

PPL

Conservator Society

FEBRUARY 2025



Celebrating PPL's 150th History and Traditions

Welcome 2025! We've been looking forward to this year for quite some time! As many know, it represents 150 years since the Library's official incorporation in April 1875...so we want to formally kick off our celebrations here. You may have already seen some mentions in our program newsletter, along with our PPL150 identity. And, we invite you to check out our official [150th Anniversary web pages](#), where we feature a [historical timeline](#), [picture gallery](#), and more! Over the coming weeks, we will continue to announce more plans for highlighting and celebrating the Library's illustrious history – including an extra-special 10th annual Savor the Story Gala! – as well as our hopes and aspirations for the next 150 years!

For any organization that has stood the test of time like PPL, it truly IS an accomplishment! Achieving 150 years and continuing to thrive and evolve is definitely worth celebrating! But, we recognize that we would not be here today without the extraordinary support of many people over the years and notably our closest champions . . . our Conservators.

As we celebrate this year, we will be focused on highlighting PPL's vital role in and commitment to our community over the decades, specifically the Library's mission and dedication to meeting the needs of the day – whatever they may be – through the development of innovative services and programs. This has been a defining element of PPL's rich history.

Many people don't fully realize that PPL is actually an independent, nonprofit organization governed by a [Board of Trustees](#) and that we rely immensely on private donations and the support of our community. But it is this aspect that also contributes greatly to the Library's ability not only to respond quickly and creatively to needs while also working with and support other organizations in our community. Partnering and collaborating with others has been something PPL has done successfully throughout its 150 years.

It's actually kind of in our DNA from our very origins . . . from the very beginning when the Library was formed through the pooling of resources and collections of several entities, including The Franklin Society and The Franklin Lyceum, the

150th, continued on back

In the Stacks

UPCOMING EVENTS

CHOP It Up!

February 18 | 5:30 – 8 pm

You are invited to Cooking with CHOP! We are thrilled to announce that we have made this event **hybrid**, and are accepting in-person *and* virtual RSVPs. **Note: in-person seats are limited and will be designated on a first come, first served basis.** For virtual participants, we'll share a meeting link and curate boxes of ingredients for your convenience. We'll connect with you directly to coordinate the ingredients box pick-up.

What's cooking? CHOP Chef Josh will lead a live cooking demo, preparing a fresh fish crudo served with a radicchio and candied nut salad. Bar Master Sophie will walk us through crafting a perfectly paired cocktail, a **Corpse Survivor No. 2**, designed to complement the flavor profiles of our main dish.

If you would like to attend, in-person or virtually, **please RSVP to Annie by February 12 at afoley@provlb.org.**

Poetry Out Loud

Saturday, March 8 | 10 am – 2 pm

Donald J. Farish Auditorium, 3rd Floor

Join us as we celebrate 20 years of Poetry Out Loud, an extraordinary event showcasing talented youth from across Rhode Island competing for a chance to win \$20,000. Experience powerful performances and a featured artist performance with RI Poet Laureate Colin Channer. For more info, visit poetryoutloud.org.

Spaces That Hold Us

March 24 – June 3

Opening Reception: Saturday, March 29 | 1 – 3:45 pm

Joan T. Boghossian Gallery, 3rd Floor

In "Spaces That Hold Us," artist Bhen Alan explores how Filipino/Filipino-Americans in Providence shape their cultural identity in everyday spaces, such as Asian grocery store aisles, ice cream shops, university parks, and kitchen tables. Through banig (mat) installations, the exhibition highlights the personal stories of Filipino/Filipino Americans, transforming their lives into symbols and patterns woven, embroidered, or painted onto mats. These narratives reveal the resilience of the community and its ongoing commitment to celebrating and redefining Filipino-American identity.



PPL's 150th Birthday Party

Saturday, April 12 | 10 am – 2 pm

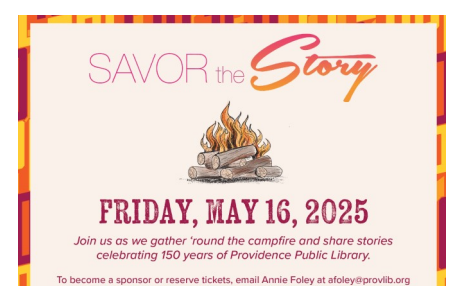
PPL's Workshop, Ground Floor

PPL turns 150 years old on April 7, just in time for 2025 National Library Week! We invite you to join in the fun as we celebrate. Bring family and friends. We'll have lots of PPL memorabilia that you can create and keep during a special 150th Maker Day. While you're here, tell us your library story and become a PPL Alum! Share why you love libraries, and especially PPL – everyone is part of the Library's story! You can even get a new 150th Commemorative Library Card! All this and more being planned.

Save the Date!

Mark your calendar and plan to join us at **CAMP PPL** on **Friday, May 16.**

We're excited to announce our 10th annual **Savor the Story**, when we will also be celebrating PPL's 150th anniversary. We are accepting sponsorships and ticket reservations, so don't be left out! **For complete information, email Annie Foley at afoley@provlb.org.**



PPL Alum Spotlight

Emmanuel — Getting Real World Experiences at the Library

My story with PPL goes back a few years. I was in middle school and looking for ACN courses to take...when I saw the HTML course at PPL, I decided to go for it. Then I took courses in JavaScript and Python. I came back and I did a Data Analytics course, and a computer hardware course. I took nearly every course that the Library had to offer and the new ones that they created. And I feel like it's just been a great experience and I've got to meet so many people, learn new skills and it's just overall been an amazing time.



After I took all the courses offered, the teachers at PPL reached out and asked if I would like to be a teaching assistant for the next course. I was in, absolutely! I set up the classroom and taught alongside the instructor . . . I was able to really connect with the students and my peers and learn so much. I also made new connections and support systems and groups. So, I know, in case I need any advice, mentorship, now I have that.

The opportunity I've had as a teaching assistant and my experience with PPL is something I don't think I would be able to get anywhere else and I think that the information and what I've learned from PPL I can transfer into the real world.

I feel the public library is so deeply important. Libraries really provide you with different experiences and information that you might not have access to. I really find it amazing and fascinating that all of this is just open to the public.

Definitely my time here isn't over, but from what I've gotten so far...everything from resumé help, to financial help and financial literacy, and just so much information and different skills that I will be able to apply into the real world. With all the coding courses I've taken, I've been really inspired . . . maybe for a path that I want to pursue. I can definitely use all the coding skills that I've learned especially as I look to college.



THIS, THAT, And ANOTHER: Providence Public Library's official podcast about all things PPL and the communities we serve

Did you know PPL has a Podcast...officially launched last April during National Library Week!? If you haven't gotten a chance to tune in yet, we invite you to listen and subscribe to PPL's podcast on Spotify. Tune in to stay up to date on PPL news, programs, and events and connected to local authors, artists, and other voices from our community. We talk about books, films, history, library collections and programs, and other topics of interest with members of our library staff and guests.

In our current episode we talk to Lauren Clem, Senior Editor of *Rhode Island Monthly*, and Phil Eil, a freelance journalist, about the important topic of news literacy. National News Literacy Week was just celebrated (Feb. 3 - 7) and obviously news literacy is an important topic during our current times. Also, in this episode, we talked to our own Jack Martin about PPL's 150th anniversary and our history!

150th, continued

Rhode Island Society for the Encouragement of Domestic Industry, and the Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers. This spirit of collaboration continues to this day in everything we do.

If we look at the traditions established by PPL's first librarian/director William Foster, who served until 1930, we can see the roots of the Library's innovative and community-minded spirit. Mr. Foster espoused the development of PPL as a true community library and worked diligently to keep the needs of the community forefront in everything he endeavored. It was in this way that PPL became known regionally and nationally for implementing some very innovative methods and practices.

As we celebrate and look ahead to the Library's next 150 years, we will be aspiring to keep this noble tradition alive . . . and with everyone's support and engagement – from those we serve to all of our generous benefactors, we have no doubt the Library will endure as an essential place at the heart of our community.

DID YOU KNOW...

PPL was among the first public libraries in the country to establish an Information Desk – in 1891 – manned by a reference clerk. Each day a list of books and articles for more information related to a significant news article from the morning *Providence Journal* was created. Similar reference lists were published weekly in *The Journal* for many years. To this day, we have the Rhode Island Index, a subject index PPL librarians kept up for decades chronicling important news from the *ProJo* and linking researchers to microfilm of issues dating back to the 1800s. Both continue to be much used and important resources only available at PPL as part of our Rhode Island Collection!

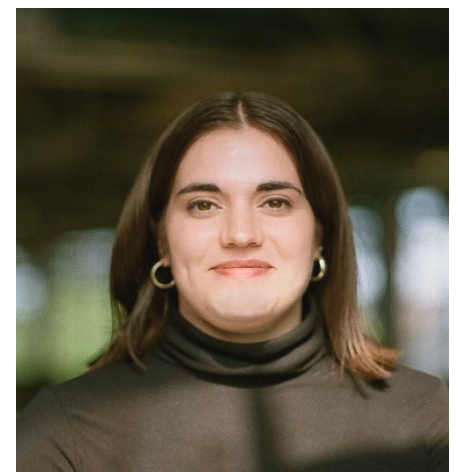
Staff Profile

Gretchen Wright

We are very excited to welcome Gretchen Wright to the External Relations Team as our new Grants Manager!

Gretchen joins us from the Development team at WaterFire Providence, her intro to the amazing world of Providence's arts & culture scene. Prior to that, she served as Director of her hometown library in Jericho, Vermont, and she's super excited to be returning to the library world.

When not at work, you can find Gretchen walking her dog in Roger Williams Park, making the most of Providence Restaurant Week, or cheering on her alma mater, the Duke Blue Devils.



Looking For an Easy Way to Share Some Love for PPL?

With Valentine's Day coming we thought we would share an easy way for you to show your love and support for PPL! Take a look at this [wish list](#) from our Youth Services team and help us keep our shelves fully stocked! Not a fan of Amazon? You're not alone! These are just some of the more needed items they have. If there is another purveyor you would prefer to support, we encourage you to do so and use this list as inspiration.