



ANNUAL REPORT

SOUTH SHORE PUBLIC LIBRARIES, 2016 - 2017



Chair's Message

It's my pleasure to be invited to bring greetings in this year's annual report on behalf of the members of the South Shore Public Libraries Board.

I believe it's fair to say that 2016-17 represented a year of transition for the Board. We said goodbye to long-time member Alan Wilson, whose wit and wisdom have been missed around the table since his retirement from the SSPL Board.

Last spring, we were reluctantly forced to say goodbye to the late Robert Myra, who for years served as the Municipality of Chester's representative on our Board, always bringing a smile and a firm belief in the importance of public libraries in building our communities up at the grassroots level.

We also felt the winds of change in October of 2016, when municipal elections brought numerous new faces to our Board – each with their own unique skill sets and background, and all with a passion for the public library system.



Even with the changes afoot around our table, the SSPL Board remains committed to providing a public library system that, in our opinion, is second to none in the province if not all Atlantic Canada.

Our staff, led by Chief Librarian Troy Myers, continue to work wonders within the constraints of often challenging financial circumstances.

We are particularly proud of the programs that SSPL branches have offered over the past year – staff have worked tirelessly to find ways to reach out to both longtime and new library users of all ages and demographic backgrounds.

As proof of the effectiveness of that outreach, we boast more than 1,500 new card holders over the past year. We've also set the bar for how libraries can embrace new technologies to enhance access to information, providing more than 10,000 hours to users at public computer terminals. We look forward to those user trends only increasing more when we open our new Lunenburg branch at the Lunenburg Academy in the next few months.

On a personal level, it has been a pleasure to work alongside such remarkable and dedicated people, both members and staff, during my nine years on the South Shore Public Libraries Board.

Truly, these are individuals who understand the important role of the library as an institution in our greater Lunenburg and Queens County community, and they are each to be commended for their relentless work.

Patrick Hirtle,
SSPL Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrick Hirtle".

Chief's Message



I reported last year that the South Shore Public Library Board of Directors was busy putting together a new strategic plan that will guide our work into the next decade. After several months of consultation – both internal and external – I am pleased to report our Vision 2027 document was approved and released to the public. While Vision 2027 clearly articulates our values and outlines our strategic priorities and holds staff to account with easy to understand, measurable goals, it is the mission we take the most pride in. Our mission is our beacon, it is the reason we do everything we do, and our mission is clear: our libraries celebrate reading, discovering, learning, and sharing.

I like to describe public libraries as “your original social network”, offering you real people, real connections, and real information you can count on. Vision 2027 is available on our website or you can come into any of our outlets and we will give you a copy of the document. I encourage you to read it and let us know what you think. If you have questions, comments, or complaints I will be happy to discuss them with you. You can find me at: tmyers@southshorepubliclibraries.ca.

On the building better libraries front, I am pleased to report our Lunenburg branch move to the Lunenburg Academy is getting very close to fruition. As I write, tender submissions are currently being evaluated and construction will begin soon. We are planning on welcoming you to the new space sometime this fall or early winter. Mayor Bailey and Lunenburg Council have been steadfast in their support for this project and deserve all of the credit for making it happen. They were also instrumental in lobbying the Nova Scotia Government and ACOA who have become partners in this project to refurbish this national historic site. I applaud their vision and commitment to building a better community in this very physical way.

I often get asked, “In this digital age, why do we need new libraries?” The answer is simple: humans are social creatures, and well-designed physical spaces can guide our social interaction in positive ways. Good public libraries become the places we gather without prejudice, and this connectivity leads to new conversations, collaborations, and ideas. Good public libraries will also inspire awe in our children, making them say “Wow!” every time they visit. In these spaces we will all be encouraged to do great things and proudly declare that we are open, welcoming, and working on creating a better community together – no matter what the future may bring.

In my opinion, it is because of this digital age that well designed public spaces have become even more important. Don't just take my word for it - I encourage you to read all the reports from our outlets and look at our usage metrics in this document which support the claim that libraries do matter.

As information becomes more and more digitized, South Shore Public Libraries will continue to ensure self-directed education will be available to all in a safe, accessible public space. We will also help you discover the truth as the increasing noise of “fake news” grows. In short, we will deliver a human experience – a real social network - that technology can only mimic. Please join us and help make your libraries better. We are constantly looking for new ideas in this changing world and would love to collaborate with you as we move forward.

Speaking of change, we have had to say farewell to some long serving staff this past year. Robin Benjamin, Nancy Dowd, Ken Malcolm, Marion Moore, and Teresa Workman have all moved on to other opportunities. Their combined work experience of almost one hundred years will be missed. On behalf of everyone here at South Shore Public Libraries, we wish them well as they start a new chapter in their lives.

On the Board front, we also say goodbye to long serving Director Alan Wilson. Alan has reluctantly decided to retire from our Board in his 90th year so he can free up time for other projects and pursuits. Alan's commitment, knowledge, and wit will be greatly missed. He personifies what it means to be community minded, giving his boundless time and energy over the years to countless groups committed to building capacity and strength in civil society. On top of that, he is a true gentleman who is an absolute joy to be around. Alan, more than anyone else, has made South Shore Public Libraries the success it is today. He has set a high standard for public service that few of us will ever reach. His accomplishments are an inspiration to us all. Thank you Alan!

In closing, I would like to thank our municipal and provincial partners. Without the ongoing support of the municipalities and the Government of Nova Scotia, South Shore Public Libraries would not exist. We greatly appreciate your faith in us and we look forward to building better, smarter communities together.

Troy Myers,
Chief Librarian and CEO,
South Shore Public Libraries

MISSION

Our Libraries Celebrate
Reading, Discovering, Learning and Sharing



VISION

South Shore Public Libraries is a vital centre of the community, sharing a robust collection and innovative technology, that inspires life long learning and literacy in a positive, welcoming environment.



VALUES

Literacy • Innovation • Inclusion
Intellectual Freedom • Collaboration • Community



Branch Updates



Alean Freeman Library, Greenfield



The past year has seen some changes at the Greenfield Library. Ken Malcolm left in the fall and was replaced by Charity Fraser in mid-December. For the transition period David Trueman and Eric Pottie took turns serving the community and keeping the library on track.

In March the branch saw its first program established, a knitting and handcrafting group that meets on Saturdays. It has had a slow start, but there is a core of regular crafters and we hope to see that number grow in the coming year.

As this is my first year at this branch of the library, I am excited to meet the summer members and see what all the fuss is about! We would like to give a big THANK YOU to our wonderful volunteers, without whom this library would not be possible!

Charity Fraser, Library Clerk

Mobile Library

With a combined 63 years of library service, Dave has 30 years and I have 33, the Mobile Library continues to provide good research, reading, DVD and information service to 20 communities. Year 2016 saw an increase in circulation. With the help of Karen and Brenda, substitutes, and a thankful nod to Technical Services staff we were able to keep the Mobile on the road, even in inclement weather, with a constantly refreshed collection.

The New Ross School stop is now so comfortable with the students that they know our names and with confidence approach the desk to request specific titles. This is delightful from 6-10 year olds!

The 2016 Summer Reading Program was a big success, and library members were very generous in supporting our Buy-A-Book for the Library campaign.

We have had some of our generous member-friends pass away or relocate this year, and we will miss them. On the other hand we have registered many new members who have now become our friends.

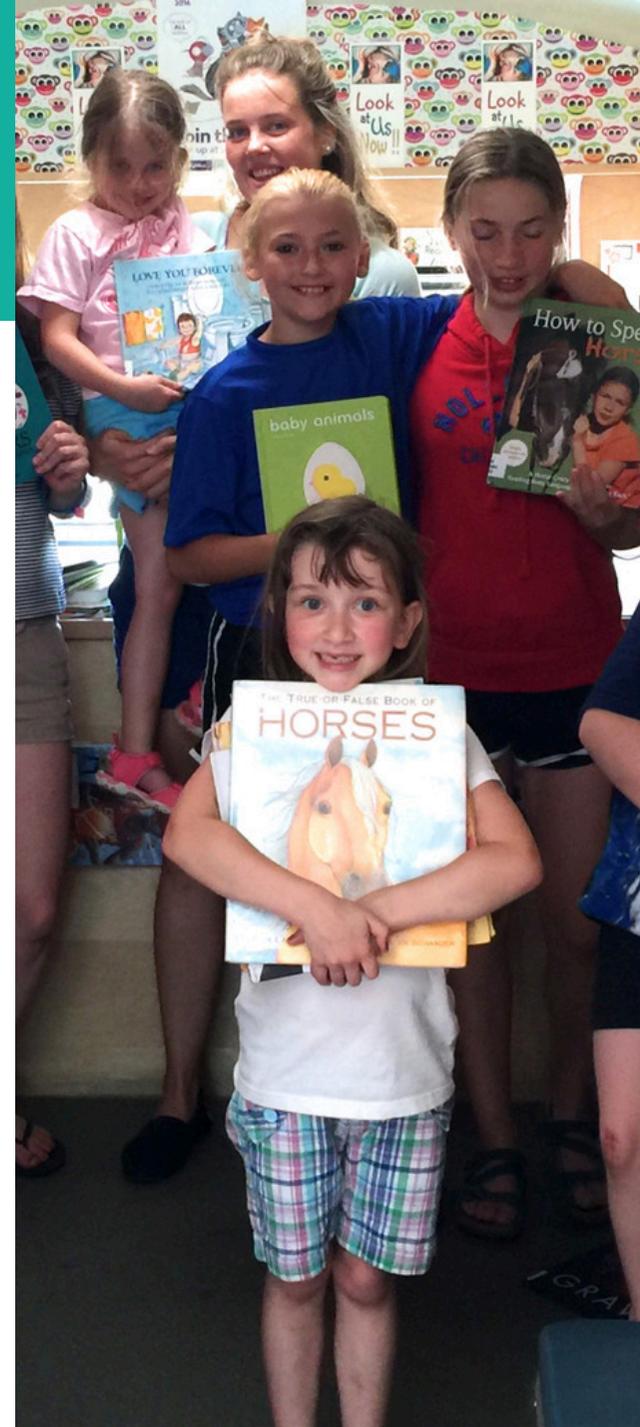
One of our most eventful days of the past year was when the starter on the bus went kaput in Broad Cove. Members brought us hot coffee and muffins, and Silver's Garage showed up and fixed us on site and we carried on.

A film crew from the TV show "The Treasure of Oak Island" visited the Mobile in Mahone Bay and interviewed me! I was sorry that they cut the scenes showing our display of Oak Island book titles, but other amusing bits made it to air.

The future looks good for keeping the wheels on the bus going, with perhaps a re-consideration of our schedule for the future.

We are a kid-, teen-, parent-, granny-, grumpy- and doggy-friendly library, just ask anyone! Come see us!

Crystal E. Madill, Branch Coordinator



As a lifelong learner and avid reader I was very excited to join the South Shore Public Libraries team as Branch Coordinator of Margaret Hennigar Public Library in December 2016. Margaret Hennigar Public Library is a very busy place, with a diverse group of members.

We offer various educational, fun and engaging programs and services. This year two Technology Interns joined our staff for three months. They offered programs and individual help for those who wished to learn about computers, tablets and smart phones. They engaged youth with programs such as Maker Space on the Road, educational math games, and how to build a computer. These programs were popular with our members, and were especially a success over March break.

Also in March we held a "Paint Nite" fundraiser with 47 people in attendance. It was great to open up after hours for such a fun event. It was so successful, that we have many requests for another "Paint Nite".

We are now into our second year of displaying art at the library. It really adds a wonderful visual experience for our members, and also attracts new people to our branch. We look forward to continuing this initiative and offering workshops and events that accompany the displays.

Films are still a significant part of our programming this year. Our monthly Indie Film Nights offer screenings of quality independent films. We also took part in National Canadian Film Day, joining libraries and other locations all across the country to showcase the great films made by, for, and about Canadians.

Our regular and well attended programs were Story Time, Art Classes, Lego Club, and The Creative Impulse.

We offered a space for many volunteer-led groups and activities such as chess, handy-work, board games, writing groups and book clubs.

We feel very fortunate to have so many wonderful volunteers as part of the MHPL team. The Seed library is into its second year. Thanks to the help of many volunteers, the seeds were out and ready to go to all of the eager gardeners, despite our very long winter.

Every Thursday Night will be Teen Night. Programs and clubs such as improv, animé and slam poetry will be offered to youth aged 14-18. Baby club will be every Tuesday, because it is never too early to start loving your local library! Offering these programs insures that all age ranges have a fun and engaging program at the library.

Over the next year we will continue with successful programming, and look forward to adding more diverse and interesting programs and events for our members to partake in. The Margaret Hennigar Public Library staff value our members, and look forward to your visits with us. We strive to provide the best possible experience to all of our library borrowers and other members. We look forward to another busy, exciting and successful year!

Katherine Sharp, Branch Coordinator



Thomas H. Raddall Library, Liverpool

09/15

Exciting times at Thomas H. Raddall Library! There have been a number of changes, which have included a new staff member, a three-month librarian internship, a tech volunteer, a French reading volunteer, and a number of student placements, which in addition to our existing dedicated staff have created a dynamic and fun environment.

The branch has drastically increased its program offerings. For our adult members, these have included knitting, colouring and tabletop games, which provide much needed relaxation and de-stressing. New technology has also been strongly supported with programs on tablets and smart-phones, eBay, Microsoft Word, email and the latest apps. For our younger members, we have had new technology programs such as the very popular Minecraft, Build a PC, Math Madness and 3D printing, as well as the fun stuff such as Games Club, Art Club, Hang Time, Story Time, Creative Impulse and Lego Club. The new scavenger hunts at Christmas and Easter also proved to be very popular. In addition, with the generous volunteer time given by Denise, we now have a French story time!

We have seen a number of fantastic and informative presentations and displays, including a photographic workshop by Kas Stone, a fibre arts demonstration by Kacy DeLong, and a Green Engagement program for children by Green Schools Nova Scotia.

The branch has had its collection of fiction and non-fiction books, audio books, DVDs and magazines updated and enlarged. We've also had regular displays of books highlighting specific themes, such as travel, New Year New You, Spring Clean, gardening and YP (young persons) fiction. These have been very popular with our members, as well as being fun and informative.

We've held a number of special events throughout the year, such as March Break programs for children, a day of film screenings for National Canadian Film Day, and the annual TD Summer Reading Club.

We pride ourselves on being a venue for a host of programs run by other organisations, such as the Raddall Reading Club, Senior Safety, Connect Nova Scotia, Queens Gardening Club, and Queens volunteer tax service. This helps the library to be an essential part of the Queens community. We aim to be a social hub, providing information and services to all residents and visitors, a role we hope to develop through active partnerships.

We look forward to a positive and constantly evolving future. Leading the way in social and technological help and information, as well as providing a safe space to relax and be entertained. We aim to provide new programs and forge new links with our cultural partners – Queens Municipality, local schools, museums and other community groups. The library is about people first and foremost. We are a part of the rich culture of Queens County, and our principle objective is to serve its' people in every way we can.

Finally, I would like to thank our branch staff and volunteers for their helpful and dedicated service, and in turn, extend these thanks to those who impact our service in our sister libraries and the technical department. Though, most of all, I would like to thank our library members for giving us this opportunity to serve our community.

David Trueman, Branch Supervisor



Lunenburg Library



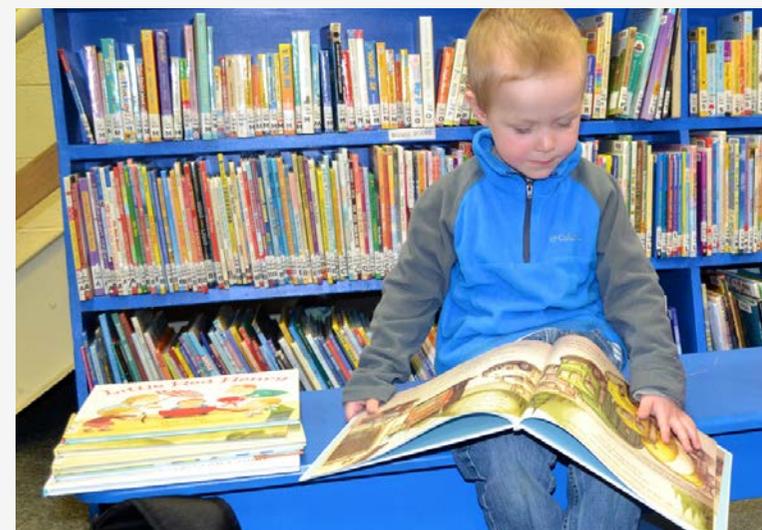
We're always looking to support the community through partnerships and programming, and this year was a great success. Community members led seminars on nutrition and health, 3D-printing demonstrations, and poetry readings, and our knitting circle has a loyal group of dedicated crafters each week. We celebrated Lunenburg's 262nd birthday with a Lego contest (there were fantastic entries depicting Lunenburg's history and architecture), had a great second year of loaning family day passes to the Fisheries Museum of the Atlantic, and best of all we held the first ever Lunenburg Lit Festival! The festival was a runaway success, and our partners were indispensable in pulling it off – a big thank you to the Town of Lunenburg, Lexicon Books, TD Bank, Lunenburg School of the Arts, Lunenburg Walking Tours, MLA Suzanne Lohnes-Croft, and Nova Scotia Provincial Library for your help and support!

There was a big focus on art activities for children throughout the year, with some fantastic creations being made using paint, papier-maché, felt, cloth, sculpture, collage, and other media. Summer activities also included nature walks, outdoor games, and cartooning workshops. March Break was a combination of art, technology, math, creative writing, and puzzles and word-play. It was an exhausting year (probably more for staff than for the kids), but well worth it seeing everyone learn so much and have lots of fun!

Of course the big question on everyone's mind is the move to the Lunenburg Academy. Preliminary construction has been completed, and interior renovations will commence shortly, so we'll be moving later this year, and we couldn't be more excited with the design of the new space and the opportunities for expanded library service that it will provide.

Customer service is the top priority for all South Shore Public Libraries branches, and the staff at Lunenburg are prime examples. They are always working to provide anyone who walks in the door with a pleasant, rewarding library experience – from topical displays to research assistance to informed book recommendations and more, their goal is always to provide the best possible help, and they don't disappoint!

Jeff Mercer, Lunenburg Branch Manager, Deputy Chief Librarian



Community Engagement

Community Engagement is about making connections, sharing ideas, building partnerships, and striving to engage and serve people while encouraging them to embrace literacy and the joy of reading.

There are several highlights from the year to share: We launched a new initiative, Be Active BackPacks, in May. These unique physical literacy packs are filled with equipment, props, and books that encourage families to get up and move. You can borrow them for two weeks at any library. Staff were also able to incorporate the packs in several ways: afterschool programming, preschool storytime and activities, and special rural summer story and activity programs.

A partnership with the Age Friendly Mahone Bay Committee allowed us to access funds and purchase an iPad Lab. This set of tablets has not only enabled us to offer technology classes in our branches, but has also allowed us to go out into the community and help combat social isolation in seniors by sharing this technology.

This summer we took Storytime on the road - through community partnerships in Petite Riviere and New Ross, we were able to host weekly outdoor Story Time and other activities in those communities. This was a very successful initiative and we look forward to expanding the program this summer!

We played host to our Tanzanian partners from VETA Mikumi and Arusha this year. Faculty from these two East African vocational schools were in Nova Scotia to attend NSCC Continuing Education classes and to see first-hand examples of cultural tourism. We hosted the group on the South Shore portion of their visit and were excited to return the hospitality we were shown in Tanzania a few years ago.

We were able to strengthen a great community connection this year. Through our partnership with the Fisheries Museum of the Atlantic, not only were Family Passes to the museum available to borrow at the Lunenburg Library for a second year, but they were also available all season long at the Margaret Hennigar Public Library!

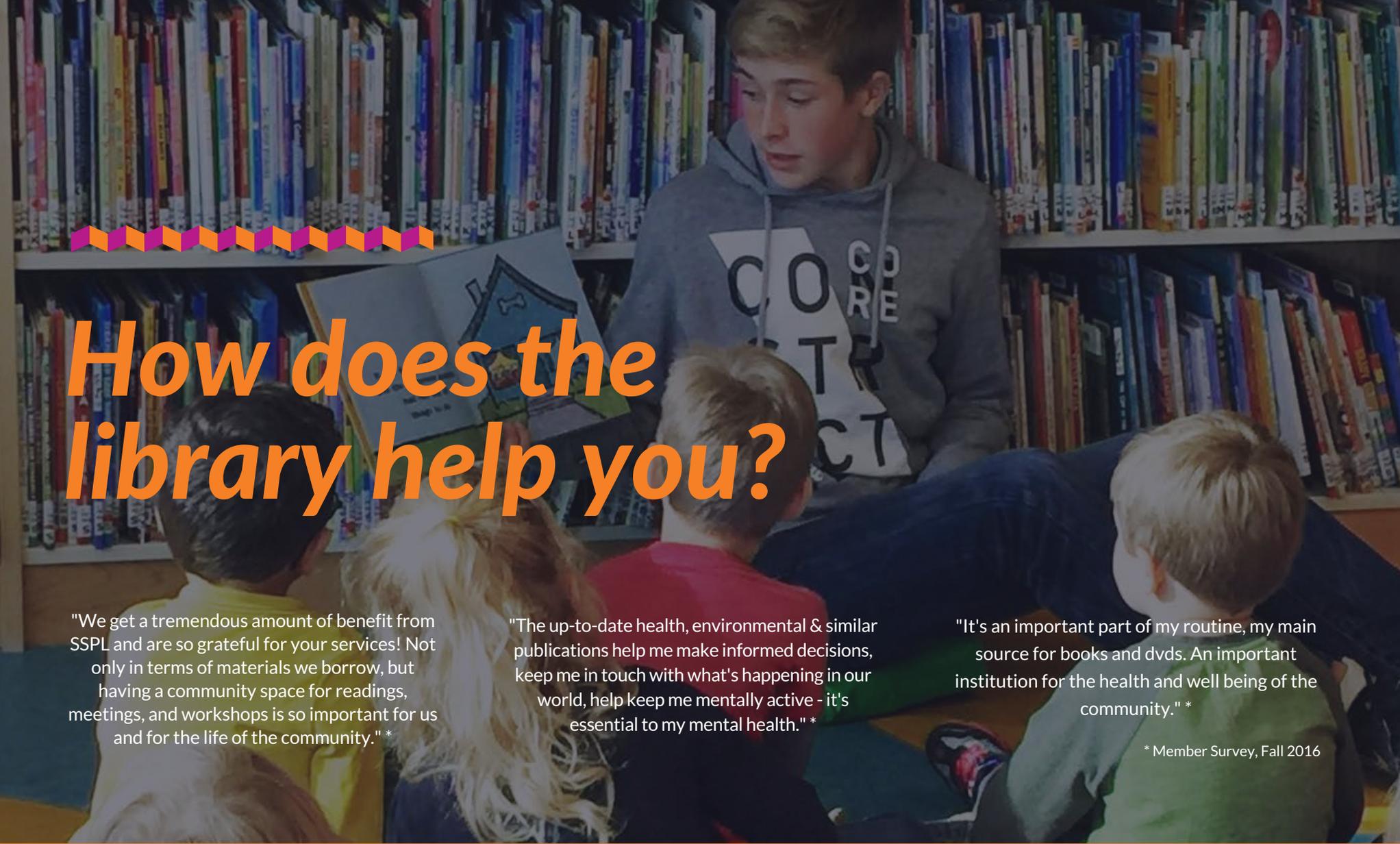
Overdrive and our electronic resources have created an entry point for us to visit many schools. Students use their library cards to download an eBook or audio book. We have been able to register significant numbers of new members in the 10- to 18-year-old demographic. Contacts made during school visits also resulted in Pop Up Library opportunities - we were invited to school field trip locations where we handed out books and promoted the summer reading program. We also hosted several Hackmatack Children's Award authors at local schools.

We have many people sharing their skills and passions while helping their community thrive as SSPL volunteers. This year our volunteer complement has risen to over 30 individuals and we have at least one working in each branch.

SSPL's new Strategic Plan "Building our Future" was completed this year. One of the strategic priorities is that SSPL will serve as a heart of the community, and that we will become a community connector by encouraging volunteers, providing community meeting spaces and pursuing outreach and partnership opportunities. We look forward to the exciting adventures that working toward accomplishing this goal will bring.

Christina Pottie, Community Engagement Coordinator





How does the library help you?

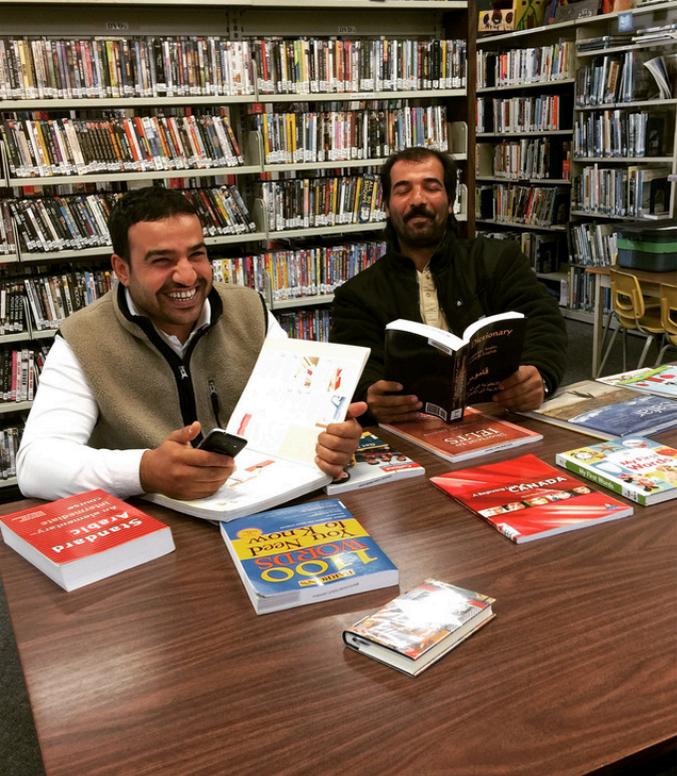
"We get a tremendous amount of benefit from SSPL and are so grateful for your services! Not only in terms of materials we borrow, but having a community space for readings, meetings, and workshops is so important for us and for the life of the community." *

"The up-to-date health, environmental & similar publications help me make informed decisions, keep me in touch with what's happening in our world, help keep me mentally active - it's essential to my mental health." *

"It's an important part of my routine, my main source for books and dvds. An important institution for the health and well being of the community." *

* Member Survey, Fall 2016

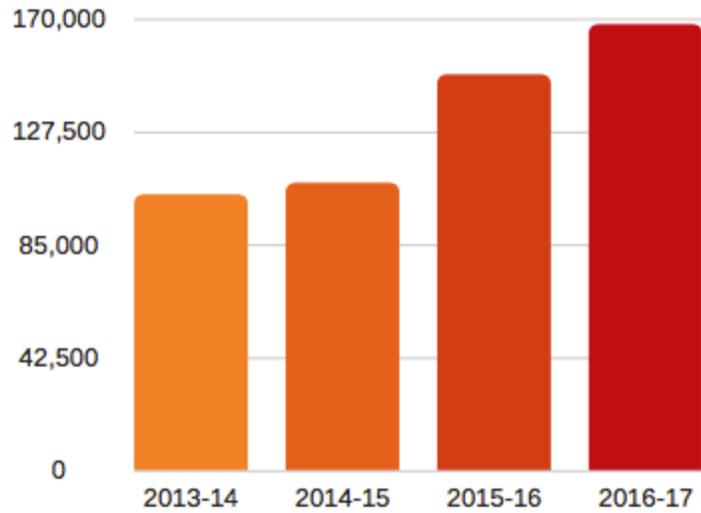
KEY METRICS



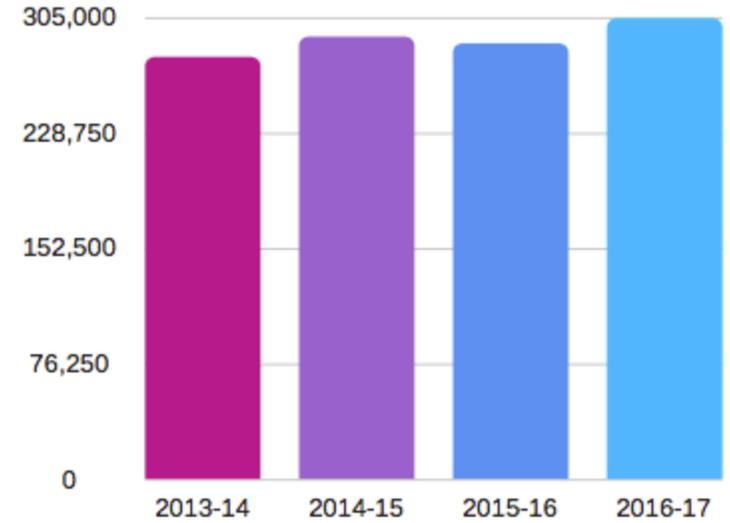
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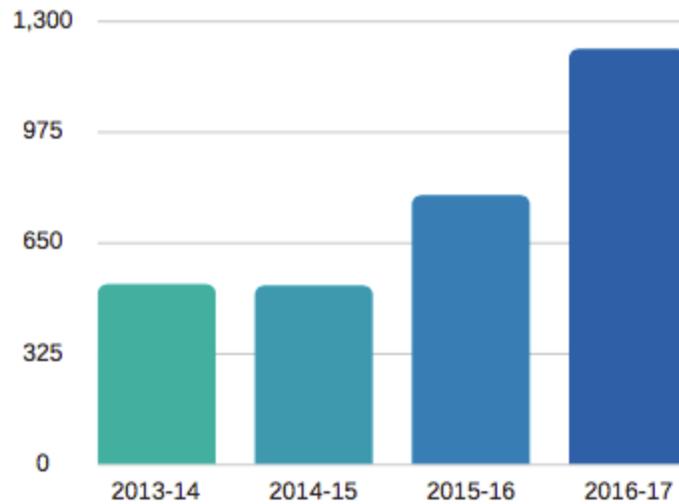
IN PERSON LIBRARY VISITS



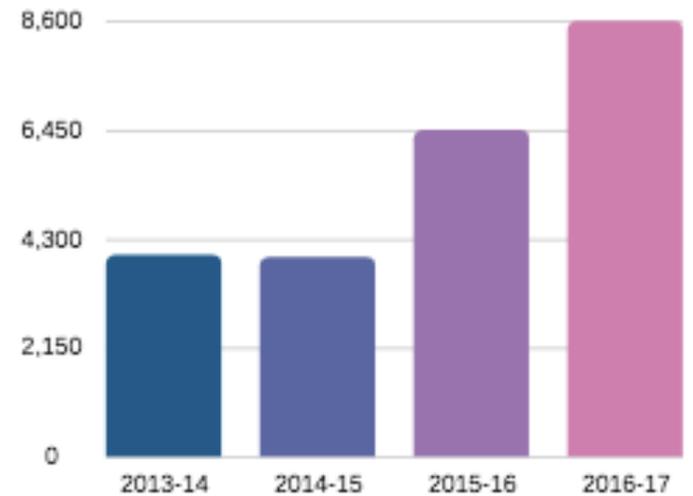
ITEMS BORROWED



PROGRAMS OFFERED



PROGRAM ATTENDANCE



FIND US @

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

135 North Park Street
Bridgewater NS
B4V 9B3

902-543-2548

LUNENBURG LIBRARY

19 Pelham Street
Lunenburg NS
B0J 2C0

902-634-8008

MOBILE LIBRARY

135 North Park Street
Bridgewater, NS
B4V 9B3

902-527-7656

ALEAN FREEMAN LIBRARY

5060 Highway 210
Greenfield, NS
B0T 1E0

902-685-5400

MARGARET HENNIGAR LIBRARY

135 North Park Street
Bridgewater, NS
B4V 9B3

902-543-9222

THOMAS H. RADDALL LIBRARY

145 Old Bridge Street
Liverpool, NS
B0T 1K0

902-354-5270

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Special thanks to South Shore Public Libraries 2016 funders, including the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, Municipality of Chester, Region of Queens, Town of Bridgewater, Town of Lunenburg, Town of Mahone Bay, the Province of Nova Scotia and our Donors for your ongoing support.

