

Access Policy

Procedures

- Fill out a registration form and present a photo ID.
- Complete a research request slip.
- Bring only the materials necessary for your research. You may use your laptop computer, camera, or cell phone. Coats, large bags, containers, and other equipment or bulky items are not permitted (these will be placed in a designated area). Library staff reserves the right to inspect your research materials and personal effects.
- Notify Library staff of any photocopy or photography needs. Duplication and photography are permissible for private study only. For publication purposes, you will need to file a request.
- Written permission must be obtained by the West Falmouth Library for the publication of any archival material.
- Always cite your sources.

Use

- To handle items, either thoroughly wash and dry your hands or wear nitrile gloves as provided by Library staff. Do not use white cotton gloves unless you are handling photographs and certain artifacts.
- Handle the materials carefully and as little as possible. Touch only the margins of documents and books or the edges of photographs.
- Use only one book, manuscript, or folder at a time.
- Maintain the order of the materials within boxes and folders.
- Keep materials flat on the table or with supports as provided by Library staff.
- Do not stack anything on top of, lean on, fold, or trace the materials.
- Food and drink are not permitted around the materials.
- No pens. Pencils and paper will be provided by Library staff for note taking only. Do not mark on the materials.
- No paper clips, rubber bands, sticky notes, staples, or tape of any kind may be used.
- Do not remove any item from its protective enclosure unless instructed to do so by Library staff.

About the Archives: The West Falmouth Library Archives supports the Library's mission to promote lifelong learning by providing access to primary and secondary sources on the cultural heritage of West Falmouth. The general public may enjoy the exhibits on display throughout the Library and use the archival collections for research.

Accessing the Archives: The West Falmouth Library Archives are available to all researchers. Finding aids will help researchers identify and locate materials relevant to their project. **Use of the materials is by appointment only.** Researchers are asked to contact the Library to inform staff of their research topic so that items may be prepared in advance of their visit.

West Falmouth Library
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PO Box 1209
West Falmouth, MA 02574

Phone: 508-548-4709
Fax: 508 457-9534
E-mail: wfal_mail@clamsnet.org
Web: westfalmouthlibrary.org

Library Hours

Sunday, Monday	Closed
Tuesday	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Wednesday	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Thursday	2 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Friday	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Saturday	10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

West Falmouth Library Archives



The purpose of the West Falmouth Library Archives is to document, preserve, and make accessible materials regarding the history of the village of West Falmouth. As the steward of primary and secondary sources, the Archives protects the heritage of the community, ensuring that it is available to the general public and future generations.

Providing Access to the History of West Falmouth

History: The West Falmouth Library was established in 1879 by a group of young women with a 50-volume collection of books. The present library building was dedicated in 1896 and has always served as a gathering place for the community. Due to the community's great interest in local history, the Library fulfills a need to save the artifacts deemed to be of historical value. Today, the Library seeks to protect the cultural heritage of West Falmouth by collecting documents and items that reflect the people and events that have shaped the village.

Collections: The West Falmouth Library collects and preserves archival materials pertaining to the history of the village of West Falmouth and the West Falmouth Library, including **documents, photographs, correspondence, scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, oral history interviews, and realia.**

The Archives maintains institutional records that document the activities of the West Falmouth Library and also houses manuscript collections, containing the personal papers of West Falmouth residents and other ephemera related to local history. In particular, the Bowerman-Gifford papers dating to 1673 and are popular for genealogical research. This collection consists of the personal and business papers of two prominent Quaker families.

In addition, there is a small collection of rare books, including diaries, first editions, and the logbooks of a local ship's captain, Caleb O. Hamblin. In the Community Room of the Library hang antique oil paintings and portraits depicting the village's early community leaders.

In order to preserve local history as accurately as possible, the West Falmouth Library actively assesses its current holdings and seeks new gifts in accordance with its collection policy.

Donating to the Archives: The West Falmouth Library depends upon the generosity of donors in order to add to its archival collections and enhance the collective memory of West Falmouth. In return, the Library will care for the donated materials permanently, as long as they maintain their authenticity and their physical and intellectual integrity. Although the Library cannot accept everything, all potential donations will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If you are considering donating to the Archives, please adhere to the following procedures:

- Material should not be mailed or dropped off at the West Falmouth Library without first consulting with the Library Director.
- In order to maintain the historical context of the collection as much as possible, items should not be organized, removed, or rearranged without consulting the Library Director.
- Donors must sign a deed of gift agreement, which transfers legal ownership of the records to the West Falmouth Library.
- After approval for acceptance into the Archives by the Library Director and the Board of Directors, donations may be made in person or by mail.

Please also consider making a monetary donation in order to support ongoing care for the collections.

