



Boston Authors Club

June-July 2023 Newsletter

- **Good News: The Three C's for Thriving Bookstores**
- **Spotlight on Three Boston-Area Bookstores: All She Wrote, Molly's Bookstore, and Words as Worlds**
- **Feedback Wanted! Should the BAC Have a Wikipedia Page?**
- **President's Musings: Summer Reading**
- **Yesteryear: Goodspeed Book Shop as a Career Compass**

CELEBRATING BOOKSTORES



The 10th anniversary of Independent Bookstore Day was celebrated in April. But BAC members have many reasons to cheer for the success of local bookstores every day of the year. This issue features 3 community-focused bookstores (2 recently opened, and 1 opening in fall 2023), and analyzes U.S. bookstore trends and advice from a Harvard Business School professor about how the Three C's help bookstores to meet their market.

Our Yesteryear column extends the bookstore theme with the story of Louis Arthur Holman, a 1917 BAC member who launched his career from the print department at Goodspeed's Book Shop, an iconic Beacon Street destination for books, prints, maps, and all-around good reading from its founding in 1898 to its close in 1995.

MEETING

the

MARKET

Some Surprising Good News: Bookstores Are Booming and Becoming More Diverse, the headline from a July 10, 2022 [article](#) in the *New York Times*, and *Where Did All These Bookstores Come From?*, a February 26, 2023 [article](#) in the *Boston Globe*, inspired this month's BAC Meeting the Market feature on the resurgence of local independent bookstores.

As the *Times* article notes, the founders and owners of newly

opened local bookstores typically come from diverse backgrounds, are likely to have strong community roots, and share a commitment to accessible, inclusive programming. In fact, research by Harvard Business School (HBS) professor Ryan Raffaelli concluded that the key factors responsible for independent bookstore success can be summarized in 3C's - community, curation, and convening.

His HBS working paper, *Reinventing Retail: The Novel Resurgence of Independent Bookstores* expands on the details of 3C best practices as follows:

Community: Independent bookstore owners identify with the interests and needs of their customers and work to establish a strong connection to local partners including other small business owners, elected representatives, cultural, educational, and literary groups

Curation: Instead of just stocking best-sellers, local bookstore owners are curating inventory that reflects their mission and allows their store to provide a more personal and specialized customer experience.

Convening: Local bookstores are becoming hubs for literary and cultural events and a range of discussions. Owners attract customers and build loyalty by promoting their stores as community and literary centers. Convening encompasses familiar bookstore events like author talks, book signings, and story hours together with providing space for book clubs and game nights, groups of community members with likeminded interests, as well as hosting music performances, art exhibits, and birthday parties.

According to Raffaelli, these strategies have resulted in a 49% growth in [the number of] independent U.S. bookstores between 2009 and 2018.. Even though the early pandemic years depressed bookstore sales and led to store closures, there has been a strong resurgence in the past two years. Allison Hill of the American Booksellers Association notes in the Times article, "It's kind of shocking when you think about what dire straits the stores were in in 2020. We saw a rally like we've never seen before." The ABA now has 2,023 member stores in 2,561 locations, a strong increase from 1,689 members in 2020. The New England Independent Bookstore Association (NEIBA) is experiencing similar growth, with steady increases in membership over the past eight years.

This data brings us to the good news for Boston-area book lovers, who can celebrate the expansion of venerable bookstore brands such as Barnes & Noble, Porter Square Books and the Harvard Bookstore into new downtown Boston locations, as well as the opening of unique and diverse bookstores with curated and community-focused offerings.

The next article spotlights 3 such stores.

By Mary J Cronin

Reinventing Retail: The Novel Resurgence of Independent Bookstores

Ryan L. Raffaelli, Ph.D.
January 2020

Boston-Area Bookstores Spotlight


All She Wrote



Christina Pascucci Ciampa, founder/owner of All She Wrote Books

Christina Pascucci Ciampa is the founder/owner of All She Wrote Books, an intersectional, inclusive feminist and queer indie bookstore with the mission to support, celebrate, and amplify underrepresented voices through a curated selection of books spanning all genres.

Before opening her retail store at Assembly Row in Somerville in July 2020, Christina bootstrapped her mission by partnering with local businesses, getting permission to set up a few portable bookshelves for browsing and possible sale to their customers. To continue selling her books during the pandemic, she provided online ordering with curbside pickup service. Now that customers are back in person, All She Wrote hosts book clubs and regular events.

In a *Boston Globe* interview, Christina emphasized her commitment to accessibility and community service, "An ethos of accessibility and

All She Wrote Books

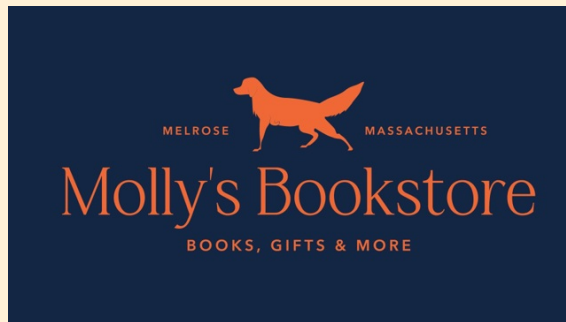
451 Artisan Way
Somerville MA

Hours:

Sunday,
Tuesday, and
Wednesday:
Noon to 6 pm

Thursday thru
Saturday:
11 am to 7 pm

community are at the core of All She Wrote. There are wide aisles for wheelchair users, an artists' corner for locals to display their art, and a free box of Advanced Reader Copy books so that everybody can take something home, regardless of cost."



Molly's Bookstore, which opened in November 2022, was inspired by the desire of co-founders Andrea Iriarte Dent and Brett Reed to provide a welcoming gathering space for the diverse population of their Melrose community.

In a pre-launch [article](#) in the Melrose Patch, Andrea noted that when she was growing up, and even later as a member of a Latino reading group, it was challenging to find books that she could identify with and want to read. The titles at Molly's Bookstore are selected with the multifaceted backgrounds, cultural heritage, and reading interests of the Melrose community's local customers, from children and teens to older adults.

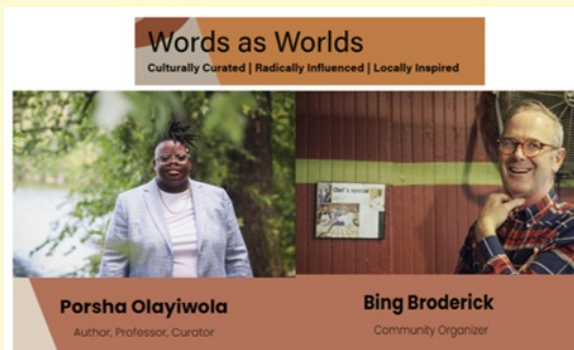
The store currently offers a summer reading program as well as regularly hosting book clubs, author talks, and community events.

Molly's Bookstore

667-669 Main Street
Melrose MA

Hours:
Monday thru
Saturday:
10am – 5pm

Sunday:
Noon – 5pm



Coming soon....

In Dorchester's Fields Corner neighborhood, co-founders Porsha Olayiwola and Bing Broderick are collaborating to make their fall 2023 launch of the Words as Worlds bookstore a cause for community celebration and connection-building as well as a sustainable social enterprise.

In a recent interview for the BAC, Bing emphasized that he and Porsha, both long-time Dorchester residents, realized that there are relatively few opportunities for Dorchester's highly diverse community to get together over shared literary, cultural, and related interests. They envision Words as Worlds as a "literary gathering space" that will be culturally curated, radically influenced, and locally inspired. Once it's up and running they hope to offer some kind of program almost every evening.

In describing how he and Porsha think about curating the store's inventory, and their plans for public programming, Bing notes that,

"Words as Worlds will feature underrepresented communities in the literature that we carry as well as the events we will host. We will stock titles in various languages, especially those that are spoken by Dorchester residents. Our focus is to become an afternoon and evening destination, open from about two in the afternoon to eight at night. As a gathering place we'll emphasize all types of programming—music, discussion, author talks, whatever our community members want to have available. Our goal is to become a place where someone coming home from work will stop in to have a drink or a snack and likely will run into a neighbor or meet someone new who lives nearby. We want it to be a place where neighbors come to enjoy themselves, explore new books, and deepen community connections."

Words as Worlds has already achieved a community support milestone by being selected as the anchor retail tenant of a new residential development serving income restricted residents that will also open this fall at 1463 Dorchester Avenue. To support its mission, the bookstore is accepting donations at <https://www.wordsasworlds.org/> in cooperation with VietAID, a Dorchester nonprofit

Feedback Wanted! Should the BAC Have a Wikipedia Page?



According to Wikipedia there are currently 6,656,015 articles in its English language version, containing over 4.3 billion words (an average of about 654 words per article). Among the literary groups with a Wikipedia entry, you will find the Anthology Club, the Grolier Club, and the Boston Athenaeum. In fact, in the category "American writers' organizations" you will find 94 separate organizational articles.

However, you will NOT find any article about the history, membership, activities, or mission of the Boston Authors Club.

This prompts your newsletter editors (Mary Cronin and Scott Guthery) to ask the question: Should the BAC have its own Wikipedia entry? We would love to hear your opinion. Please send a brief comment (along the lines of "Yes!" "No" or "Tell me more") to us at bostonauthorsclub@gmail.com

There's no pressure to volunteer, but if you ARE curious about how to create a Wikipedia entry, and possibly interested in participating in the process over the next several months, we would especially welcome that! Many hands can make valuable contributions to building a BAC presence on Wikipedia by helping to research, write, and edit sections of the BAC entry, compiling a list of notable BAC members, and more. One feature of Wikipedia that would increase BAC's visibility is that once we have our own entry, we can add links from existing Wikipedia pages of current and past BAC members back to the BAC page to highlight their membership.

Please let us know what you think.
Many thanks,
Mary & Scott



SUMMER READING - BEACH BOOKS

Happy unofficial start of summer, BAC friends! For many of us these next few months will bring time spent outdoors, departures from our usual schedules, and, of course, beach books.

Even if you don't go to the beach, you probably have, as I do, a stack of books stashed someplace in your home that you've been saving for that time when the weather changes, when you have fewer or different responsibilities. And though I admit that throughout the year I often depart from the non-fiction I have to read for my day job as a social science professor or my other job as a historian/biographer and sneak in novels, essays and short stories, it's really the summer when I allow myself the indulgence of departing more radically from my usual reading genres.

Here are a few of the books I'm looking forward to diving into when sitting in my backyard, or at the beach at the pond, or on vacation:

Ben Shattuck's *Six Walks*; Andrea Barrett's *Ship Fever*; Ed Yong's *An immense World*; Curtis Sittenfeld's *Romantic Comedy*; Ilwoo Woo's *Master Slave*; Heather Clark's *Red Comet*; Mary Louise Kelley's *It Goes by So Fast*; Ned Blackhawk's *The Rediscovery of America*; and Susanna Moore's *The Lost Wife*. I'm sure that my wanderings into the library and local bookstores will yield others!

In our next issue of the BAC Newsletter we'll be announcing the winners of the 2022 Julia Ward Howe prizes and providing you with information about our fall awards event. This will also give all of us even more suggestions about wonderful books to read!

Wishing you all wonderful, healthy and relaxing times this summer, and of course, good reading!

YESTER YEAR

Goodspeed Book Shop as a Career Compass



Louis Arthur Holman (1866-1939) joined the Boston Authors Club in 1917. According to an article by Hyder Rollins in Harvard's DASH repository, "It may be doubted, whether anyone has ever equaled Louis Arthur Holman in knowledge of the life of Keats and of the persons, places, things connected with Keats." Quite a claim and elegantly put. The biggest part of Holman's collection ended up at Harvard and the referenced article includes a description of the "more interesting" letters that he (Holman) received during his Keats researches.

Holman, pictured at left, moved to Boston from Canada in 1889 and shortly thereafter entered employment at Goodspeed's Book Shop. Here he built a career in art and literature that ranged beyond his well-documented Keats collecting and scholarship. Holman continued the art studies that he had begun in Canada at the Cowles Art School, taking courses at the Boston Night Art School. In 1917, he started the print department of Goodspeed's, and managed it successfully for over a decade. In 1930, when Goodspeed's moved to a new location, Holman stayed behind and turned the print department into a new business, Holman's Print Shop. His intent, he said, was to specialize in "old prints of moderate price" but, according to an interview in the *Boston Herald*, he would "tolerate no modernistic prints."

Holman's artistic, literary, and print talents are all on display in the series of monthly pamphlets he published, *Within the Compass of a Print Shop*, in his monographs on arts and artists, and in his three books, *Ten Scenes from the Life of Benjamin Franklin*, *Old Maps and Their Makers*, and *The Graphic Processes*.

In her article on Holman, "Loving, Knowing, and Illustrating Keats: The Louis Arthur Holman Collection of Keats Iconography," Anne Roland writes, "Holman spent over twenty-five years assembling a collection illustrative of Keats's life, setting himself the task of finding an illustration, artifact, or photograph related to every person, place, or thing mentioned in one of Keats's poems or letters. His quirky collection of Keatsiana toured the USA and England in the early 1900s as exemplary Keats scholarship and as a teaching tool for college English professors."

I've often read that Goodspeed's was a very special place in Boston---nay, a shrine---for booklovers. One doesn't have to close one's eyes too tightly to envision Louis Arthur Holman at a dimly lit desk surrounded by shelves of books in the basement of 5a Park Street preparing a folio of prints for exhibition or cataloging a recently acquired Keats letter. And, of course, taking time to attend the meetings of the Boston Authors Club.

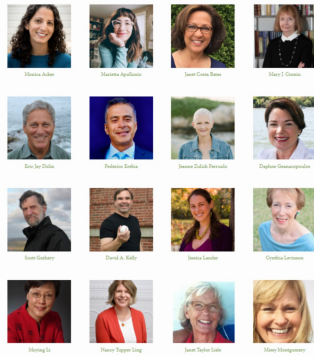
By Scott B Guthery



**For inclusion in the AUGUST
BAC Newsletter, send your
events, news, and publications
by 7/29/23 to**

bostonauthorsclub@gmail.com

Claim your spot in the
BAC Author Gallery!



A REMINDER THAT ALL BAC
MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO
ADD THEIR INFORMATION TO
OUR NEW AUTHOR GALLERY.
Email us for details

bostonauthorsclub@gmail.com

Become a member OR RENEW NOW for 2023!
Membership dues are \$50 annually for the calendar year. You can join and renew online by [clicking here](#). If you would rather pay by check, please make your check out to Boston Authors Club and mail it to the following address:

**Nancy Tupper Ling
Boston Authors Club
1600 Providence Highway #247
Walpole MA 02081**

| BOSTON AUTHORS CLUB | bostonauthorsclub@gmail.com |

STAY CONNECTED



Boston Authors Club

Boston Authors Club | 103 Conant Road, Lincoln, MA 01773

[Unsubscribe bostonauthorsclub@gmail.com](mailto:bostonauthorsclub@gmail.com)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by bostonauthorsclub@gmail.com powered by



Try email marketing for free today!