



A Note from the Local History Librarian

Hello Suffern Free Library patrons! For those of you who are unfamiliar with me, I thought I would take the opportunity to introduce myself so that you know who your local history librarian is. My name is Audrey, and I serve as both a reference librarian and the local history librarian.

As for my background, I received my Masters of Library and Information Science from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee in 2020. I trained as an archivist, and while in graduate school, I worked in the University's archaeological department. Later, for my fieldwork, I helped to establish an archive at the Charles Allis Art Museum in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

When the pandemic hit, I pivoted from working behind the scenes and into the public sector, realizing how crucial libraries were (and are) to our community and to communities worldwide.

If you need help with any of your research needs, I'd be happy to assist you. All you have to do is call the reference desk or email us to set up an appointment. Doing so gives me time to pull the necessary materials so that they are ready for you when you come in to conduct your research. Or, if you are visiting the library, feel free to stop by the Ramapo Room and I can show you around. The room is usually open in the afternoons.

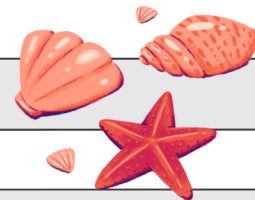
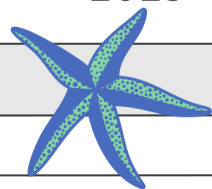
Thank you for your continued support and I look forward to hearing from you all!

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ON LOCAL HISTORY

Translations

Many Suffern residents have heard of these names. Ever wonder what they mean? See the translations below:

- **ramapo** -- sweet water
- **kakiat**--neck of land between two hills
- **mahwah**--meeting place
- **houvenkompf**--high head
- **palisades**- a line of cliffs by a body of water (such as an ocean or river)
- **nyack**-the fishing place
- **antrim**- lone ridge



Data Bank Fast Facts

- Also known as: CETA Project #604
- Started July 5, 1977 and ended April 4, 1978
- Contained well over 5000 pieces and approximately 1000 photographic slides
- Two full-time researchers were hired: Mr. Gordon and Ms. Jacobs
- After funding ended, the Data Bank remained and was added to over the years.

Data Bank Resource Center

We all know that the Suffern Free Library is a unique place. We have a beautiful building, a diverse book collection, and even our own cafe. But, before we had all that we had something even more unique. We had the Data Bank Resource Center.

The Data Bank Resource Center was first developed by the Suffern Free Library back in 1977 under the leadership of Matilda Gocek. Its purpose was much like what Google is for us today; a place to search for information, specifically local information (with a few exceptions). For example, if you wanted to know what all the restaurants were in Suffern, you would go to the Data Bank. Or, if you wanted to learn more about Spook Rock, you would go to the Data Bank.

In April of 1977, Gocek spoke of her big vision in the monthly newsletter. She writes, "Just imagine a resource center with all the known and recorded history of the village of Suffern in one place, available at one's request..." Of course, such a resource requires funding, and one that she was impressively able to obtain.

In that same year (1977), CETA, or the Comprehensive Employment Training Act, awarded a grant to the Suffern Free Library to make such a dream possible. Two researchers were hired to spearhead the task and were, by all means, successful.

Not only were there extensive amounts of newspaper articles collected, but there were demographic surveys, inventories of local resources, and audio interviews conducted. From a historical standpoint, the efforts of these researchers gave us a snapshot of Suffern as it was in the late 1970s. It allows us to see all the ways that the community has evolved and changed in the past 50 years.

In some of the surveys, many residents commented on how much they enjoyed living in Suffern and how it is "simply beautiful".

Other residents commented on the library's old building on Maple Avenue, and how "noisy teenagers do congregate in this area."

Sadly, over the years, the original structure of the Data Bank has been lost. We don't know what all the original file subject headings were and we don't have a complete inventory of all the materials it contained. We are lucky in that many items are stamped with "Data Bank Resource Center" stamps, but even then there could be many lost or unknown items.

Currently, the Data Bank is being reconstructed as close as possible to the way that it originally was. While it will be impossible to get a full reconstruction, we can enjoy the parts we do know existed and get a true glimpse into Suffern's past.

