

## ***LIBRARIAN'S ANNUAL REPORT*** ***August 20, 2020***

**Memberships and Circulation:** We currently have 96 books in circulation and 140 members. That's a little less than half what we had at this time last year, which makes sense given the drastic reduction in visitor numbers island-wide.

**New Books:** We had a delay in getting new books this year. But now they're finally gracing our shelves! We added 226 books this year. As always, thanks go to Carol Burdick and the fantastic Book Committee (Candis Kerns, Beth Van Houten, Pam Rollinger, Kelena Reid, Laurie Day, Andrew Dalrymple, Ann Hughey, Kathie Iannicelli and Paul Goldsmith). I'd also like to thank Michael Gourley for again supplying us with an amazing round of children's books from Houghton Mifflin. I'd also like to note Lara Tupper, who included us in her initiative to provide books by Black authors to Libraries. We added "Salvage the Bones," "The Fire This Time," "Redefining Realness," "A Burst of Light" and "Gingerbread" thanks to Lara. A final thank you to Susan Hirschman and Sandip Wilson who donated high quality young adult books as well. I'll note here that we usually do not take donations. However, I trust the expertise of Michael, Susan and Sandip as knowledgeable people in the book field and I'm so grateful for their help in curating our collection!

**Interlibrary loan** is now up and running again after being unavailable since the winter. We are so glad to have this service back!

Our **Website and Facebook page** have continued to be important virtual extensions of our Library space, now more than ever! I started a series of Facebook posts aimed at discussing anti-racism and amplifying the voices of the Black Lives Matter movement. While there's been a lull in this content in the past months as I worked on opening, I'm fully intending to keep the discussion going throughout the year. It is my strong belief that the Library should be engaged in this historic civil rights moment. And furthering the cause of anti racism has always been a core tenant of libraries. If anyone has resources they think I should share, or wants to be involved in this, please reach out to me.

We finished the **online card catalog** in the nick of time, as this is now the only way patrons can see what books we have. While our physical card catalog remains updated, this year we are only letting Librarians search through it.

Our **computer room** is closed to patrons this summer, but Matt and I are still printing and laminating documents upon request. **Wifi** is available in the Library lawn only, in order to discourage lingering in the building. Once again, it was judicious that we installed Wifi last summer, as it has been integral for our operations this year! In the spring when the Library was not open, I had provided WiFi as a public service. But now once again you must join the Library as a patron (or be an island resident) to get the code.

The usual **groups** that shared the Library space are not being held this year. I have let Maura Conley, the MISCA treasurer, use our back room during off hours to complete this essential work for MISCA since she does not currently have an internet connection. And for those interested, the island AA is meeting on ZOOM. The Meeting ID is posted at L. Brackett & Son.

This brings me to the ultimate topic, **the pandemic**. At this point in the Annual Report, I usually discuss what's happened this summer. However, as we're all well aware, it has been an unusual year for the Library. We opened on July 1, with safety measures in place including: limiting number of patrons in at a time, required masking, Librarians handling the checkout procedure (no signing book cards, sadly!), quarantining books for 72 hours and of course, lots of sanitizing. I'm happy to say it has been going well. Since opening I've adjusted a few things so people can make the most of the Library. I now have a touchless hand sanitizer dispenser (thanks Michael!) and I let people look through the books if they sanitize their hands beforehand. I'm also letting people take books and read them outside, to compensate for the fact that they can't sit in here and read. This has been especially useful with families. Everyone is respectful and Matt and I have had no issues enforcing the rules. In the spring prior to opening we did "porch pickup": patrons browsed our card catalog online, then emailed me with their request and I left it in the book drop for them. I still offer this service for those uncomfortable coming in the building. I feel confident that the Library is safe for both staff and patrons.

Sadly, we made the decision to cancel almost all **events**, including the **Distinguished Writers Series**. This also meant we had to forgo our major fundraisers, Chowderfest and Library Day. We did not do the Raffle, as we felt that during a time of economic hardship we could not ask businesses to donate, nor could we expect people to buy tickets. The atmosphere of the island is certainly different this summer. On the one hand, no programming made the summer feel a little less exciting. However, especially with the fundraisers, it's also given us some breathing room and a chance to rethink. I take pride in knowing that the Library is being responsible in not encouraging congregating in any way. All of the other island organizations also canceled their events, so we are acting in solidarity with our community.

Now, I said "almost all" events because we have had a couple happenings online! Corlis Carroll is still offering Storytime on Wednesdays via ZOOM. The gatherings have been small but fun. In June, we hosted an author event on ZOOM with Lara Tupper, who was slated to speak in person. She connected with our previous Distinguished Writer, Christina Baker Kline, who moderated the talk. It was a great success! I also did Storytimes with the Monhegan School on ZOOM this past spring, when the school was shut down. We had a Book Group discussion on ZOOM in April as well. Our use has been tentative so far, but I plan to build on our online programming if the pandemic is long lasting. There's a lot of potential for meaningful engagement even without face-to-face contact. Finally, I am doing Writing Group via email. I send a prompt out every Monday, and then we share throughout the week. I am really happy I can continue this. Writing Group has become so special to the Library.

In closing, I want say how happy everyone is that we are open. I know it involved a lot of planning and anxiety, but I feel like opening the Library this summer was the right course of action! We have yet to see what next year will hold. I think it wise to postpone planning about events or operations in 2021 until we see how Maine is faring, after what could be a resurgence this winter. No matter what, I am confident that we will move forward in the safest manner possible and continue to provide Library services to our community in whatever way we can. I'm extra grateful to the Board for their support and guidance during this time. I'd like to especially thank Miki Partridge, our outgoing President, for her leadership.

And I'm grateful to our Library community near and far for your love and support!

Respectfully submitted,

Mia Boynton