

Rogers Free Library Trustees

Greetings Trustees,

The Bristol Phoenix tells me there are opportunities to become a library trustee. I am very interested.

I retired from library work about 10 years ago, and have remained an active community member ever since. While living on the Cape I volunteered as a sailing instructor at Sail Cape Cod, teaching adults and working with disabled sailors. Since moving to Bristol in 2022, I've held a similar role at the Herreshoff Museum for the past 2 summers. Obviously, I am an active card holder at the Rogers Free Library.

My background is library research, and I've worked in both academic and business settings, since acquiring my MLS in 1984 (yikes!). I love our town library, and am especially proud that it remains open until 8 most nights. I write a monthly piece in our condo newsletter, and have found the library (and the Phoenix online archive) invaluable. I've attached (below) my article from the July 2023 issue that was researched in your Special Collections room.

Fair warning: I believe in intellectual freedom, free speech and privacy. Banning books is ridiculous.

Please get in touch with any questions, or to discuss my application further.

Thanks,
-Chris

Christopher R. Allen
423 Hope Street
Unit D
Bristol, RI 02809

EXPERIENCE

7/12 – 11/14 **SENIOR RESEARCHER**

Bella Research Group

Currently serving as sole researcher for a small, private equity consultancy. Managing a cloud based proprietary knowledge base, and providing short reports and exhibits for client presentations.

6/88 – 6/12 **BUSINESS INFORMATION ANALYST**

Harvard Business School, Boston, MA

Performed research and analysis on business and economic issues. Provided business school faculty with short reports, exhibits and quantitative analysis on industries, companies, markets, and managerial issues. My research work contributed to case studies, journal articles, books, and curriculum development. Was also responsible for training and supporting faculty research assistants, and actively involved in collection management of numeric databases.

12/86 - 6/88 **REFERENCE LIBRARIAN**

Bain & Company, Boston, MA

Supported information needs of strategic business consulting firm. Conducted high volume on-line searching, and quantitative research in a rapid turnaround environment.

8/84 - 12/86 **DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS**

Agribusiness Associates, Wellesley, MA (Defunct)

Created and operated an information center for a small consulting firm. Oversaw efforts of research staff and supervised the administrative operations of the business.

6/82 - 6/84 **LIBRARIAN**

Harvard University, Center for Science and International Affairs

Ran a small one-person library specializing in arms control and defense issues. Supported research interests of 20 resident doctoral students.

12/79 - 6/82 **RESEARCH ASSISTANT**

Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government

Assisted Director of Public Policy Program in preparing books, speeches and journal articles. Research areas included air pollution control programs, education of handicapped children and effective managerial techniques.

EDUCATION

1/82 - 6/84

SIMMONS COLLEGE

Master of Science - Library and Information Science

9/73 - 5/77

ITHACA COLLEGE

Bachelor of Arts - General Studies

SKILLS

Proficient with spreadsheet, database and graphics software packages. Experienced on-line searcher, Expert user of numerical databases such as Bloomberg, SDC, Morningstar, CapitalIQ, ThomsonOne, Datastream and Compustat. Advanced Excel skills.

References on request.

History of Bristol Fire Departments:

It's 1820 and your house is on fire. The two leather fire buckets, that the Town of Bristol requires you to hang on the outside of the house, have already been emptied and the fire continues to rage. The kids run the buckets down to the harbor for refills while neighbors begin moving important belongings out of the house. You leg it down Constitution Street to enlist Bristol Engine #2, who bring 300 feet of leather hose and a large copper-lined tub to start putting the wet stuff on the hot stuff. Meanwhile the entire town, every man woman and child (population 3,000), form a bucket brigade from the Narragansett Bay up to the tub, now positioned just uphill from your home.

You rebuild the house and your life, and your child grows up to volunteer for the Hydraulion Engine & Hose Company, which is our country's oldest continually operated volunteer fire company (1843), originally located at Franklin and High Streets, now up on Metacom. The Hydraulion was just a fancy name for a VW sized hand pump that rode on 4 wooden wheels, pulled to the scene by the firefighters. State-of-the-art then and saved the Bristol Steam Mill in 1856 (now the white building at Stone Harbor).

Fires were destructive and frequent; Bristolians recalled them by name: the Iron Castings Factory on Thames Street, Gardner's Steam Planing and Sawmill (3 times!), the Oakum factory on Franklin Street, St. Michaels Church, Pokonet Mill, National Rubber. The 1960 fire at the Colonial Inn on State Street claimed 6 lives. The history and character of a town can be measured by the brave volunteers that fought these battles. Our town employs just 5 full time professional fire fighters, all the rest are volunteers. One of these volunteers, R.S. Bosworth,



is pictured below, taking a short break while fighting the 1946 blaze at the Bristol Manufacturing Company.

The town grew, and additional fire departments were born. The King Philip Engine Company (1846) later renamed the Ever Ready Engine & Hose Company (1924), extinguished a fire on the Belvie rooftop "sun parlor" on March 5, 1928 (let's try to bring a cake or something to the Ever-Ready's every March 5th). They also dominated Bristol's twilight baseball league

throughout the 1930s.



The Dreadnaught Hook, Ladder & Hose Company came next. The “Dreads” rebuilt the building that graces the corner of Church & High Streets and are famous for aerial rescues and daredevil rooftop work. The fourth and most recent of our fire departments is the Defiance Hose Company (1905) which protects the north end of town. Defiance dominates the Bristol July Fourth water battle competition, which you’ve got to see to believe (think tug-of-war with high pressure water).

The fire houses enjoy a friendly rivalry over which of them brings “first water” to a fire, but BFD’s Rescue Squad (1947) responds to most calls (over 50 each week). The EMTs provide sick or injured Bristolians critical life support and very fast transport.

For nearly 200 years these departments have been staffed by generations of Bristol’s carpenters, plumbers, municipal workers, mechanics, machinists, accountants, engineers (even newspaper publishers). Andrade, Bosworth, Castro, Coggeshall, Fales, Gray, Manchester, Sousa, Usher, Walsh—familiar names in town, good neighbors, they raised families, ran businesses, and helped build Bristol...when asked, they also put out fires.

You can say thanks to these folks at the firefighter memorial monument outside the Burnside building and be sure to give them a big cheer as they march by on the Fourth. *Chris Allen*