

Southwick Public Library Celebrates 120th Year of Service to the Community. July 23, 2012

10:30 a.m. Welcome

Introduction of dignitaries and speakers:

- State Senator **Michael R. Knapik**
2nd Hampden and Hampshire District
- Sam King for Congressman, **Richard E. Neal**, MPA
2nd Congressional District
- Nick Powers for U.S. Senator **Scott Brown**
- State Representative **Nicholas Boldyga**
3rd Hampden District
- Selectman **Art Pinell**
Chairman, Southwick Board of Selectmen
- **Karl Stinehart**
Southwick Chief Administrative Officer
- **Anne Murray**
Southwick Library Director
- **Pete Heap**
President, The Friends of the Southwick Public Library, Inc.
- **Michael McMahon**
Chair, Southwick Public Library Board of Trustees

Senator John Kerry was unable to attend but sent a Senate Certificate

11:00 a.m. Entertainment followed by refreshments in the
Community Room

A brief history of the Southwick Public Library

The library was started in 1891 by a local clergyman in a residence on College Highway. According to available information the *Southwick Free Public Library* at 475 College Highway was built in 1892 by the town at a cost of about \$ 3,000. The *Free Public Library Commission* (now MA. Board of Library Commissioners) provided \$ 100 worth of books to start the library. The town in 1892 appropriated \$ 150 for library support. The facility was open on Wednesdays from 7 to 8 p.m. and on Saturdays from 3 to 5 and 7 to 9 p.m. The annual cost of administration was \$ 50. In 1895 the town population was 961 and in 1898 the library had 1,170 volumes and annual circulation of 1,300.

[Above information courtesy of the 1899 report of the *Free Public Library Commission*, digitized by Google and the *Reports of the Southwick Trustees of the Free Public Library 1892 & 1893.*]

The building remained in use as the public library until February 1999 when the current library at 95 Feeding Hills Road opened. The current library building was built in part with volunteer labor which required a special Act of the State Legislature. For more information on library services, etc. visit www.southwickma.org/library or www.southwicklibrary.info

Currently the *Southwick Cultural Council* is in the process of securing funds to restore the old library building for public use including compliance with ADA regulations. For more information www.southwickma.org/cultural.