and electronic games, 141 miscellaneous items such as storybook characters, toys, and kits, and has access to over 30,000 eBooks through membership in C/WMARS. New media types are added as they become available and demand is indicated.

The collection strengths fall in three areas.

- Both the fiction and popular materials collections are strong. New materials are ordered on an ongoing basis in response to patron requests and projected demand.
- The children's collection is strong, particularly in the area of picture books. Numerous and varied children's books support children's learning, growth and interests.
- Local history is also another focus of the collection. This group of materials contains numerous items that can support local researchers and genealogists. Of special note are the documents and photographs recording the history of the Wachusett Reservoir construction and its impact on the Town. The books from the collections of David and Lydia Maria Childs, who gained some prominence in the abolitionist movement, journalism, and as a popular novelist, are housed in this collection and periodically attract professional researchers. The Library also maintains a complete collection of the *Old Farmer's Almanac* originally published in West Boylston by Robert B. Thomas, the community's first Town Clerk.

ACCESS

All who enter the Library may browse and use materials. The Library assures access to its holdings, without fees, for all patrons, who may select or reject for themselves any item in the collection. Individual or group objection to a particular item or type of material in the collection may not preclude its use by others. Access to information is available by mail, telephone or other electronic

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means according to the limits set in the reference policy.

Patrons wishing to borrow circulating materials directly from the Beaman Memorial Public Library collection must register for a patron card according to the guidelines of the registration policy. A Beaman Library patron card or one from another C/WMARS member library can be used to borrow materials from any portion of the circulating collection. To facilitate use, materials for children, teens and adults are shelved in separate areas, but borrowing is not restricted by area. Responsibility for a child's use of library materials rests with the parent or guardian, not with the Library.

REQUEST FOR WITHDRAWAL OR ADDITION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

Whenever a patron objects to the presence or absence of any particular material, the complainant will be given a hearing. All complaints to staff members will be referred to the Library Director who will discuss the matter with the person. If the patron wishes s/he will be supplied with a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form. If there is a request for withdrawal or addition of material, the Library Director will consider the request and make a decision based on the item's conformity to selection standards and criteria set forth in this policy. This decision may be further appealed to the Board of Library Trustees at a regularly scheduled meeting. Materials subject to review shall continue to circulate pending final action.

GIFTS

Gifts are accepted with the understanding that all books or other items so given may or may not be added to the collection. Gift materials, including titles new to the collection, are subject to the same selection standards as materials purchased by the Library. Items not added to the Library collection may be donated to the Friends of the Beaman Memorial Public Library for later sale, or disposed of in a reasonable manner. Donated materials will not be placed on special shelves, or separated from other similar materials already in the collection. Donated materials will display a bookplate to recognize the donation.

Free informational literature on topics of educational, cultural, social and recreational concern to the community is displayed and distributed in various locations in the Library including bulletin boards both in the Children's Room and on the main floor.

GENERAL SELECTION GUIDELINES

GENERAL COLLECTION PRIORITIES

The Board of Library Trustees has overall responsibility for collection development. Such responsibility is delegated to the Library Director, who in turns delegates responsibility for development of specific sections of the collection to appropriate staff members.

In general, collection priority is given to materials with current information, popular and current appeal to users and chosen in response to readers' requests. The library collects classic materials in

areas such as: Fiction, Philosophy, History, Cookery, Religion, Sociology, Literature, Art and Architecture, Gardening and Biography. (Classic materials are defined as chronologically older titles which are listed in Fiction Catalog, Public Library Catalog, or other professional bibliographies.) The library primarily collects current materials in the areas of Health, Medicine, Science, Travel Guides, Technology, Law, Business, Computer Science, and Sports.

The library purchases and leases duplicates for materials that are in great demand. Leasing is the preferred option; if continual demand is anticipated or the material cannot be leased, the library will purchase an additional copy. Duplicate materials are procured for materials that circulate for a two week loan period and have 5 holds, or for materials that circulate for a three week loan period and have 3 holds. Duplicate copies may also be purchased in support of Summer Reading lists established by West Boylston schools; school support is crucial to this effort.

As the cost of books continues to rise, paperback materials become a cost effective alternative to hardcover books. Trade paperbacks and some mass-market paperbacks are purchased to meet heavy demand for hardcover materials or as duplicates for titles on school reading lists. Many donated paperbacks are added to the collection to meet the demand for popular, portable, inexpensive reading materials. Titles only available in paperback may be purchased to meet a specific need. Since paperbacks are inexpensive, and because they are easily damaged, the paperback collection is weeded more frequently.

Materials in the English language are given priority over non-English materials. The primary format of materials is print, but not limited to print. Unabridged editions receive priority over abridgements which will be considered only if they retain the flavor and quality of the original work. The library does not ordinarily purchase textbooks, except in those subject areas where materials in another form are not available.

Collection decisions are based first on the needs of the community. Attention is next focused on the content required to meet that need. Only after the content need has been determined will the actual package or format be considered. The nature of the content and use to which it will be put determines the format. Other considerations in selecting a format include cost and available space for storage and display. New formats purchased by the library are based on these considerations and user needs.

Materials purchased for the collection of the Beaman Memorial Public Library are paid for with funds provided through the annual operating budget from the Town, interest from specific Trust funds, and monetary donations from private groups or individuals. Such monetary donations are placed in a separate account and are expended in a manner consistent with the Collection Development Policy. The Library makes every effort to purchase items in the subject areas or formats specified by the donor; however, due to availability, the library cannot guarantee that particular titles will be purchased. Materials purchased with donated funds will be identified by means of a bookplate naming the donor.

The Library also purchases electronic resources for both the library's collection and the shared

materials in electronic resources within the C/W MARS catalog. Those resources purchased for the shared collection do not fall under this Collection Development Policy.

SELECTION PROCESS

Materials (both print and non-print) are selected by members of the Beaman Memorial Public Library staff using a variety of reviewing media. Responsibility for ordering materials is delegated to the Children's Librarian, the YA Specialist and the Assistant Director.

When selecting non-fiction materials for the collection, the staff considers the author's competency, overall excellence of the material (artistic, literary, etc.), superiority in treatment of controversial issues, ability to stimulate further intellectual and social development, appropriateness to the level of the user, and potential usefulness to the library's collection. Due to limited resources and because the Library has access to the collections of other libraries through Interlibrary Loan, the relevance of the material to our collection is especially considered. Material that receives positive reviews might not be purchased if it duplicates comparable materials already owned.

The Library attempts to purchase a wide variety of fiction titles to satisfy the needs of all our borrowers. The library staff chooses titles based on reviews that consider, among other things: the appeal of a book for a specific audience, the artistic skill evident in its rendering, and the literary reputation of the author. The same criteria are used for spoken word formats with the additional requirement of clarity of sound and performance quality; selection of audio-visual materials will be considered similarly.

Selection, collection development and maintenance tools include, but are not limited to:

- Reviews in professional, association, and library journals or periodicals which specialize in a particular subject
- Publishers' catalogs and other vendor lists
- Suggestions from Beaman Memorial Public Library patrons
- Direct viewing of materials (sales visits, MLS workshops)
- Standard bibliographies
- Individual expertise of staff and/or community members
- Coverage in local bookstores or media outlets

SPECIFIC SELECTION GUIDELINES

CHILDREN'S MATERIALS

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PICTURE BOOKS, which constitute an important part of the children's collection, are predominantly visual in format and designed to be used by young children; they are often shared with an adult. Picture books are purchased to introduce children to the world of books and literacy, cultivate pre-reading and other developmental skills, and create a life-long love of reading. Purchasing is heavy in this area to accommodate user demand.

CHILDREN'S FICTION includes novels and short stories written for children of all ages and abilities. Easy readers, fiction series, classic children's novels and award winners can be found in this collection. Children's fiction is purchased to expand and develop children's reading skills and provide enjoyment of the printed page. The library acquires a wide variety of genres in response to children's reading interests and school needs.

CHILDREN'S NON-FICTION is purchased to present information and provide reading enjoyment for the pre-reader to the experienced reader. These books are written predominantly for children and are selected for this special appeal. Non-fiction includes, but is not limited to: biography, folklore, science, nature, health, history, crafts, literature, and other informational books.

CHILDREN'S REFERENCE materials are selected to support children's informational and school assignment needs. This collection includes: children's encyclopedias, almanacs, and e-content. Some of these items do not circulate at all or may be held on "special reserve" to support specific class assignments.

PARENTS' SHELF materials are selected to provide information for parents of younger children. This circulating collection is housed in an area adjacent to the Children's Room (alongside the magazine collection) in order to accommodate the browsing needs of parents visiting the library with their children. This collection is only a portion of the total number of items on the subject of parenting; other titles can be found in adult non-fiction.

CHILDREN'S AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS are selected from reviews, prior viewing, patron interest or fulfillment of a specific need within the collection.

MAGAZINE subscriptions are purchased for children's reading pleasure and informational needs. They are designed to be used by the youngster and often shared with an adult. In addition, magazine subscriptions are purchased for the Parents' Shelf for adults looking for information on parenting topics as well as on family activities to share with their children.

CHILDREN'S ELECTRONIC RESOURCES are purchased to provide children with fun learning experiences. Ongoing acquisitions are provided through donations and support of the Friends, as well as municipal funding. Educational databases are available in-house and on computers outside the library for patrons with an active library card to encourage curiosity and to support the learning process.

Young adult materials are selected for young people approximately twelve to eighteen years of age. Young adults are not limited to the collection that has been selected for them. They are encouraged to make full use of the entire collection to the extent that their interests and capabilities allow. Likewise, readers from other age groups may wish to use the Young Adult collection.

YOUNG ADULT FICTION materials consist of hard cover, soft cover and audio format books to serve the reading interests of Middle and High School students. Items are chosen to provide a variety of genres and to meet popular demand. Since these selections help bridge the transition from children's to young adult books and from young adult to adult titles, materials may vary greatly in subject matter and in reading levels. Series titles, classic paperbacks, and books in graphic format comprise a smaller portion of the collection. Selections are based on journal reviews and recommendations from patrons.

YOUNG ADULT NON-FICTION materials are selected to meet the informational needs and interests of Middle and High School students. These materials are shelved with the full non-fiction collection to provide a bridge to that collection. Reference materials useful for student's assignments are shelved within the full reference collection.

YOUNG ADULT PERIODICALS form a limited collection selected to serve the popular reading interests of young adults. These items are intended to circulate.

AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS of interest to young adults are chosen to supplement the print collection. These items serve to address the educational and entertainment needs of young adults as well as to provide resources for reluctant readers. Music CDs, video games, and audio books, shelved in the young adult area, appeal to a broad audience and provide additional resources for readers of varying abilities. DVDs of interest to young adults are shelved within the adult collection.

YOUNG ADULT ELECTRONIC RESOURCES are provided to enhance young adults' online educational and reference activities. Educational databases may be accessed from inside the library or from out-of-library locations through the library's webpage. The young adult section of the library's website provides links to teen readers' resources, information about eBooks, and resources designed to assist students with homework, career exploration and the college search process.

ADULT COLLECTION

FICTION titles are acquired in hardcover, paperback and audio-visual formats in response to popular demand. Timely response to user requests is a high priority in overall library service. In order to meet this demand, materials may be acquired through a variety of means including purchase, lease, loan and donation, within the boundaries of this policy, budget considerations and space constraints. Beyond this there is attention given to providing

balance within the collection regarding genres, diversity of authors, and those works that stand the test of time. In the development of this balance the library recognizes that it may not always be possible to meet user demand but, as noted above, alternate resources are always pursued.

NON-FICTION materials are selected in hardcover, paperback and audio-visual formats to meet the reading interests and informational needs of the community. Titles are chosen for their relevance, timeliness and appeal.

REFERENCE materials are selected in both print and electronic format to meet the general informational needs of library patrons and include local reports, a variety of forms, and notices for public viewing. As is typical of a small public library, we collect a broad range of topics rather than specializing in any specific topic area. Every attempt is made to keep time-sensitive materials up-to-date. Reference materials must be used within the Library.

A small portion of reference materials are set aside in separate “ready reference” areas for use by the staff and for patrons upon request. Professional reference materials for librarians are collected in office areas, primarily for staff use, but may also be used by the public upon request.

Electronic databases are purchased to support reference services and are supplemented by purchases made by various state entities for use both within the library and on computers located outside the physical building.

MAGAZINE subscriptions are selected for their general interest and popular appeal. Technical, scholarly, industry-based, or other subject specific journals are not collected. Donations of current periodical subscriptions conforming to the overall guidelines set forth in this policy are accepted. Back issue of periodicals are maintained for various lengths of time, as space allows, and most back issues may be accessed through electronic databases or retrieved through Inter-Library Loan.

NEWSPAPERS, primarily a small collection of local/regional newspapers, are purchased for use within the library. Back issues are held for one month as space allows. *The Banner*, the local newspaper, is considered integral to the permanent local history collection and is maintained indefinitely.

AUDIOVISUAL collection materials currently consist of audio books, music, movies, documentaries, television series, and video games. At the time the Library only collects film in DVD format, and donations are welcomed. New purchase selections are made based on patron requests, popularity, relevance to the community, relation to existing collections, price and availability.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS from the Historical Collection have been made available online through participation with Boston Public Library and the Digital Commonwealth site.

Images include the complete collection of photographs taken DURING THE BUILDING OF THE Wachusett Reservoir. Staff chooses images to submit for digitization and produces the metadata necessary to give access to the information about the image. Additional groups of photographs may be selected as funds become available.

LARGE PRINT is a growing collection of popular titles in both fiction and non-fiction. New titles are purchased on a regular basis and include large print magazines and an abridged weekly newspaper.

EBOOKS and other downloadable resources are purchased through membership in C/W MARS and for patrons state-wide by the MBLC. These entities are responsible for negotiating and maintaining license agreements, maintaining budget information, ordering materials in response to requests and reading lists, arranging access and discovery, maintaining the database of catalogue records, and associated information services such as the website and supporting librarians and readers.

WEEDING

Selection of materials for the library collection is an ongoing process which includes the removal of materials no longer appropriate and the replacement of lost and worn materials that are still of value for informational or recreational needs.

Weeding the library collection is as much a routine as the acquisition of new materials. The purpose of discarding materials from the collection is to maintain an accurate and up-to-date collection for library customers. Materials which are inaccurate, outdated, unused, or in poor condition detract from the usefulness and aesthetic appeal of the collection. These materials take up shelf space that could be occupied by needed and requested materials.

Weeding is primarily a designated responsibility of the Children's Librarian and the Assistant Director; however, every member of the staff may participate in that process. The goal of the Beaman Memorial Public Library is that each section of the collection is to be weeded on a regular basis to keep the collection up-to-date. Special attention is paid to medical, legal, computer science and technology, and travel materials as they tend to become "dated" rapidly. Areas of the collection that are overly crowded (occupying both the top and bottom shelves of the section and without approximately 6 inches of space on a shelf) should be given immediate attention.

Materials are discarded from the collection using the MUSTY guidelines for weeding. Items that are weeded from the collection include ones that are: misleading or factually inaccurate; damaged, soiled or worn; outdated or superseded by a new edition or newer title on the same subject; trivial or having no discernable literary or scientific merit; irrelevant to the current needs and interests of the community or containing information that may be obtained more readily elsewhere. Staff also employs professional guidelines and collection development tools such as Public Library Catalog. Materials that have not circulated in three to five years, duplicate titles no longer needed to meet demand, or damaged materials are also considered for discarding.

Discarded items in reasonable condition will be placed in the Friends of the Library book sale. Items in damaged or outdated condition will be recycled or thrown out. Reference discards may or may not be offered to other libraries in the State.

Specific weeding guidelines:

General Encyclopedias with publication dates older than four years will be withdrawn from the collection. Periodicals are retained for two years except for newspapers (1 month) and *The Banner* (indefinitely). College guides and test study guides are retained for two years and then discarded. Travel guides are retained for three years and then discarded. Audio-visual materials are discarded if they are damaged or have not circulated in three years. Toys and kits will be evaluated and may be discarded if they are damaged, outdated, or have not circulated in three years.

WEST BOYLSTON ROOM COLLECTIONS

The historical collection includes: local history, genealogy, and public documents and is housed in the West Boylston Room. The purpose of this collection is to gather in one place, organize, and properly store information on West Boylston from its earliest settlement to the present day. The Library strives to make these materials available to the public for research and teaching from the intermediate level (5th grade and up) to college and graduate levels and for independent researchers. The safety of the collection is paramount. Access to materials from this area of the collection will be provided during the hours when there is a librarian available to assist with research. The director reserves the right to restrict use of any document or part of the collection to an appropriate level of research or researcher.

In its role as a community center the Library maintains this valuable collection of local history, genealogical information and various artifacts in a secure area. Materials so housed are intended to be a small but focused collection of information on West Boylston history, social life, work and industry, religion and churches, schools, etc. Emphasis is on printed materials: books, pamphlets, newspaper articles, school yearbooks, photographs of a reasonable (storable) size, preferably unframed maps, especially pre-1900 maps of the town, and available genealogies and family histories of early West Boylston families.

The general historical collection includes a specific collection relative to the life and times of West Boylston from its founding in 1808. This West Boylston Collection consists of town reports, unpublished materials, historical records, *The Old Farmer's Almanac* (1793 to the present), photographs, maps, school yearbooks, and clippings from local newspapers pertaining to West Boylston. The historical collection is especially rich in materials dealing with the construction of the Wachusett Reservoir, covering the period from 1895 to 1905, and local newspaper archives. Library history and archives are maintained within the historical collection as well as period histories and records from the Civil War and Vital Records (up to 1850) of many Massachusetts communities to aid in genealogical research.

The decision to add any item or material to the historical collection is the prerogative of the Library Director as is the decision to exclude or remove certain items. The collection may include all types of materials which can be stored and organized appropriately, such as books, pamphlets, newspaper clippings, maps, small photographs and pictures, and manuscripts. The Library's ability to properly store and care for items is a major factor in deciding whether or not to retain certain materials.

Material for the historical collection is acquired through purchase following standard procedures from publishers, museums, historical societies, etc., or as gifts or donations. The Beaman Memorial Public Library welcomes such gifts, as this is often the only way to acquire local manuscripts, maps and other historic documents. The Director may decide that a donation is best used in the regular collection or, in some cases, channeled to a more appropriate institution. The Director will be happy to help a potential donor find the best repository for any gift that cannot be accommodated within the library's collections.

In order to maintain a concentrated collection, donations under consideration should be within the scope of the collection as outlined above, should be in useful and storable format, and given without any restrictions as to permanency, limitations on access by the public, or in any other way. Should the donor have a particular reason for wishing to place limitations on a proposed gift, the Director will be happy to discuss the situation and work to find adequate solutions or compromises. Neither the Director nor any staff member is qualified to give evaluations for tax purposes on any donation. A third party evaluation is required for substantial gifts.

The collections located in the West Boylston Room are generally available to the public. However, because of the value of many of the documents, and because many of them could not be replaced if lost or damaged, they must be used under staff supervision. This collection does not circulate and must be used at an assigned location within the building. There are strict limits on photocopying and patrons must check with the director before doing so. Access to the West Boylston Room and its collections is obtained through a staff person at the Adult Circulation desk. In-depth questions requiring staff research for information that may be contained within these materials are often deferred until such time as adequate staff resources are available.