

# Champlain Township Public Library

## Head Librarian's Annual Report 2021

<u>Statistical summary</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>%age (+ 72.5r -)</u>
Loans & Renewals	10310	12858	(19.8)
ILL Loan Requests	268	240	11.7%
ILL Loans Supplied	304	196	55.1%
Programming	2554	1620	57.7%
Overdrive circulation	7204	6444	11.8%

Although we do not have the number of circulations we have had in past years. We are pleased with the level of service we were able to provide our community during the past 20 months of our closure. We look forward to being able to reopen and to offer in house services in 2022.

### What Happened at Champlain Library in 2021

#### BCL Online

As the library remained closed due to the necessary upgrades to the building all staff continued to find ways to engage with our patrons virtually in 2021. We worked to educate the public in how to use our online systems and patrons have been very successful in navigating the website, our online collection and our e-resources.

- **New Website!** With so much of our communication being done online, book reservations, program registration and membership renewals, our website needed an update. Our new website is easier to navigate, to find information and fill out forms. We are able to get library news out to our patrons, and they can access their own accounts at any time.
- **Virtual Storytime and Story Walks:** Alicia continues to offer virtual Story times every Tuesday morning. During the Summer we offered Story Walks at Wood hills park. Stories were set up throughout the park, families could stroll through the park to read the books in both languages. This was a great break for kids who have been doing most schooling online in 2021. They were able to disconnect, get outside and engage with parents.
- **Kids Code Jeunesse:** Learning to code is like learning a new language: it opens doors in all areas of life. Kids unleash their creativity when they start coding, and become better communicators and problem-solvers. Kids 9-13 can now take part in our afterschool virtual program offered bi-weekly through the library.
- **Adult Take and Make kits:** Our craft kits for adults have been very popular this year. Adults like the fact that they can pick up the kit and do the craft at their own convenience without having to show up at a set time. We offered a different themed craft each month.
- **Champlain Library goes Fine Free!** In 2021 the Champlain Library Board voted to go fine free. We want to be able to serve all the people in our community regardless of income. In order to do this in a fair and equitable way we must remove the all barriers to learning. The library has put into place automatic email reminders to alert patrons of due dates and overdues. The staff have

not noticed an increase in library materials being returned late. Due to the pandemic and library closure, fines were being waived making it the perfect time to join libraries from across Canada making the switch to fine free.

## **2021 in Review**

- **Butterfly Way:** Champlain Library was selected by the David Suzuki Foundation to be a host member of their Butterfly Way project. The goal of the Butterflyway Project is to establish habitat for local bees and butterflies in communities throughout the country. The library was tasked with organizing a small local team to help them plant at least a dozen pollinator patches. We exceeded all expectations and had 31 participants in the project. The Horticulture Society and Foodland were very helpful in offering seeds and plants to all participants.
- **Discovery Kits:** Champlain Library received a grant from the Sarah Badgley foundation to create Discovery kits. These kits cover a range of topics from Space to magnets to the solar System and your emotions. These are great resources for home-schoolers. The kits contain reading materials, experiments, and games. We also received a grant from Walmart to create kits for seniors with dementia.
- **Contests:** Despite being closed we held a number of contests throughout the year for all ages with items donated to us by local shops/ community groups. We also partnered with the **Horticulture Society** to run a Green Thumb contest. This contest encouraged children to show off their plants by offering prizes in various gardening categories.
- **Community Outreach:** During September we held Pop Up libraries at several locations in Champlain including, Foodland, Scotia Bank, and the Old Jail in L'Orignal for Library Card sign up month. We were able to safely attend the VKH Farmer's Market during the summer with a book sale. Alicia has also done a few virtual Storytimes for local schools.
- **A Book on Every Bed**  
We began this program in November 2010. The idea behind this project is that every child should wake up on Christmas morning with a book on their bed. We were able to donate 100 books to children whose families receive Christmas baskets from the Vankleek Hill and L'Orignal Food Banks. This is almost double the requests from last year. We also provided magazines to seniors who receive food hampers and supplied 3 senior residences with magazines and activity books to hand out. Many thanks to all who donated books or money to help reach so many children.
- **Meetings:** Head Librarian/CEO Cynthia attends regular department head meetings held at Champlain Township as well council meetings and the budget meetings. Staff meetings and Library Board meetings are held on a monthly basis. Cynthia also attends monthly virtual meeting with the Ontario Library Service.

## **Programmes**

- **Let's Talk Science.** This science program has become very popular. We have partnered with Let's Talk Science from Ottawa U and they provide kits every month that include everything needed for kids to conduct science experiments at home. Some activities have links to online tutorials. These kits are available in English and French and are a great resource for parents who are home schooling during the pandemic.
- **Crafts:** We offer a monthly Take & Make kits to kids, teens and adults. All the necessary materials are included as well as instructions sheets for patrons to complete at home.

- **Challenges:** Alicia runs fun challenges and games that kids can do at home.
- **Book Clubs:** We currently have 3 book clubs that meet monthly over Zoom. If you like reading, we have a club for you! The three categories are English fiction, English non-fiction and French. New members are always welcome. The clubs meet virtually so you don't even have to leave your house! It's the perfect way to find out about great reads.
- **Libby and e-resources:** Libby, our e-book borrowing portal continues to grow in popularity. We purchased more popular novels to meet the demands this year. With Libby, patrons also have access to over 3000 magazines in both languages, and can stream movies and documentaries through Kanopy. They can also access Great Courses for online learning through Kanopy. **The Great Courses** are a series of post secondary level educational videos instructed by professors. They allow you to access higher education on your own time, and at your own pace. There are courses in a wide variety of subjects ranging anywhere from Mindfulness and Photography to Ancient Civilizations, Language Study, Finance, and Law. We also offer a collection of French e-books on **Cantook Station**. French-language eBooks available from Quebec, Franco-Canadian and some European publishers. Includes titles for adults, teens and children.
- **Seed Library:** The seed library is now in its seventh year. With the support of the **Vankleek Hill Horticultural Society** we offered small packets of flower and vegetable seeds. In 2021 we were able to partner with the **Vankleek Hill Food Bank** to offer seed starter packs for families who participated in the gardening program.
- **Summer Reading Program:** We ran many virtual activities and challenges over an 8-week period. As kids were tired of online learning we continued with our Make and Take activities and sent home challenges kids could complete by themselves or with their families. We had 61 kids registered for the Summer Reading Program.

**Library Building:** This was a big year for work at the library. New posts and beams were installed/replaced on all 3 levels of the building. Asbestos was discovered and was successfully removed from the ceiling during the process. Extensive painting was done. Some of our collections were moved to allow for proper social distancing requirements. Specifically, our DVD and computer areas have changed. Plexiglass shields were installed on the front desk. A major cleaning was done throughout the library as all books and shelves needed to be dusted. This was a huge undertaking!

**Champlain Residents who use Hawkesbury Public Library:** We continue to reimburse Champlain residents (through Champlain Township) who purchase memberships for Hawkesbury Public Library.

**Professional Development:** Throughout the pandemic staff have taken advantage of the many virtual webinars and conventions that we would not have an opportunity to attend if it were in person. We have also completed online training and courses. Alicia has completed her first year of APPL leadership with the Ontario Library Association.

**Grants:** The library received a grant from our local Walmart for \$1000. We also received a grant from the Sarah Badgley foundation for \$500. Champlain Library will receive 100% of our internet fees through the Internet Connectivity Fund.

**Social Media and Web Site:** Champlain Library has a new website which meets the requirements of accessibility. It is designed to facilitate reserving books online. We continue to post information on social media for upcoming activities and events at the library. We currently have 764 people following our Facebook page. We also have an active Instagram page with 394 followers that showcases our books and events.

**A Word from the Head Librarian:**

2021 was a year of changes for the library. We had staff changes. Mario Larocque who had been with the library for seven years left to begin a new job. We were fortunate to fill his shoes with Shannon Bale who has over 20 years' experience at the Ottawa Public Library. With her extensive knowledge, Shannon will be a great asset to the staff and patrons of the library.

We had structural changes. With the building undergoing renovations, we had to adapt our lending and work schedules. Except for 2 weeks the library was able to continue to offer curbside service. With the completed renovations the library will again be a hub for the community.

What 2021 taught me is how resilient we all are and how willing to reach out to others in our community. It has been difficult for staff; we miss our clients. We miss the interaction. We are so thankful for the messages and the smiles we see through the doors.

Our Book on Every Bed campaign showed us how many people are struggling right now. This cements the importance of public libraries in my mind. The need for a space where all people have free access to literature, learning, computers and technology is paramount. We have added a film streaming service as well as over 3000 e-magazines.

As our municipality grows, we will grow, and will continue to find ways to offer great services.