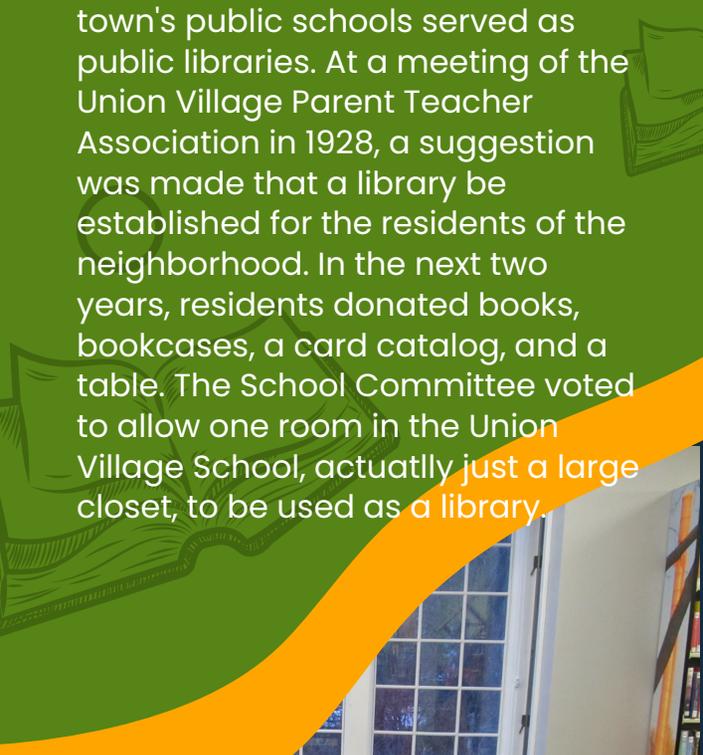


North Smithfield and the village of Slatersville have a rich tradition of supporting libraries and their services to the community. As early as the mid-1800's, Amos D. Lockwood and other supporters established the Slatersville Library. The village was noted for its fine library, containing a collection of valuable books numbering 1,500 volumes.



In the 20th century, many of the town's public schools served as public libraries. At a meeting of the Union Village Parent Teacher Association in 1928, a suggestion was made that a library be established for the residents of the neighborhood. In the next two years, residents donated books, bookcases, a card catalog, and a table. The School Committee voted to allow one room in the Union Village School, actually just a large closet, to be used as a library.



Over time, the library has reconfigured the space to meet with current demands. High density stacks were installed in 2001 to increase material capacity, and more room has been made available to meet the needs for computer usage and DVD collections. The library now houses a collection of over 58,000 items.



Today, the library is a vibrant center for the community, with over 33,000 visits annually, providing not only books, magazines, and DVDs, but classes in the arts, computing, organization, and health-related topics. In addition, there are many hugely popular children's programs, playgroups, teen programs. There are passes to borrow, movies to watch, books to discuss, ever-changing programs to attend, a friendly face to greet you, and, as always, a comfortable chair to sit in and read while overlooking our beautiful, natural setting.



## History of North Smithfield Public Library

---

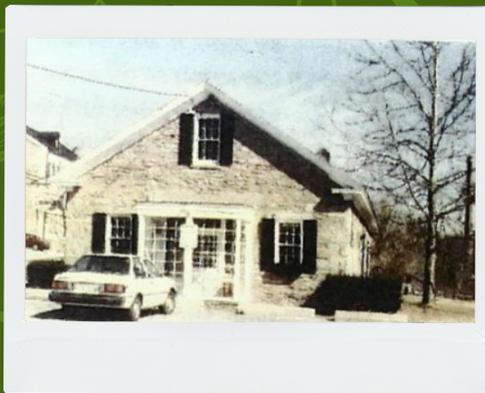
The library was officially incorporated as the Union Village Public Library in 1931. Perhaps you might recognize some of the names of the original trustees:

Samuel Farron 71 Great Road  
Maria Jewell 163 Great Road  
Helen Bradford 31 Warren Ave  
Ruth Kelly 199 Great Road  
Herbert Carpenter 86 Great Rd

The library was formed for the purpose of *"receiving, holding, and administering property and employing the same in the establishment of a free public library in Union Village, in the Town of North Smithfield, in the state of Rhode Island, and by means of such library promoting the intellectual, artistic and social life of the people of the Town of North Smithfield, Rhode Island."* These are words that still hold true to North Smithfield Public Library's mission today.

In its first year of existence, the Union Village Public Library reported that there were 750 volumes in the library with a circulation of 1,813 books since January 16, 1931.

In the early 1940's, libraries were added in Bushee, Forestdale and Kendall-Dean schools, as a result



Union Village Public Library had its name changed to North Smithfield Public Library in 1944.

Mrs. Louise Hamlett, the director of the library from 1957 to 1977 tells of transporting books in laundry baskets stowed in the trunk of her car from one school to another - a precursor of the present interlibrary loan system which links all of Rhode Island's public libraries.



In March of 1966, the library trustees decided to consolidate all the school libraries and leased the John Slater Building, a former mill store in the old Slatersville mill complex. The original library building, which now serves as the children's section of the library and community room, measured 26' by 100' and was built with granite walls three feet thick. The new library was provided with new furniture and space for 12,000 volumes. The North Smithfield Public Library finally had a home. The library purchased the building in 1968. Five years later, additional land was purchased for a larger parking lot and future expansion.

By 1981 it was evident that there were too many small rooms in the library to provide proper functionality. More adults and children were using the facility and there was no room for children's programming. The new addition, which houses our adult collection, opened in 1989. At that time, the Centennial Committee gifted Centennial Park to the library.