

Infinites

Celebrating Gail Borden Public Library's 150th Anniversary
by Aron Ryan

I am old

as a Galapagos tortoise.

My shell shelters

not one, but infinite fables.

Books as bountiful
as stars. You cannot see every galaxy

anymore than you can read
each story in my observatory.

If my pages were mirrors,
you'd see smiles tucked into open books -

a wonder unnumbered, lest it lose its wonder.

Open a book, any book, tracing my words with your fingertip
as gently as you'd graze the commas of tulips,
petals curling purple, pink, peach, painting the springtime green
between the Fox River and me.

I am home

for art. Para La Abuela, alebrije exhibited
at my exhilarating Creatures of a
Dream World. La tortuga shelters las mariposas monarcas,
painted butterflies perched on my dome of a home;
may you rest your freckled wings on my speckled green shell.

I am refuge

for every language, every book, every creature,
home to Rocket the library turtle,
home to painted lady butterflies taking their first flight,
home to newborns and abuelas and readers

seeking sanctuary in my shelves. Open a book, any book, and listen
to these pages rustling like autumn leaves in a brisk breeze,
smelling just as sweet. Breathe in the scent of a freshly printed book
in your favorite nook of my paradise.

I am Gail Borden Library,
celebrating my 150th Anniversary in verse,
yet my worth cannot be enumerated

anymore than we can count the words in this vicinity
or the stars in a universe expanding

infinitely...