

Letterboxing

Letterboxing is an outdoor activity that combines treasure hunting, map and compass skills and rubber stamping. Letterboxers follow clues found on the Internet to find hidden letterboxes and then use their "personal stamp" to "log into" the letterbox. They take away an impression of the letterbox's stamp in their personal Letterboxing Journal.

Letterboxing has its origins on Dartmoor, England in 1854. The first "letterbox" was actually a bottle and did not have a stamp or logbook. It was located at Cranmere Pool and took a minimum nine mile one way hike! Starting in 1888, a small tin box replaced the bottle. Visitors would leave a self-addressed postcard in the box. The next visitor would take the post card home with them and mail it from their hometown, hence the name Letterbox. A logbook was added in 1905 and the rubber stamp appeared about 1907. It was 40 years before the next box was planted on Dartmoor and 122 years after the Cranmere Pond box, there were only 15 boxes on Dartmoor. It was not until the 1980's that letterboxing in Dartmoor National Park really became big!

Letterboxing in the USA started after an article about the Dartmoor Letterboxes appeared in the April 1998 issue of *Smithsonian Magazine*. One of the first areas in the USA to have letterboxes was right here in Connecticut!

Today there are more than 98,000 active letterboxes worldwide listed on AtlasQuest and 91,000 of those are in the US. In the US, Massachusetts has the most (7595), then Connecticut (7569) and New York (7498). But CT is still #1 for number of letterboxes per square mile (1.6)!

Want to know more or find clues to letterboxes?

Go to www.atlasquest.com or www.letterboxing.org.

Phone App → Box radar

Letterboxing Etiquette

There are some basic rules to follow as a letterboxer:

1. Respect the land when hunting boxes and when hiding them. Don't place a box that requires people to tramp through sensitive wildlife or plant habitat to find it, for example. Warn letterboxers of possible hazards in the area of the box in your clue notes. Use common sense. If you have any doubts, ask the landowner or manager, or simply choose another location for your activities. Adopt the **Leave No Trace** principles of outdoor etiquette. Remember, some lands have restrictions on land use; know them and observe them.
2. Don't publish or re-transmit other peoples' clues or stamp images without their permission.
3. Repack and hide the thing as well or better than it was when you found it, in the exact place you found it.
4. After finding it, try to be discreet when stamping up and re-hiding it. Remember you do not want to give away the location to other letterboxers, so they can have the same fun finding it you did. You also need to protect the letterbox from "Muggles" (non-letterboxers).
5. Of course, do not violate the laws, rules, customs, and people or property rights wherever you conduct any activities.

Letterbox With Girl Scouts of Connecticut!

Camp Laurel will be hosting Laurelei's Letterboxing Challenge September 23, 2017. This event is open to the public. Event will be listing in the Walktober book as well as on Atlas Quest. The camp will be open from 9 AM to 4 PM for letterboxing. All the stamps will be newly planted and handcarved by Girl Scouts. This year the theme is "Tell Me A Story".

Glossary

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Blaze | A mark used to mark a hiking trail. Often they are spots of paint found on trees or on rocks when there are no trees on the trail. The color of the blaze denotes the color of the trail on a map. Blazed trails are often called by their color. |
| Pace | Take two steps, counting every time you put the same foot down. Take normal steps, not baby steps or giant steps. |
| Step | Take one step, counting every time you put a foot down. Take normal steps, not baby steps or giant steps. |
| Trap Door | A rock or other flat object that is used to cover a letterbox hiding place. |
| Two-sister tree | Two trees that look they are growing from one trunk at ground level. Other numbers of sisters can also be used. |

First Friday: Box 1 and Box 2 (2)

Box #282196



1 S Main St, Putnam, CT

Planter: Thompson Whangdoodles

Planted: June 2, 2017

My Note: None



Record your find!

| Name | Last Found |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1. Science Fiction: Star Wars | active Jun 6, 2017 FF |
| 2. Action Adventure: Indiana Jones | active Jun 6, 2017 FF |

From May to October of each year Putnam, CT celebrates "First Fridays". It is a themed street fair held on the first Friday of each month. This year's theme is the MOVIES! In honor of that theme, we have planted a box whose stamps will be available for a limited time. The first box will have two stamps (we decided to do this after the first "First Friday" in May). The stamps will be active on the first Friday of each month and will remain in place until the day before the next "first Friday". Putnam is a fun little town that has seen a large resurgence in the past several years! There are many restaurants and shops to enjoy and wander through. 85 Main and Victoria Station Cafe are favorites, The Stomping Ground has local musical artists, Wonderland Comics can satisfy your pop culture and gaming needs and the Bradley Theater offers well produced plays! Come and enjoy this gem of the "Quiet Corner"! Please check out the Facebook page for "First Fridays in Downtown Putnam CT".

Find the parking lot where the "Gertrude Chandler Warner Boxcar Museum" is. Park and proceed to the end of the lot opposite the museum. Find the second street lamp amongst the bushes. The box is in the bushes where the support cable for the lamppost meets the ground. As always, be discreet and re-hide well!