



Report to the Community

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Chief Librarian's Report

After laying the groundwork for a refreshed focus and a new attitude of resilience and confidence in the Library's role in the community during the past several years, 2009-10 turned out to be a busy year in which many projects were realized.



Facilities

The big news that came days after the end of the year was about the work that was completed on the Lunenburg County Lifestyle Centre and the inclusion of a new flagship library branch and administration centre. The facility will be built on York Street in Bridgewater and will house a substantially expanded library and new administrative space. It is scheduled to open in 2012.

After a couple of long years of negotiations, a unique agreement was signed by the Province, the Region of Queens, the South Shore Regional School Board, the Greenfield Community Resource Centre Society and the Library Board to open the Alean Freeman Public Library, a satellite branch in the new Greenfield Community School. The soft opening took place on March 20, with the Grand Opening scheduled for early April. All parties are proud of the new agreement and excited about providing enhanced library service in the central Queens area.

The new Mobile Library arrived just in time to wrap up the year and hit the road as April began. The new 'blue wave' look is visually striking and the mechanics of vehicle are state of the art, featuring an efficient furnace system and a streamlined wireless computer connection. Staff members Cathy MacDonald and Dave White have done an outstanding job in acquiring this latest mobile unit.

During the summer, the Hebbville Administration Office suffered water woes – pump problems and dry weather left staff without a fully functioning plumbing system for several days. Having a suitable water system in place in the new facility is a requirement! During the fall, the Library Board partnered with a local non-profit agency to allow the use of a third of the building for storage. The arrangement has given the Library's book budget a much-needed infusion of funds.

Collections

With several avenues of funding arrangements coming together, the Finance Committee passed a budget late in the year that clearly emphasized the priorities set out in the Library's last Long Range Plan and for the first time in the history of the organization, brought the collections budget up to the national average per capita expenditure of \$5. Previously, no more than \$2.50 per capita had been allotted to this area. The commitment of the Board to make the collections the highest priority for the organization shows a great deal of foresight and thought.

Adding to the Library's electronic collections, an introductory set of downloadable audiobooks was purchased late in the year as part of a consortial agreement with the other rural libraries in Nova Scotia. South Shore Public Libraries also participated in a pilot project for the province in working with large Canadian vendors to introduce automatic release plans for purchasing.

Services and programs

Many branch programs emphasized the creation of a welcoming place for young people. A number of movie afternoons were held in the Bridgewater and Liverpool locations, as well as an after-school program for tweens featuring book discussions, crafts and other activities. Storytime continued to be a programming highlight for the Library, with two new sessions added to accommodate the growing number of participants.

Dozens of discussion group sessions were held throughout the year, including regular book club meetings as well as the Big Books reading club, the popular Small Communities – Big Ideas series and the Library Café. Computer sessions for seniors continued to be popular and due to patron demand, included the addition of a digital camera course. A record number of established and budding authors shared their work during readings, workshops and a weekend celebrating poetry called Poets on the Town.

The highly anticipated email notification system was implemented in the fall of 2009. Patrons are thrilled to receive reminders of due and overdue materials electronically and cost savings are being realized both in staff time and postage.

Immediately following the implementation of the new electronic notification system was the launch of the province's Borrow Anywhere/Return Anywhere program, allowing patrons to borrow books from any public, college or university library in Nova Scotia, and return items to their library of choice. This was an immediate hit with borrowers across the province.

Nova Scotia is taken the lead in working toward more Equitable Library Access for patrons with print disabilities. South Shore Public Libraries' staff members were involved in hosting a one-day summit for providers and users of services to those with visual, perceptual, learning and mobility disabilities as well as the resulting province-wide staff training 'bootcamp'.

Staffing

Several staff changes took place throughout the year, including the addition of a new 'Page' position, currently in place in three branches. All staff members participated in a provincially-sponsored Respectful Workplace training session in Halifax during the spring. A pandemic plan was put in place in late autumn; fortunately a full pandemic didn't hit the province, and most staff members remained healthy throughout the season.

Funding

A spring election meant Provincial budget figures weren't released until mid-year. While this made for difficult planning, a small increase was granted to libraries across the province. The additional funds were used to top up the Library's collections budget. The Library Boards Association of Nova Scotia, including South Shore representative Marie Hogan Loker, worked hard to raise awareness of public libraries and the services they offer through their 'Public Libraries are important to me, my family and my community' election campaign.

Locally, the Adopt-a-Book program was revamped to take advantage of the overhauled book budget and minimize staff time so they could continue to focus on regular acquisitions and cataloguing. The highlight of the year included an evening gala to launch the program. Communications Coordinator Teresa Workman led a team of staff members in creating a memorable and successful event, bringing in nearly \$10,000 over the course of the program.

Friends and Volunteers

The Friends of South Shore Public Libraries spent the latter part of the year taking a look at their structure and how they could organize themselves in a more efficient way. They are anticipating holding a book sale in 2010.

In addition to book sales, discarded books and unsuitable donations are also being sent to a company called Better World Books which sells used books online through venues such as eBay and Amazon. The profits are shared with the Library and a literacy charity.

The Volunteer Committee met during the summer to fulfill its mandate as outlined in the Long Range Plan. The planning session resulted in a recommendation to keep the volunteer recruitment efforts of the Library at a very low level.

Community partnerships

The Library continued to partner with the Town of Bridgewater's Sustainability Partnership by participating in planning sessions, co-promoting and hosting events and making their Integrated Community Sustainability Plan available to the community.

The Library partnered with staff and volunteers from South Shore Regional Health's Mental Health and Addictions Services Departments, the South Shore Schizophrenia Society, and the Nova Scotia Community College to build and promote a collection of resources available to all members of the community, and particularly those who receive referrals from mental health professionals in the area. Funding for the project was provided in part by the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia.

Late in the year, the Second Story Women's Centre approached the Library to ask for help in raising awareness about violence against women. Staff participated in general planning sessions and hosted a special Small Communities – Big Ideas discussion on this issue in Lunenburg.

During the summer of 2009, I returned to school to pursue my doctoral studies at the Queensland University of Technology through the San Jose Gateway PhD Program. As demands on my time became more pressing, I tendered my resignation from South Shore Public Libraries at the end of the year. I've found my stay here brief but never boring!

Cheryl Stenström
Chief Librarian

Branch Reports

Thomas H. Raddall Library, Liverpool

Georges deRome, a former Liverpool staff member, rejoined the staff and accepted the Sunday position at the library. Georges' hiring permits flexibility within weekend scheduling, in addition to providing an appropriate substitute in the event of staff illness or vacation requests. Tina Nickerson accepted the position of branch page. Tina is a welcome addition to Liverpool's roster. Liverpool regular staff also includes Wanda Kushner, Robin Benjamin, Heather Stevens (currently on extended sick leave), and Cathy MacDonald.

South Shore Opportunities vacated the Rossignol Center at the end of October, creating the need for an additional staff member to fulfill the requirement that the library have two staff members in the building at all times. Staff will review this arrangement when Mr. Hines secures another tenant for the vacant office space. The server was moved from the South Shore Opportunities side of the building to the small office in the library. The server is now accessible to reboot when the situation arises.

Liverpool Branch continued its adult program of Introduction to Computers for Seniors. A new program, Basic Digital Camera, was added and response has been excellent, with a full complement of participants for each session. Story-time continues as a perennial favourite, with moms and their tots all enjoying Miss Heather's enthusiasm, stories and music. Liverpool added an extra session due to excellent response from parents. Liverpool's Program Room is well used by other community groups as well. The federal volunteer income tax assistance program, for low-income individuals, ran from February through April. South Shore Health held a five session workshop for interested participants called Living with Chronic Pain. The Raddall Reading Club continues to meet the third Thursday of the month. The Queens County Gardening Club meets once a month on Thursday evenings from April through November. The local Bible Study Group meets three Thursday evenings a month.

This year saw a tremendous influx of new books, audio books and DVDs, which in turn set staff to thinking about displaying items to their best advantage. Use of space was re-configured so the multimedia collection is now shelved together. The display area for new items has been significantly enlarged. The reference collection was reduced and now is housed next to the Nova Scotiana collection. The Young People collection was moved and expanded. Staff reserved a bay of shelving to feature monthly displays.

Maintenance-wise, the long standing issues with Liverpool's security alarm system have been resolved. Heating problems at the Rossignol Center were addressed with an overhaul of the boiler and burner that took approximately one week. A sincere thank you to Norm Amirault for his prompt attention to library concerns.

Wanda A. Kushner
Branch Coordinator

Lunenburg Library

Lunenburg's patron's were pleased to see all the new books arriving on our shelves this past year, so many that we have had to do some rearranging to accommodate them. Branch staff are happy with the new schedule made possible by the new page and weekend/substitute positions. Lunenburg library had several successful programs and events this past year; the ever popular Storytime with Miss Heather, Small Communities Big Ideas lecture & discussion series, two sessions of Computer Basics for Seniors & Digital cameras, an author reading and a very successful weekend of poetry readings.

Janet Wells
Branch Coordinator

Mobile Library

The Mobile Library has now completed its first year as a single vehicle fleet. The schedule that combined two vehicles into one has worked out most of the kinks and been well received by patrons. The emphasis of the schedule is longer regular stops in central locations. Circulation is up over last year and the staff continue to provide excellent service, which has always been the trademark of our Mobile outlet. The Mobile stops in New Ross, and New Germany on Tuesdays, Chester and Chester Basin on Wednesdays, Mahone Bay on Thursdays, and Caledonia on Saturdays. Various stops in Lunenburg and Queens Counties are covered by a three week rotating schedule on Fridays.

On March 20th the brand new Bookmobile went on the road for the first time. The old bus died gracefully in the parking lot 2 days before the end of its run. The new bus is quiet, efficient and staff is looking forward working on it during all four seasons.

Christina Pottie
Branch Coordinator

Bridgewater Library

Bridgewater Library's most successful events of the past year were about writers and writing. In February and March the Library held a series of writing workshops with Nina Munteanu, an internationally published Canadian author. In May, "Writers Month", the Library hosted three writing workshops ("Memoir Writing" with William Kowalski, "Spiritual Writing" with Regina Cooper and "Writing for Children" with Nancy Wilcox Richards) thanks to a grant from Nova Scotia Writer's Federation and the Canada Council. An Open Mic session at the end of the month enabled workshop participants to share their work. Author readings with Joanne Jefferson and Budge Wilson rounded out the month.

A couple of new initiatives were well received by Bridgewater patrons. Most borrowers were eager to make sure we have their email addresses so they can receive reminders and overdue notices by email. The Borrow Anywhere Return Anywhere (BARA) programme is proving very popular with our patrons who love to borrow dvds, music and magazines from Halifax and others who are happy to be able to return university and community college items through us.

The Summer Reading Program brought a number of children who read to complete their log book and win prizes, but also those who signed up for Spy School, and those who attended our spy movies and participated in Spy Headquarters (games and activities). StoryTime was popular as always and we had people on the waiting list for each session. During the spring months we held "After School Thursdays at the Library". We started a Thursday Book Club in the winter for children ages 8 and up. There was a good response to Computer Basics for Seniors and Digital Camera sessions.

Staff changes include: Krista Orchard resigned, Ilana Luther was hired as a Saturday clerk, Elly Danica was hired as a Saturday page, Karen Cook worked on the Mobile Library as needed. We rearranged the physical space to make the Library a more efficient workspace and more welcoming to borrowers. They like it; we like it. There is a lot of public support for the Lunenburg County Lifestyles Centre. People called their municipal representatives and mayors, came to a public meeting, asked questions and became quite engaged in the issue.

Marion Moore
Branch Coordinator

Statistics

CIRCULATION	2008-09	2009-10
Alean Freeman (Greenfield)	---	211
Bridgewater	74,082	71,830
Hebbville*	13,368	17,894
Lunenburg	38,537	39,921
Mobile	48,430	50,885
T.H. Raddall (Liverpool)	38,473	36,459
Total	212,890	217,200

INTERLIBRARY LOANS	2008-09	2009-10
Borrowed from other libraries	4,162	2,980
Lent to other libraries	2,890	3,552

INFORMATION REQUESTS	2008-09	2009-10
Alean Freeman (Greenfield)	---	6
Bridgewater	6,556	6,243
Lunenburg	3,451	2,913
Mobile	2,715	2,847
T.H. Raddall (Liverpool)	1,365	2,185
Total	14,087	14,194

SPECIFIC TITLE REQUESTS	2008-09	2009-10
Alean Freeman (Greenfield)	---	1
Bridgewater	12,843	12,710
Hebbville	7,201	5,246
Lunenburg	4,793	4,956
Mobile	3,983	9,461
T.H. Raddall (Liverpool)	5,299	6,087
Total	34,119	38,461

VISITS TO LIBRARIES	2008-09	2009-10
Alean Freeman (Greenfield)	---	63
Bridgewater	50,388	43,860
Lunenburg	30,294	26,367
Mobile	16,272	12,366
T.H. Raddall (Liverpool)	22,746	23,562
Total	119,700	106,218

Statistics

OPEN HOURS	2008-09	2009-10
Alean Freeman (Greenfield)	---	12
Bridgewater	2,225	2,222
Hebbville	1,984	2,008
Lunenburg	2,400	2,408
Mobile	1,352	1,108
T.H. Raddall (Liverpool)	1,930	1,950
Total	9,891	9,708

PROGRAMS	2008-09	2009-10
Alean Freeman (Greenfield)	---	0
Bridgewater	75	74
Lunenburg	62	57
T.H. Raddall (Liverpool)	81	80
Other*	8	10
Total	226	221

PROGRAM ATTENDANCE	2008-09	2009-10
Alean Freeman (Greenfield)	---	0
Bridgewater	1,178	1,035
Lunenburg	1,075	865
T.H. Raddall (Liverpool)	1,395	1,374
Other	97	734
Total	3,745	4,008

STAFFING	2008-09	2009-10
Professional Librarians (FTE)*	3	3
Non-professional staff (FTE)	19.45	16.87
Total (FTE - Full-time equivalents)	22.45	19.87

Statistics

COLLECTION EXPENDITURES (adult and children)	2008-09	2009-10
Audiovisual materials	\$4,103	\$15,328
Books (fiction and non-fiction)	\$117,847	\$258,891
Magazines and serials	\$15,806	\$7,602
Other	-----	
Total	\$137,756	\$281,821

Statistics

INCOME	2008-09	2009-10
Province of Nova Scotia	\$896,796	\$947,000
Municipality of the District of Chester	\$57,933	\$65,116
Municipality of the District of Lunenburg	\$144,474	\$147,446
Town of Bridgewater*	\$41,036	\$46,679
Town of Lunenburg*	\$13,244	\$14,871
Town of Mahone Bay	\$5,056	\$5,667
Region of Queens*	\$64,457	\$67,020
Other Municipal Funding	\$14,000	\$17,486
South Shore Regional Library Board (grants and other income)	\$69,555	\$32,291
South Shore Regional Library Board (donations**)	\$60,060	\$48,558
Accumulated Surplus (For Mobile Library)	-----	\$120,781
Total	\$1,366,611	\$1,512,915

*These municipal units also provide and maintain library buildings in their jurisdictions, including capital expenditures, operating expenses and repairs/renovations.

**Including booksale and Adopt-a-Book

EXPENDITURES	2008-09	2009-10
Administration office	\$82,299	\$80,108
Books and other library materials	\$137,756	\$281,821
Mobile Library operations, maintenance & insurance	\$78,923	\$193,296
Professional services**	\$15,989	\$10,899
Other	\$1,299	\$936
Specialized software, Automation	\$15,440	\$24,540
Staff	\$969,468	\$871,828
Supplies***	\$71,648	\$51,643
Travel & Training (staff and board)	\$23,496	\$15,064
Total	\$1,396,318	\$1,530,135

**Audit, legal expenses, consulting fees, etc.

***Book processing, office, shipping, programs, etc.