



## Does It Feel Crowded in Here, or What?

**T**HE LAST TIME THE EDGARTOWN LIBRARY was expanded, in the mid-1970s, our town's population was about 1,700 people. In the past three decades, our numbers have grown to more than 3,900, while the library has expanded not an inch.

In 1979, when our building was new, we had 30,168 books on the shelves. In 2008, our collection numbered 31,132 books — an increase of fewer than a thousand books over 30 years — because those shelves are simply full. Our policy of “one book in, one book out” is necessitated by this reality. Without a rigorous program of what librarians call “weeding,” we’d soon need to hand out crowbars together with new library cards, or patrons wouldn’t be able to pry materials from the shelves.

In fact, the Edgartown Library has considerably less space today for its core book collection than it did 30 years ago. More than 20 percent of the space our library gained in the 1970s has since been taken over by public computers, a service essential today but unimagined (and unplanned-for) a generation ago. The library added an elevator in 1994, losing more than 100 square feet of useful space. We’ve had to make space for nearly 2,000 audio CDs and nearly 4,000 DVDs and VHS movies, all in formats that didn’t exist in 1975. And during this span of time, the library staff has doubled to serve its growing community — yet works today in less physical space.

Seasonal pressures on the Edgartown Library have greatly increased in recent years. One telling statistic here is our number of registered borrowers, which has grown much faster than the year-round population — from 2,491 in 1978 to 7,273 last year. Every year from May through October, the library is a bustling center and essential support system not only for our seasonal property owners, but also for Edgartown’s summer workforce, which comes here from all over the world.

The new service we call interlibrary loans represents as great a sea change for public libraries as the advent of the personal computer — and this, too, adds to the demands on our building. Today, patrons decide first what they’d like to read — and then visit the CLAMS website to request it, or ask a librarian to reserve it for them.

In the town’s 1976 annual report, the library trustees proudly noted that the Edgartown Library that year had



*STANDING ROOM ONLY: The Edgartown Library is the only down-Island library entirely lacking in dedicated space for public programs. So when library trustee and author Herb Foster gave a recent talk on Yiddish and African-American influences on American language, the library closed part of the children’s department (and shut down all the children’s computers) to accommodate the program.*

processed 38 interlibrary loans. Last year, we processed more than 20,000 interlibrary loans. That’s just one more new service we deliver from staff space that’s actually smaller, now, than what we had to work with in 1975.

In June, the Edgartown Library made an acquisition it’s been planning for months, purchasing a new microfilm scanner that’s the most advanced in any public library on the Vineyard. Patrons will soon be able to scan any story from Vineyard newspapers dating back to 1846 and quickly email the images to their computers at home or at school. Our new Minolta microfilm reader is a great piece of equipment, and choosing it took some research. But with every inch of this library already under pressure, the bigger challenge is still ahead: finding a space for the new gear.

[www.edgartownlibrary.org](http://www.edgartownlibrary.org)  
508-627-4221

### Looking for Hot Music Tickets on a Summer Night? How Does Free Sound to You?

**T**HE EDGARTOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY is launching a new series of music programs this summer, featuring Vineyard performing talent and free admission on Tuesday evenings in July and August.

“Sounds Like Summer” is the series name. Each program, presented with support from the Friends of the Edgartown Library, will begin at 6:30 p.m.

Opening our series on Tuesday, July 7, will be the high-energy acoustic band, The Cattle Drivers. This popular Island group brings a modern sensibility to traditional acoustic music, drawing from a songbook steeped in Americana, flavored with current alternative country and peppered with original compositions by lead singer and guitarist, Kevin Keady. Rounding out the band are Mike Tinus on bass, Becky Tinus on violin and Nate Davis on banjo and mandolin.

Continuing our schedule on July 14, Gregg Harcourt and Mary Wolverton (impresarios of Celtic music at Katharine Cornell Theatre) will play traditional and contemporary Irish folk music on guitar and violin. On July 21, violinist Matt Pelikan and cellist Jan Hyer will perform classical favorites. The July 28 program will feature jazz keyboardist

### Foundation Event, Set for Sunday, July 12, Honors S. Bailey Norton Jr.

The Edgartown Library Foundation will host its major event of the summer, an elegant luncheon at the Boathouse Field Club at Katama, on Sunday, July 12, honoring S. Bailey Norton Jr. with a Lifetime Achievement Award. Tickets to the noon event are \$150 per person and will be available through July 6 or until sold out; for more information, inquire at the library front desk.

In addition to honoring Mr. Norton (his beautiful book documenting the people and scenes of his Edgartown, *My Long Journey Home*, is in our library collection), the Foundation luncheon will feature the drawing for a spectacular raffle prize — an all-expenses-paid European river cruise for two. Only 250 chances are being sold for \$250 each (\$110 of which is tax-deductible). For more information, ask at the library desk or contact the Edgartown Library Foundation at Box 1198, Edgartown.



PERFORMING TUESDAY, JULY 7: *The Cattle Drivers* band features, from left: Nate Davis, Becky Tinus, Mike Tinus and Kevin Keady.

Adele Dreyer playing standards, including Gershwin, from the great American songbook.

Grab a blanket and stroll downtown to the library on Tuesday evenings this month — we know you'll find the music worthwhile.

### Library Hours:

Tuesdays & Wednesdays, 10-8  
Thursdays thru Saturdays, 10-5  
Sundays & Mondays, Closed

