



1963 PATTERNS IN READING



REPORT
of the
FOREST HILL PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
1963

Chairman — *Mr. Albert White*

Mrs. Charles Purkis

Mrs. Frank Denton

Mr. C. O. Bick

Mr. R. Murray Bell (Treasurer)

Mr. Donald M. Baldwin (Secretary)

Reeve — *Mr. E. Pivnick*

Chief Librarian — *Mrs. Muriel E. Morgan*

THE CHAIRMAN SAYS ...

The first year of occupancy in our beautiful Library has passed quickly. The total number of borrowers has increased to almost fifty percent of the Village population. Increased use points to greater demands yet to be met. Though our book stock has passed the thirty thousand mark, inching toward our initial goal of fifty thousand volumes, more will be needed. This growth demonstrated by our Library is a significant reflection of recommendations made by Dr. Ralph Shaw in his Report on Metropolitan Toronto Libraries in 1958.

Among the Library events and activities that have attracted social and community interest was first and foremost the dedication of the Katherine Secord McNair Room. It was a memorable occasion at which an impressively large gathering of friends and villagers participated.

To communicate the warmth and love of children, inherent in the Children's department, the Library Board erected a high-relief sculpture of a Mother Bear with Two Cubs, by Jacobine Jones. It is housed in the Story Room, where the heart and essence of children's service is. The Library is also actively and positively involved in the first stirrings of cultural programmes for the community. Recently a Fine Arts Committee was formed under the chairmanship of Mrs. John Leitch to supervise and regulate the showings of paintings, sculptures and special collections of interest. More will also be heard from Mrs. Charles Purkis in the near future on the activities of the Cultural Committee.

To further our service to the community, a questionnaire was sent to numerous residents and organized groups, such as the Home and School Association, asking for suggestions and comments on the Library and its service. All replies were carefully considered at meetings of the Board.

On the national scene Forest Hill Village Library has become favourably known. We have helped to plan the Trustees' programme for 1963 and 1964, and together with some of the ablest Canadian Trustees have worked to formulate the agenda for the convention in Halifax. Our Library's name appears in several areas because both Librarians and Trustees have contributed time, thought and energy, and have been actively interested in the welfare of the "Mutual Opportunities for Progress" programme.

Our hardworking, sincere and conscientious Library Board does its job for the community—helping the Library grow and take its place as an integral part of community life. I must mention our worthy Treasurer, Mr. R. Murray Bell, who carries us through from one budget to the next, and Mrs. F. Denton and Mr. D. Baldwin, our Corresponding and Recording Secretaries. The sage advice of Magistrate C. O. Bick, a former Reeve of the Village, has been invaluable. I thank them for their splendid efforts and attention to their job, for their co-operation and whole hearted support they have given to make up a harmonious and effective Board.

I want to thank our hardworking and very capable Chief Librarian, Mrs. M. E. Morgan, and her staff for an outstanding job in coping with the many problems of administration and management to keep our Library efficient and smooth running.

Sincere thanks are due to the Village Council and the Board of Education for their co-operation which helps us maintain the standard of Library service throughout the year, and for discerning appointment of Library Board members who can work so well together for the betterment of Library service for us all.

In taking stock of the values and purposes of the Library and the Library Board, it is well to remember that the Library lifts us out of our narrow confines: it is a world for anyone to explore and capture for himself, to expand his horizons. Books contribute to the elevation of reading taste and to the educational, intellectual and cultural processes. We must share and foster the love of books, so that they can enrich the inquisitive mind and stimulate the imagination.

I recently came across a statement entitled “A legacy for his Children” which impressed me. It came from a committee member of a small Library in one of the provinces.

“I know I won’t leave much money to my children, and certainly not a distinguished name, but I do think it is a sort of legacy for them that I should be the kind of person appointed to the Library Board.”

Albert White
Chairman

WHAT IS A LIBRARY ?

At the end of the first year in our new library building, a year which seemed to acquire an air of breathlessness as the months flew by—for our membership grew and grew, our circulation spiralled madly upward, and our book processing appeared an unending assembly line—it may be interesting to reckon our progress in terms of ultra-simple answers to that question of apparent simplicity.



a library is for books . . .

Indeed it is the essential function of a Public Library to supply to its readers the books and related material for which they ask. Moreso, the Library should not only satisfy, but promote the demand for books. Working from this premise, our approach to book selection is not the dogmatic 'only-the-best-books' attitude; rather we feel that we should get the books most suited for filling the needs of our borrowers. We are attempting to build a collection which has vitality, variety, quality and extent.

During the first months of the year it was with mixed feelings of delight and despair that we watched the rapidly emptying shelves, but by a determined effort at book purchasing and processing, backed by a sizable book grant from the Village Council, we slowly forged ahead. We are pleased that we have been able to reduce the cost of book processing within the past three years from approximately \$2.00 per volume to a low of 75¢, yet our books are classified minutely. However we face a problem in that a fair proportion of books classified in the first years of the library's existence must needs be reclassified in order to conform to our present standards.

The avid reading appetites of our borrowers necessitate a large stock for exploration. While the goal of at least 50,000 volumes is still a couple years away, this year we were able to advance the total usable stock to 30,431 as compared to the 1962 figure of 21,766. To acquire depth in our book collection, we follow a yearly pattern of stressing acquisition of books in a particular subject field. Last year the focus was on art books, this year, because of the great student population and student usage of the library we emphasized our literature acquisition; so that of the 8,665 volumes added during the year, over 1,000 belonged to the literature section.

With our bookstock under control, we extended our material to include periodicals. Careful selection was made of forty-five periodicals chosen to present a divergence of interests, e.g. *The Connoisseur*, *Dancing Times*, the *Law Journal*, *Popular Ceramics*, and the *Gourmet* magazine. We find that they are as much read as the books. *a library is for people . . .*

Though the Library is only one of a number of forms capable of enhancing the human personality, and so preventing the individual from becoming a mere functional unit, it is a potent force. The people who use the Library are at all ages and levels of development—ranging from those whose incipient curiosity is only beginning to awake to the advanced research of the mature trained mind.

5,340 persons joined the Library in 1963—3,962 adults and 1,378 children. Our 'live' membership soared from 5,715 in 1962 to 9,774 in 1963. Of the adults who registered this year, 860 were from other municipalities: while the largest number was from Toronto, we acquired a following in all the other municipalities, and as far afield as Rexdale and Islington. Approximately 156 of these beyond-the-limits readers came to the Library as a result of an initial inquiry to the Bibliographic Centre for a particular book, and on learning that the desired volume was available at our Library, decided to adopt the quicker personal approach rather than the inter-library loan method. For this we feel more than amply repaid for our contribution of 5,139 entries to the Bibliographic Centre.

It is difficult to pinpoint the attitude of the villagers towards the Library: there is a feeling of quiet pride in its possession. Nowhere would you find a public more responsive to its social responsibilities. No villager has ever refused to assist in any of our activities—in fact, assistance is usually proffered unasked.

a library is for service. . .

The simple minimum requirements expected of any library would be to provide without question, favour or limitation, a highly convenient and attractive local service giving the largest possible scope for individual research and recreation. Our new building provides an attractive environment, and we hope that the quality of service as well helped to send our circulation up to 190,192 during 1963, a matter of 107,242 issues over our 1962 total of 82,950.

We are well aware that our Staff, increased to total seven in 1963, was yet not quite adequate to cope with the meteoric rise in library use during the year, and one of our prime needs for next year will be a further expansion of staff. Within our limitations we must have been successful, for replies to a questionnaire distributed by the Library Board were quite heartening as 96% of our users expressed themselves as being quite satisfied with the service rendered. However we cannot remain static.

The library should go halfway to meet the reader. We try various means of effecting this. Registration requirements are kept to a minimum; the library is treated as an all-in-one pavilion so that there is an easy flow between the various levels of borrowers—children, young people, adults. Suggestions are welcomed, both for improved service and book additions. In this last connection we filled more than 4,000 requests during the year. Of this number, approximately 300 were for books not in our stock at the time of the request; but we anticipate the borrower, so that more than 200 of these were already on order though not yet delivered by the publishers. Of the remainder, 10 were obtained from Interloan, and we purchased 70% of the other titles.

Attractive book displays are a constant feature, and we were able to compile two book lists of which 2,500 copies were distributed—one on Art for general distribution, one on Public Relations for a special group of classes. While we were not highly organized for special Art displays, interest was stimulated and maintained with a series of ten informal exhibitions, the one evoking most local excitement being that of a selection from the year's work of the Recreation Commission classes.

The cost of the library services for 1963 amounted to \$68,883.78, of which \$35,830.63 was spent on Staff salaries, \$25,698.74 on Books, \$3,714.04 on Supplies, \$1,952.45 on repairs to Books and \$1,687.92 on other maintenance costs. The Municipality provided \$61,096 of the operating fund, the Provincial Government \$3,395.14, and Fines and Fees swelled the total by \$4,412.60.

a library is for cooperation . . .

A most rewarding session with the Director of Education, the School Principals and the School Librarians opened new avenues for cooperation between the Public Library and the Schools. Hitherto students descended on us with long lists of required reading, or en masse to work on similar projects. We are now being forearmed by having reading lists sent to us from the Schools, and by advance notices outlining upcoming projects from the teachers. We are also benefiting from the use of the Board of Education purchase of a laminating machine to which we give houseroom.

Cooperation did not end with the Schools. After an initial workshop on book display technique with the Home and School Library Chairmen, this group is most enthusiastic in organizing book displays as a regular part of the various group meetings. The Home and School Post gives the Library publicity in each of its issues as also does the Recreation Commission in its bulletins.

to talk of other things . . .

We felt a special warmth this year toward the Canadian Library Association. One of our staff, Mrs. Hille Sonin, was awarded a C.L.A. scholarship to attend Library School, and our Board Chairman, Mr. White, was elected President of the Trustees Section of the Association.

At the year's end, I have extremely warm feelings to my unique Board and hardworking staff, to the Reeve and Members of Council for their continued financial support, to the gracious President and members of the Home and School Association who work so closely with me, to the Board of Education, the Director of Education and teachers for their prompt and amiable cooperation, to Mr. Cronsberry and members of the Municipal staff for their obliging natures, and to those members of the public who without fanfare quietly donated valued books to the library.

At the year's end, there is a consciousness that there is still so much to do for ideals to be realised, but also a consciousness of doors opening, of infinite possibilities of becoming other than we are, for here in the Library people can learn to 'walk with kings, to have within their grasp that Open Sesame which unlocks doors, not of robbers, but OF KING'S TREASURIES.'

Muriel E. Morgan
Chief Librarian

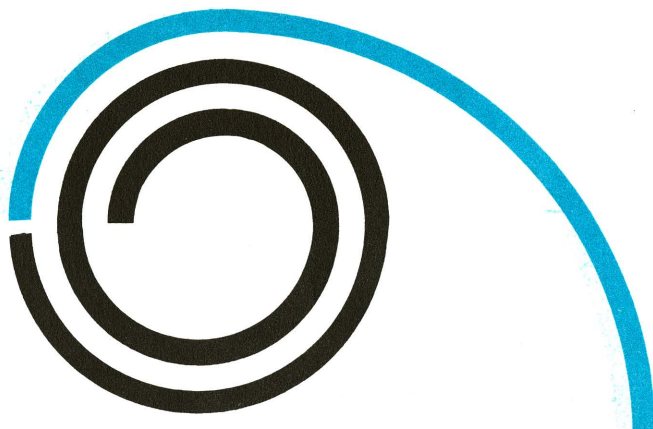


. . . a library is for people . . .



some members of the hardworking board in the workroom . . .
L. to R.: Mr. Baldwin, Mrs. Purkis, Mr. White, Mrs. Denton, Mr. Bell.

CIRCULATION FIGURES SAY . . .



1956 — 32,619

1957 — 39,169

1958 — 41,002

1959 — 42,273

1960 — 47,421

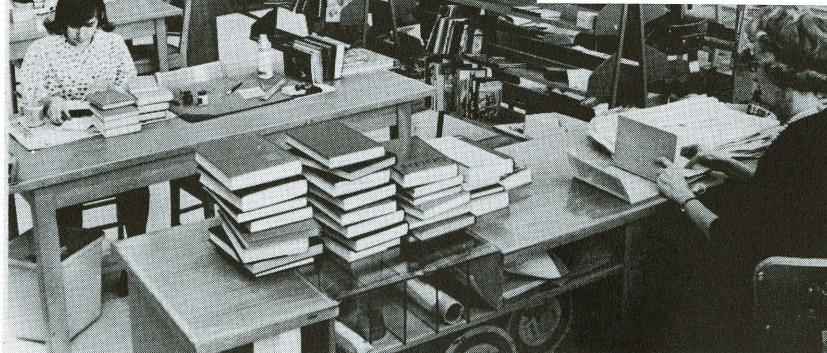
1961 — 62,241

1962 — 82,950

1963
190,192



1982 — 188,379



. . . book processing—an unending assembly line . . .

THE CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN SAYS . . .

Forest Hill Children's Library is in an unique position in that its existence followed that of the school libraries. Some people were sceptical about the usefulness of the Public Library, yet in 1963, 48,000 children's books were circulated. At the end of only one year of operation 1,539 out of 2,500 eligible children (between the ages of two and twelve) had registered as borrowers. How can we account for this immediate response in an area where the children are not book starved? We found that many children can exhaust a School Library in a few years and that they require specialized material or books written for adults. The public library is able to offer them a greater variety both in fiction and non-fiction.

The other large section of borrowers is made up of the pre-school children who, in past years, had been ignored by the libraries and book publishers. Many children are able to make use of the simplest picture books from the age of two. By the time they are four, their appetite for books, both literary and factual, is insatiable. Since, unlike other Children's Libraries, we do not need to purchase several copies of the same book, we are building a children's collection with a great variety of non-fiction, stories, and picture books.

We also discovered that although many of the school children came voluntarily to the library, they did not know how to find the books they wanted. In meeting with the principals and librarians of the three preparatory schools it was decided that there were a few reasons for this, one of these was that we in the public libraries use a different classification system from that of the schools. It was decided to bring each grade 4, 5 and 6 class to the library and instruct them in the use of the card catalogue and the Dewey decimal system. Of course, we also wanted them to know that the Public Library existed.

In November the classes came from South Prep and a large percentage of these children had already found their own way to the library. In an hour and a half session the children were given a brief introduction to the Dewey decimal classification system and the uses of the card catalogue. They were shown a variety of reference books; some they found familiar, others amazed them because of the degree of specialization they represented.

The children found the thirteen volume Oxford English Dictionary by far the most impressive book they had ever seen. At the end of the lecture the children were given reference problems to answer for themselves and some time to investigate the library on their own.

We cannot state that all the children are now expert cataloguers, but we will say that they all know how to begin to look for the books they want, which is more than many adults are able to do.

During the year we also had visits from some of the Nursery schools and Parochial schools in the area. The younger children were told how books are circulated, how to take care of library books, and were told a story or two. Generally the most impressive part of these tours was an inspection of the microfilm reader.

At the beginning of the year the response to the Saturday morning story hour was so great that we decided to halve it. Children from three to five came at 10:30, and from six to ten at 11:00 a.m. The concept of the story hour was also expanded to include music. On various occasions we prepared a tape of either classical or folk music, some of which we knew the children would enjoy, some of a more experimental nature. You can imagine our delight when several of the children said they liked Schoenberg's "Prelude to the Genesis Suite" best. The other pieces they heard were a Mozart Nocturne, some Schubert songs, and excerpts from Tchaikowsky's Swan Lake.

Amidst the flurry of new activities in the library we continued our normal activities. New books were ordered and processed so that by the end of 1963 the stock had been increased by 1,852 to 6,639. An inventory of the entire Children's library was undertaken. Throughout the year we continued our most important task which is to help each child find the right book at the right time.

Judith Sarick
Children's Librarian



... the card catalogue impresses ...



... art displays stimulate interest ...

LIBRARY HOURS

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday

10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Wednesday, Friday, Saturday

10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

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