



**BEXLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY**

*Centennial Celebrations Guide*





Get ready for one of the biggest celebrations in Bexley because in 2024 your library is



We're elated to kick off a year-long celebration to tell our incredible story and share how much we appreciate being part of this amazing community. Brace yourself for an outstanding lineup of dynamic authors, special events, and fun activities! We can't wait for you to join us throughout this extraordinary year of enlightenment, engagement, and inspiration at the library.

### Special thanks to our centennial celebrations sponsors and supporters

- Bexley Bed + Breakfast
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Visit our website at

[BexleyLibrary.org/100Years](https://BexleyLibrary.org/100Years)

to share your BPL memories and discover all of the library's centennial festivities happening in 2024!

## Director's Message



Dear Bexley,

This year marks a monumental milestone at Bexley Public Library – the occasion of our centennial celebration. It's hard to believe that a century of learners, explorers, and readers have been inspired and served by our library. And for me, personally, it's difficult to express the honor of shepherding this library, which strives each day to be a living and powerful resource for the public good, through such an important year in our history.

A 100-year anniversary only happens once, and our staff has been all hands-on deck in planning a truly unforgettable centennial celebration. We have an unbelievable lineup of authors, musicians, artists, and events. And beyond the exciting activities, we are committed to honoring the trust and support you have given us throughout our past century.

It has been a privilege and joy to be your library for the past century. This library has a long history of providing trustworthy information, exceptional and personalized service, and unrestricted access to the materials and resources that inspire and empower each patron we serve. For the past hundred years, we've been a sanctuary for curious minds, and as we step past this milestone we will carry our legacy of literature, technology, and human connection forward.

We can't wait to celebrate with you!

*Ben*

Ben Heckman, Library Director



Bexley Public Library Staff

### 2024 BPL Board of Trustees

- Natalie Coles (President)
- James A. Wilson (Vice-President)
- Dr. Susan Williams (Secretary)
- Melissa Ingwersen
- Jennifer McNally
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Bexley Public Library



Centennial Website: [BexleyLibrary.org/100Years](https://BexleyLibrary.org/100Years)



# Centennial Special Events & Activities



## BexArts Ode to the Library

**Exhibition:**  
March & April

**After-Hours Artist Reception:**  
Friday, April 12 at 6 pm

BexArts, Bexley's own arts council, will be in the library with a specially curated library and book-themed artwork display celebrating BPL's 100 years of service. And be sure to join us for music and light refreshments during the BexArts After-Hours Artist Reception.



## Centennial Challenge

Think *you* can make it to 100? Stop by the library any time this year for exciting activities, games, and challenges for patrons of all ages. Discover 100 things to do at the library, or take the centennial challenge. Whether it's 100 books, hours of reading, or visits to the library, we challenge you to 100!



## 10 Decades Book Club - 100 Years of Reading

**First meeting Sunday, March 17 at 2 pm**

Join our monthly book club journey that explores the classics from each of the decades that BPL has been open. Get started now on our first featured book, the 1920s classic novel of the Harlem Renaissance, *Passing* by Nella Larsen. Check BPL's quarterly program guides for additional meeting dates and times.



**March** – *Passing* by Nella Larsen

**April** – *A Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley

**May** – *The Lottery and Other Stories* by Shirley Jackson

## Bexley Students' BIG Ideas!

Check out the library this spring to discover Bexley's newest authors and artists!

Visit the Youth Services department to discover our newest collection of picture books created by Bexley City School students. As part of an art project, each book represents a collaboration of high school and elementary school students' efforts to create something extra special for readers.



And while you're at the library, don't miss the showcase of artwork featuring Bexley High School students creatively imagining the *next 100 years* in Bexley.



## Centennial Music Performances

Generously funded by the Samuel C. and Gale M. Shamansky Fund for the Advancement of Culture and Entertainment at the Library



### Music of George Gershwin

**Sunday, April 14 at 3 pm with Tony Hagood**

Join us in celebrating the 100th anniversary of *Rhapsody in Blue* with a virtuosic piano arrangement by Tony Hagood, who will also feature other music by George Gershwin to showcase his enduring musical legacy.



### Music of Earl Scruggs

**Sunday, July 14 at 3 pm with Appalachian Swing**

Celebrate Earl Scruggs' 100th birthday with acclaimed bluegrass band, Appalachian Swing. Scruggs' groundbreaking banjo playing style left an indelible mark on bluegrass music.



### Music of the Roaring 20s

**Thursday, August 15 at 7 pm with Todd Stoll and the Uptown Bootleggers**

Enjoy a decade of music from the 1920s as Todd Stoll and his band play the music of the Jazz Age.

## Centennial Kickoff Celebration at the Library!

**Thursday, April 25 at 6 pm**

It's time to celebrate! Bring your family and friends to the library for a good old-fashioned birthday party complete with cake and ice cream. Try some library-themed specialty items from our community partners and win some of your own BPL centennial swag! The celebration continues with an enlightening visit with Roosevelt Montás, our introductory Centennial Author Series author.





A major component of our centennial year, we're pleased to showcase a lineup of authors who distinctly reflect the library's goal to enlighten, engage, and inspire our community of lifelong learners.

We are thrilled to host these globally recognized and locally embraced authors as a part of our celebration of learning and literacy.



To learn more and register to attend one or all of these FREE author visits, please visit [BexleyLibrary.org/BCAS](https://BexleyLibrary.org/BCAS).



**Centennial Kickoff Party & Introductory Author Visit with Roosevelt Montás**

**Thursday, April 25 – Kickoff Party at 6 pm, Author Talk at 7 pm**

Celebrate the official launch of the library's centennial by joining us for a kickoff party complete with cake and ice cream! Following the party, stay to enjoy an enlightening author talk with Columbia University Senior Lecturer and author **Roosevelt Montás**. Roosevelt's book, *Rescuing Socrates: How the Great Books Changed My Life and Why They Matter for a New Generation*, explores the lasting influence of the Great Books, how they still have the power to change lives, and why they matter now more than ever.



**Prince Shakur & Quartez Harris in Conversation Celebrating 100 Years of James Baldwin**

**Thursday, August 29 at 7 pm**

**Prince Shakur** and **Quartez Harris** have both been profoundly impacted by the life and work of James Baldwin. Join us for this engaging conversation between two of Ohio's celebrated authors and poets in honor of the 100th anniversary of James Baldwin's birth. Prince's latest book, *When They Tell You to Be Good*, was published in 2022 to wide acclaim.

Quartez has an upcoming picture book biography on James Baldwin's childhood scheduled for release in August 2024.



**Hanif Abdurraqib & Franny Choi in Conversation**

**Thursday, June 6 at 7 pm**

Join us for an engaging conversation between two celebrated poets and authors, **Hanif Abdurraqib** and **Franny Choi**, as they discuss life, libraries, and their work, including Hanif's upcoming book, *There's Always This Year: On Basketball and Ascension*.

Franny's recent collection of poetry, *The World Keeps Ending, and the World Goes On*, was published in 2022 to wide acclaim.



**Author Series Finale with Maggie Smith & Saeed Jones in Conversation**

**Thursday, September 26 at 7 pm**

Don't miss our Author Series Finale with Bexley's beloved hometown poet, writer, editor, and teacher, **Maggie Smith**, and the Kirkus Prize-winning author, poet, and podcast host, **Saeed Jones**.

Maggie and Saeed will discuss their lives, work, and library love with the witty, open-hearted introspection for which they are both known.



**Linda Kass in Conversation with Patrick Losinski**

**Thursday, July 25 at 7 pm**

We are honored to host local author and Gramercy Books founder and owner **Linda Kass** who will be here to share her most recent historical fiction novel, *Bessie*.

Linda will talk with Columbus Metropolitan Library Director, **Patrick Losinski**, about the intersections of history, literature, and culture and the relevance they play in our everyday lives.



Books will be available for purchase at each event and online through [GramercyBooksBexley.com/bpl-centennial-author-series](https://GramercyBooksBexley.com/bpl-centennial-author-series). Ten percent of online books sales will be donated to the Bexley Community Author Series Fund at the Bexley Community Foundation.

Special thanks to all of our Centennial Author Series partners & sponsors:



Bexley City School District



Friends of Bexley Public Library



GRAMERCY BOOKS



Rotary Whitehall Bexley Rotary District 6590



Crane Group



BEXLEY community foundation



BEXLEY Magazine



Giuseppe's RITROVO

Special thanks to Host Committee Co-Chairs Annie & Tim Bezbatchenko



# Centennial Special Events & Activities (continued)

[BexleyLibrary.org/100Years](https://BexleyLibrary.org/100Years)



## 100 Years of Adventure at the Library! Summer Community Read Kickoff Party Thursday, May 30 at 3 pm

Jump start your summer by joining us for the Summer Community Read Kickoff Party! Sign up for Summer Community Read, enjoy fun family activities, meet special guests, and discover 100 ways your library can fill your summer with adventure.

## Birthday Bash and National Road Car Show Friday, September 6 at 5 pm

September is BPL's official birthday month and we're celebrating one more time with our 3rd annual National Road Car Show! Enjoy great food from local food trucks and peruse an array of amazing cars on display by local car enthusiasts while listening to tunes from the decades. And no birthday bash would be complete without sharing in a little free cake and ice cream!



## Join the Festivities!

We invite you to participate in the many ways we are celebrating our milestone birthday. Visit [BexleyLibrary.org/100Years](https://BexleyLibrary.org/100Years) and watch for our quarterly program guides for additional information and program details.

## Community & Collaborations!

Businesses around town are helping us celebrate our big birthday with specialty items and discounts! Sip on one of Giuseppe's library-inspired cocktails, enjoy a specialty pizza from Bexley Pizza Plus, dive into a library-inspired ice cream sundae at Johnson's, or try our flavorful library brew from Seventh Son Brewing. And if that's not enough, make an online purchase of select books at [GramercyBooksBexley.com](https://GramercyBooksBexley.com) and Gramercy Books will donate 10% to the Bexley Community Author Series Fund at the Bexley Community Foundation. With such amazing community support, there are a plethora of ways for you to help us celebrate!



Your library will be around town all year long. Look for us and our special centennial swag at your favorite community events like the Independence Day Parade, PorchFest, Farmer's Market, and more!

## What's YOUR BPL Story?

We all have a BPL story and we'd love to hear yours! Share a favorite memory, librarian, or experience with your century-old library! Send your videos, photos, and stories to [MyStory@bexleylibrary.org](mailto:MyStory@bexleylibrary.org)

# BPL Centennial Festivities Snapshot

- March 1**  
BexArts Ode to the Library Exhibition opens and runs through April 30
- March 17**  
10 Decades Book Club Kickoff / *Passing* by Nella Larsen (2pm)
- April 14**  
Tony Hagood Music Performance, Celebrating 100 Years of *Rhapsody in Blue* (3 pm)
- April 18-21**  
Friends of the Library Spring Book Sale
- April 25**  
Centennial Kickoff Party at the Library (6 pm) and Author Visit with Roosevelt Montás (7 pm)
- May 30**  
100 Years of Adventure at the Library, Summer Community Read Kickoff Party (3pm)
- June 6**  
Hanif Abdurraqib & Franny Choi in Conversation (7 pm)
- July 14**  
Appalachian Swing Music Performance, Celebrating 100 years of Earl Scruggs (3 pm)
- July 25**  
Linda Kass in Conversation with Patrick Losinski (7 pm)
- August 15**  
Todd Stoll and the Uptown Bootleggers Music Performance (7 pm)
- August 29**  
Prince Shakur & Quartez Harris in Conversation, Celebrating 100 Years of James Baldwin (7 pm)
- September 6**  
Birthday Bash and National Road Car Show (5 pm)
- September 26**  
Author Series Finale with Maggie Smith & Saeed Jones in Conversation (7 pm)
- November 7-10**  
Friends of the Library Fall Book Sale



# Bexley Public Library: Reflecting Our Community's Commitment to Lifelong Learning

Visit [BexleyLibrary.org/100Years](https://www.bexleylibrary.org/100Years) for detailed history of Bexley Public Library



**1924** Bexley's Board of Education founded Bexley Public Library to meet the needs of a growing suburb. It was first housed in Bexley High School, now Montrose Elementary School.

**1929** Having outgrown its space at the High School, and funded by a taxpayer approved bond issue, Bexley Public Library opened its bronze front door to a new building.



**1928** Ruth Laudahn, BPL's first trained children's librarian, was hired, enabling the library to offer regular storytimes and support early childhood education.



**1950** In line with BPL's commitment to education, the first audiovisual items added to the collection were 16mm educational films.

**1958** Many programs started under Mary Teeter Zimmerman's leadership, including the first summer reading program for children.



**1934** BPL expanded its library card access to include all Franklin County residents.

**1955** Mary Teeter Zimmerman, BPL's Library Director, began presenting "Fun With Books," a WBNS radio show geared to children. It became a TV segment on WTVN-TV.



**1968** A newly renovated library opened up more space for studying and programming with the additions of the Browsing Room and Auditorium on the east side of the building. The iconic *Mother and Child* bronze sculpture by Ebb Haycock was installed in the courtyard.

**1992** A major renovation brought upgrades to the library's décor including classic green carpeting and amenities like moving from physical to electronic card catalogs.



**1959** BPL was one of the first libraries in central Ohio to serve the homebound with book delivery service.



**1984** The first computers were available for public use, giving patrons access to exciting new technology.



**2014** BPL joined the Central Library Consortium, giving patrons access to millions of additional items from partner libraries.

**2020** Original artwork became the latest non-traditional item to circulate at BPL, in addition to other unique items like board games, telescopes, and guitars.



**1993** BPL's popular live-music series, *Tea at Three*, began, and the tradition continues today with the help of the Samuel C. and Gale M. Shamansky Fund at the Library.

**2017** BPL eliminated fines for materials and introduced automated renewals.

**2022** BPL's Memory Lab and Creation Station introduced new technology and equipment to patrons in support of their creative interests and digital preservation needs.



**2021** BPL began live streaming programs, distributing free COVID-19 test kits, and expanded its home delivery service in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.



**2024** Bexley Public Library celebrates 100 years of enlightening, engaging, and inspiring our community of lifelong learners.

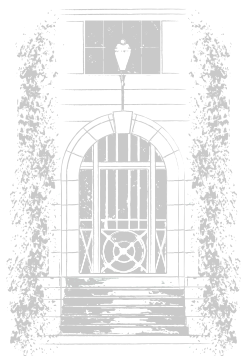






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