



Elizabeth (Liz) Bolton Photograph by Dan Bunker

Our Town Librarian is Moving On.

Steve Soreff, MD

On August 6, 2019, the Blaisdell Memorial Library welcomed Elizabeth (Liz) Bolton as its new director. And on March 31, 2023, she will move on. (2019-2023) Remember [*The Dash Poem*](#) by Linda Ellis. It says what is important is not the dates but (-) the dash. With that in mind, I talked with Liz about her time in Nottingham.

What follows is her Nottingham dash, Spoiler alert, her story is one of courage, determination, and triumph in the face of COVID-19. She came here with an incredibly deep, diverse, and comprehensive [library background and experiences](#). She was and is a bibliophile treasure. Her predecessor had left the library in great shape. Her early days were joyful and successful. Liz said that Cara Marsh had left things in “great shape.”

Then on Sunday, March 15, 2020, the library and her world dramatically changed, And her response makes her a champion and fighter. As Liz recalled, “I received a call from the Head of Trustees to shut things down. It came without warning and I had patrons at the door.” Thus began the library’s COVID years. What to do? During it, the library would lose staff and was not reopened to the public on a limited basis until June 2020. The library entered uncharted waters. And, as Bolton pointed out, “the rules changed daily”. Initially, there was a fear of books would carry germs.

But here is where Elizabeth (Liz) Bolton took command. She said, “that the library was an essential service.” She, along with her staff, its Trustees, and the Friends, found creative ways to maintain library services. They developed “The Books in Bags” program so that patrons could get their books.



The Books in Bags”

The program of the bagged books continues now for those not wanting to as of now enter the library. The library slowly began to reopen in limited ways and with protective barriers. There was a period where all returned books had to be quarantined for 3 days.



The library did not return to full service and operation until June 2022. Throughout COVID crisis, she has exemplified the names of the two lions in front of the New York Public Library where she was a Children’s Librarian, *Patience*, and *Fortitude*.

As Liz reflected on her tenure here, she noted with pride the library’s 5 book clubs: Afternoon, Evening, Cookbook, BLM Youngsters (Grades 5 through 8th Grade), and Family. She views Nottingham as a wonderful community”. It “supports our programs” and is very well-read.



The Library Trustee Statement on Liz's departure

“We are profoundly grateful to Liz, and the work she’s done at the Blaisdell Memorial Library during her tenure. She had been in her position for just about five months when the pandemic hit. While other libraries had their doors shut and locked, Liz didn’t miss a beat—within two weeks she had figured out the logistics of a system that allowed patrons to continue to access library services while keeping them and our amazing employees safe.

Liz’s deep background and experience will be sorely missed. She came to us having worked as an academic librarian at the Culinary Institute of America, as a children’s librarian, and in community and municipal library systems. This, along with her Master’s in Library and Information Sciences (MLIS) made her one of the most knowledgeable and skilled directors with whom most of us have ever worked. We are incredibly fortunate and our community benefited tremendously from her leadership.

For her commitment to Nottingham and all she has done for this community, we are deeply appreciative. We wish her all the best.”

Finally, the Library staff is organizing a party to say farewell to Liz. It will be on Friday, March 31st, (her last day) from 11:00 AM to 1 PM. There will be some refreshments and gifts. Please, come by then to say good-bye and wish her well on her next adventure!