

**One Hundred and Thirty-third Annual Report  
Trustees of the M.N. Spear Memorial Library  
Fiscal Year 2021**

**Covid-19 Pandemic**

The Covid-19 pandemic continued to effect and influence Library programming and services throughout Fiscal Year 2021. Most services continued to be remote or through outside pick up.

Covid-19 safety measures including a ventilation system and Plexiglas barriers were installed.

In late October, 2020, limited in-person browsing appointments began only to be suspended in early December as cases began surging alarmingly in the Commonwealth. Services remained remote and via outdoor pick up until after some staff were able to be fully vaccinated. In early May, 2021, limited in-person browsing appointments were reinstated.

**Small Library Pilot Project**

In May, 2021, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners announced a Small Library Pilot Project. This competitive grant was designed specifically for new construction in towns with fewer than 2,000 residents. The project will provide increased guidance from the MBLC for the chosen town, and a higher reimbursement rate.

At Town Meeting on June 12, 2021, Shutesbury residents enthusiastically supported an article granting permission to apply for the grant.

**Article 9**

To see if the Town of Shutesbury will vote to authorize the Selectboard and/or the Library Trustees to apply for state funds through the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP) Small Library Pilot, which might be available to defray all or part of the cost of the design, construction and equipping of a new library project and to authorize the Library Building Committee and/or Selectboard and/or Library Trustees to accept and expend the MPLCP funds when received without further appropriation.

The Trustees submitted a Letter of Intent to apply for the Small Library Pilot Project on June 23, 2021.

**Hours**

During Fiscal Year 2021, with the exception of two months in the fall of 2020, Library offered outdoor pickup, telephone and online service only. Outdoor pickup was available during the following hours:

Tuesday, 1-5, Wednesday, 11 am – 1 pm and 3- 6 pm, Thursday, 1-5 pm

Friday, 3- 6 pm, Saturday, 10 am – 1 pm, and Sunday, 2-4 pm

**Staff**

Mary Anne Antonellis, Director, 40 hours per week

Cynthia Coffin, Library Assistant, 11-12 hours per week

Substitutes, Susan Millinger, Julie Stepanek, and Joann Bernhard substituted occasionally.

**Volunteers**

Volunteer service was curtailed due to safety concerns. Four teen volunteers helped with assembling and distributing take-home activity kits, creating digital resources, assembling Storywalks®. Taking care to maintain safe social distance, the volunteers also helped with processing inter-library loans and shelving. These volunteers contributed 150 hours.

**The Collection**

In Fiscal Year 2021, the total physical holdings were 12,201 items. The collection included 8,036 books, 959 audiobooks, 2,601 DVDs, 30 magazine subscriptions and 78 miscellaneous items. Shutesbury residents also had access to 120,341 e-books, 49,438 downloadable audiobooks, and 1,853 downloadable videos through the C/W MARS Overdrive Collection. The Library also provided access to Kanopy and Acorn Media, video streaming services, and Hoopla, a streaming service with video and audiobooks to Shutesbury residents. In March of 2021, the Library was awarded a Distance Learning

Grant from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and was able to add a digital subscription to Ancestry for Libraries, a genealogy resource.

### **Circulation**

1,299 registered patrons borrowed 35,053 items, a 13 percent decrease over the previous year. Total circulation included 18,701 books, 935 magazines, 929 audio books, 3,534 videos, 11,880 digital items, and 52 miscellaneous items. These figures include 4,980 items received through Inter-Library Loan facilitated through our C/W MARS membership. 3,760 items were loaned to patrons at other libraries through Inter-Library Loan. Electronic content usage, Kanopy, Hoopla, Acorn Media and Ancestry for Libraries was 15,878 uses. Most of the circulation of physical items was via outdoor pickup. Library staff prepared 2,636 outdoor pickups ranging from a single item to a bag full of items.

### **Programs**

The Library offered 298 programs with more than 5,215 attendees. Due to the ongoing pandemic, almost all programs were offered online. Fitness classes continue to be very popular among adults. The Library offered up to seven weekly fitness programs for adults, including Strength Training, Yoga, Qigong, and Zumba Gold. In October, 2020, a study group formed to read and discuss White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism by Dr. Robin DiAngelo. This group met weekly from October to June, read several related books and watched related videos.

For children and families, the Library created take-home activity kits. One kit was created monthly during the school year and distributed to 12 to 20 families. For November, also known as Dinovember, kits included supplies to make salt dough dinosaur fossils and dinosaur skeletons with pasta. In March, adults from the community made one-of-a-kind cardboard robots which were adopted by children who promised to read to them. In April, a volunteer who was working on her Girl Scout Silver Award helped create Poetry Kits. Each week a new kit was made for adults and children. The adult kits had a poem, a tea bag and a chocolate. The children's kits had a poem, some cookies and a tool for creating poetry. The Library gave out 60 poetry kits for each of the four weeks of April. Also in April, the Library resumed installing Storywalks® on the Town Common, behind Town Hall and around the track at the elementary school. The Storywalks® on the Common and at Town Hall were changed every two weeks and were offered continuously. The one at the school was changed weekly while school was in session. The staff of the M.N. Spear Memorial Library believes all children should be able to see themselves in the pages of good books. With a grant from the Shutesbury Cultural Council, a series of fourteen new Storywalks® were created including picture books that celebrate diverse peoples. Funding for programs was provided by the Friends of the M.N. Spear Memorial Library, grants from the Shutesbury Cultural Council, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and the New Salem Academy and collaboration with the Shutesbury Council on Aging.

### **Budget**

The total operating budget for fiscal year 2021 was \$107,485 Annual Town Meeting appropriated \$79,761. Additional funding was provided by the Library's Revolving Fund, the Spear Expendable Trust, The Friends of the M.N. Spear Memorial Library, grants from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, the Local Cultural Council and the New Salem Academy, State Aide to Public Libraries, the Community Network for Children, and the Council on Aging.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Anne Antonellis, Director

Kate Cell and Michele Regan-Ladd Co-Chairs Board of Library Trustees

Board of Library Trustees – Michele Cunningham, Melanie DeSilva, Brad Foster, and Savanna Ouellette