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YORK TOWNSHIP
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT

1951

Library Board

1951

Chairman - Mr. Laurence E. Grigg

Mr. W. G. Beech, Reeve

Mr. F. T. McDermott, Q.C.

Dr. Stanley Harper

His Honour Judge F.J. MacRae

Secretary-Treasurer - Mr. George Hinton

Library Board

1952

Chairman - Mr. Laurence E. Grigg

Mr. W. G. Beech

Mr. Fred Hall, Reeve

Mr. Leslie Brown

Mr. F. T. McDermott, Q.C.

Secretary-Treasurer - Mr. George Hinton

Library Staff

Chief Librarian - Miss Evelyn Gregory

Children's Librarian - Miss Janet Murray

Jane Street Branch

Mrs. Mary Higgins, Librarian

Mrs. Annie Fargher, Library Assistant

Mount Dennis Branch

Mr. Laurence Solomon, Librarian

Mrs. Agnes Irving, Library Assistant

Bookmobile

Miss Lois Black - Librarian

Mr. Harold Clement - Library Assistant & Driver

Main Library

Miss Ruth Corner - Librarian, Adult Dept.

Mrs. Yvonne Hearst - Librarian, Adult Dept.

Miss Lily Smith - Librarian, Children's Dept.

Miss Ruth Hutton - Library Assistant

Miss Catherine Keating - Library Assistant

Report of the Chairman

1951

The year 1951 was an eventful one in the short history of York Township Public Library. Within the twelve month span plans that had been made in 1948, 1949 and 1950 materialized and years of carrying on in crowded, rented quarters came to an end. Three new library buildings were opened for use and our Public Library grew almost overnight from infancy to adolescence.

Main Library The official opening of the Main Library at Eglinton Avenue West and Northcliffe Boulevard was held on the evening of March 21st. Many Township officials were present as well as representatives of organizations in the municipality and Library Boards of adjacent areas. Mr. Angus Mowat, Director of Public Library Services for the Province of Ontario was the guest speaker and guests were welcomed by the Reeve, Mr. William Beech and members of the Library Board.

The new library, an attractive, functional red brick structure, is a story and a half building with partial basement. On the street floor are large adult and children's circulating rooms, a story hour room and a high school room. At the back of the building is a garage for the bookmobile and a small stack room for the bookmobile book collection. Cataloguing office, librarian's office and stack room are in the second story which covers about one third of the street floor. Furnace room, receiving and shipping room and storage space are in the basement. This building is designed to serve the most densely populated area of York Township and also as headquarters for the two branch libraries and the bookmobile. In it all books are ordered, received and processed for the shelves before they are sent out to the branches.

Mount Dennis In May an open night was held to give the public the opportunity to inspect the new branch library at Mount Dennis. It too is a red brick structure of functional design. It has one story with full basement.

Jane Street The third new building was introduced to the public on November 12th when an open house was held at the new Jane Street Branch at Jane and Dundas Streets. It is similar in design to the Mount Dennis Branch.

All three buildings were designed by Mr. Albert E. Vine, a resident of the Township. The cost of the Main Library was \$132,533., that of the Mount Dennis Branch \$59,500 and the Jane Street Branch \$65,408. They are being paid for out of the yearly budget over a period of years.

The Library Board is justifiably proud that three new buildings and a bookmobile are being financed on a very low tax rate. In 1950 the library tax was 69 cents per capita or 1.6 mills. In 1951 it was 77 cents per capita or 1.8 mills.

Bookmobile Pride in our new buildings should not make us forget a very valuable branch of our library service, that of the Bookmobile, which for three years carried the large burden of circulation in the Township. With the opening of each new building adjustments were made in its time-table so that areas that had been asking for library service might be given stops. It is now making thirteen stops each week in points far from library buildings or inaccessible to small children by reason of railroad tracks or dangerous traffic arteries.

Surveys have shown that about 80% of the library members live within half a mile of a building, with very few coming from farther than a mile. There are several districts in York Township that are farther than a mile from library buildings, but the cost of constructing, providing adequate staff and maintenance makes the servicing of these areas by branch libraries inadvisable at present. Our Bookmobile does a useful service in carrying books once a week to people who for many reasons find it difficult to get far from home. Its maintenance cost is small compared to that of a branch that would do similar circulation. Its mobility allows it to visit many different points.

The Board is aware of the difficulties encountered by the staff during this rapid expansion. The task of buying and preparing for the shelves books for all three libraries has been tremendous. This work has been done by staff members who engage in regular circulation duties when the buildings are open. Consequently ordering and processing books must be done when the libraries are closed.

Book stocks are stretched to the utmost for even now with over 40,000 volumes in the Township book collection we have less than half a book per head of population. Until there is a book stock of approximately 150,000 volumes we cannot expect to give adequate service. Over \$19,000 of our budget was spent on books in 1951 and for that sum nearly 10,000 volumes were purchased and put on the shelves.

Four tiring and difficult moves were made during the year involving some 40,000 volumes and the Board is grateful for the way these were carried out. As the books had to be put in order on the shelves it was not merely a matter of packing and unpacking but a task that required much planning and care, yet there was little disruption of library service. Overtime work was done without grumbling, even with enthusiasm. The moves were planned by our Chief Librarian, Miss Evelyn Gregory, and the Board wishes to extend a special thank you to her and also for her efforts during the planning and designing of the Bookmobile, the first "made-to-order" bookmobile in Ontario. Miss Gregory and Miss Murray gave valuable assistance in planning practical details of the three buildings and in selecting the decorating schemes.

A word of thanks must also be given to our architect, Mr. Albert Vine, who fitted the functional needs of the library to the funds supplied by the Municipality through the Library Board. The pleasant and beautiful buildings are monuments to his skill as an architect.

Although our Chief Librarian has been chosen for special mention she was ably and willingly assisted by a Staff that is greatly appreciated by the Board. We are proud to introduce them to the people that they serve so well. You will find their names on the inside cover of this report.

Thanks are due too to our conscientious and hard-working Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. George Hinton and to our Reeve and Council whose interest has helped the progress of the buildings immeasurably.

Respectfully submitted

Laurence E. Grigg,
Chairman

Report of the Chief Librarian for the year 1951

To the members of the York Township Public Library Board.

The past year with its total circulation of over 197,000 books and registration of over 8,000 new members, marked a notable expansion of library service in York Township. It has been a year of mixed joy and despair for the Staff; joy in the beautiful new buildings and in the interest shown by library members and despair at the shortage of books and the disruptions caused by the many moves.

Comparisons with circulation figures for 1950 are hardly fair but it is interesting to note that circulation of non-fiction increased by approximately 80% over 1950, of fiction 13% and of boys and girls books 34%.

Tastes in reading showed significant trends. There was a marked increase in the reading of history, especially in personal records of World War II. As usual there was a great deal of use made of books from the Useful Arts section; books on woodworking, automobile repairs, machine shop work, radio servicing and gardening. Almost as many wanted books on how to draw or paint, pottery making and leather work, ballet and music. University students, high school and public school students sought help from the library and numbers of people borrowed books for the sheer pleasure of reading.

Main Library

In the eleven months that the Main Library was open to the public over 109,000 books were circulated although borrowers were limited to two books per person for some time after the opening in order to make the best use of the slim book collection.

That children found the books in the Boys' and Girls' Room attractive was evident from the opening day. During the year over 55,000 children's books were circulated, a little more than fifty per cent of the total circulation for the Main Library.

Mount Dennis Branch

The new Mount Dennis Branch at 1123 Weston Road opened to the public late in March. Members were all re-registered to bring the files of addresses up to date. Children were delighted to find an attractive, spacious room with a collection of beautiful new books for them. Circulation for the portion of the year that the new Branch was open was over 30,000. While the monthly total circulation figure is not appreciably greater than in the former quarters, the kind of books borrowed showed a change. In 1950 the circulation of non-fiction was 3,299; in 1951 it was 6,449. In 1950 the circulation of children's books was 9,981; in 1951 it was 13,848.

Jane Street Branch

On November 13th the new branch at Jane Street and Dundas opened. The difficulty of preparing books in sufficient quantity to satisfy new borrowers so soon after opening two other buildings was apparent in its sparsely filled shelves. Patrons again had to be limited to two books per person in order to stretch the supply. But in spite of these frustrations over 7,000 books circulated in the six weeks of 1951. Of these more than half were children's books, proving again that children need little encouragement to take out books when good books are available.

Bookmobile

The Bookmobile too moved to new quarters during 1951. At the Main Library a garage and storage space for books needed for the operation of the mobile unit was constructed. This made staff and book changes easier and saved on overhead costs.

Three changes in time-table were necessary to adjust stops as each new building opened. Changes of time-table meant slowing up of circulation to register new members at new stops and collect books at cancelled stops. In spite of these disruptions circulation was approximately 50,000 of which nearly 34,000 (or 67%) was made up of children's books.

Those who work on the bus or who visit it to observe its operation are convinced of its worth when they see the children, young mothers and elderly people who look forward eagerly to its weekly visit. Many of its patrons are unable to go far from home and library service brought by bookmobile means a great deal to them.

Book collection

The book collection was increased by 9,592 new volumes in 1951. Of these 4,718 were adult books and 4,874 were books for boys and girls.

A High School section was opened in 1951 and received such good use that its collection of books is being increased as rapidly as possible. In June all Grade IX pupils from York Memorial Collegiate visited the Main Library or the Mount Dennis Branch and were told about library service by Miss Corner or Mrs. Higgins.

Library School Students

Students from the University of Toronto Library School came to observe and do practice work in the spring of 1951. About forty students from the Library School of McGill University visited the Main Library in April when they spent a week visiting libraries in Ontario and Quebec to observe trends in buildings and methods.

Canadian Library Association

Librarians and library trustees from all parts of Canada gathered in Toronto in June to attend the Canadian Library Association Conference. Several Staff and Board members attended meetings where lively discussions on library and board problems proved stimulating and valuable.

Many delegates visited the Main Library and several made notes of features that they wished to copy in their own libraries. The Regional and County Group of Librarians held their meeting in the Story Hour Room and after the meeting toured the library and were shown the Bookmobile. Many sought information as to size and book capacity to help them in planning mobile units. Since then letters have come from Calgary, Winnipeg, New Westminster, Kitchener and Sarnia asking for details of construction.

Concluding Remarks

We have come to the end of 1951, a year which we shall probably look back on as the most exciting year in the brief history of York Township Public Library. With a growing collection of books and the means to distribute them the library is slowly but gradually assuming its important place in the field of education. We look forward to continued growth in 1952.

Evelyn Gregory,
Chief Librarian.

Report of the Children's Librarian for 1951

It has been a remarkable experience witnessing the pride with which the boys and girls and parents of York Township have accepted the new Library as their own. This has been made evident time and again in many pleasurable and different ways. From the first memorable day when eager faces pressed on the glass of the big windows, waiting and watching while the books were moved in and the furniture placed to the end of this busy year when the figure for the number of books borrowed by children alone, (55,179) bears out that first promise.

"My girl comes up here every day", said one smiling mother, as she exchanged books for her sick-a-bed daughter.

"My children used to read "comics" all the time, and now since they have the Library, they don't seem to be interested in them anymore", said another mother.

And from a small boy who enjoyed a book on "owls" came this comment, "This book was so good, I didn't even go to the show on Saturday, I stayed home reading it."

Then there was the five-year-old who has attended the Story Hour regularly every Saturday since the beginning, and who missed school all week, but insisted that his mother get him out of bed for the "Stories".

The potential young business heads came along with questions such as, "How much did this library cost?" and "Where did you get the money to pay for this library?" and "Did you pay for this library?" and "I'll bet there are FIVE HUNDRED BOOKS in this library."

This first year in the Children's Room has been spent chiefly in meeting the day to day demands for recreational reading, books on school subjects and material from reference books for essays, debates and oral compositions. With another new branch library opening in the same year a good deal of time had to be spent in assembling and preparing a book stock for its shelves. This prevented us from launching into extra activities, other than the Story Hour, and indeed as a drawing card, nothing more was necessary. We had all the response our book stock could stand.

Examining the figures indicating the classes of books most used, it is interesting to point out that the little children borrowed thirty-eight per cent of the year's total. In all libraries, this is where enthusiasm is most active, for the appetites for books of small children are very nearly insatiable. It is the librarian's job to nurture this so that it continues through the years, making the library habit part of every day life.

The first Story Hour was held in February and has been a regular Saturday event ever since with the same children attending regularly, ranging in age from three years to ten. At a time when radio, movies and television offer so much competition, we find it encouraging that fifteen hundred and forty-six children came on twenty-eight different Saturdays and discovered that the spoken word, recounting ancient folklore can still be entertaining.

With little previous advertising a Punch and Judy puppet show was presented late in November. Judging from the enthralled faces of the audience it was judged a success and we were certain of it by the remarkable way in which news of the show travelled and requests for another performance were made. The show was repeated, but that is a story for next year's report...

Last summer a request came from the Northwestern Y.M.C.A. Young People's Director for help in planning material for the story period during the summer camping weeks. An outline of suggested subjects with sources and stories that could be used was prepared. Legends and myths of North American Indians and Eskimos and Greek mythology relating to the Heavens were particularly suitable for the out-door camp. The two children's librarians were asked to visit the camp for story-telling during the six week period, and a most appreciative letter was received from Mr. Keith for our cooperation.

Young Canada's Book Week coincided with the opening of the new Jane Street Branch so extensive plans for celebration could not be made. However three classes of older children from Memorial School visited the library during the week and were entertained with book talks. A book-list with annotations was also prepared for the J. R. Wilcox Home and School Association Bulletin, with special emphasis on worth-while books for every age for Christmas gifts. A few weeks later the Children's Librarian participated in a panel discussion at Cedarvale School on the subject, "Audio-visual Aids, their facets for good and bad."

At another Home and School Association in a bordering municipality, the Children's Librarian was invited to speak on children's books. Although not our area it proved fruitful bringing new borrowers and regular story-hour patrons.

We begin another year full of expectation for further achievement and ever widening scope.

Janet Murray
Children's Librarian

Statistical Summary

<u>Circulation</u>	<u>Main</u>	<u>Bookmobile</u>	<u>Mt. Dennis</u>	<u>Jane</u>	<u>Total</u>
	<u>53,936</u>				
Adult non-fiction	24,099	4,614	6,449	1,330	36,492
Adult fiction	29,837	11,675	10,236	1,895	53,643
Boys' & Girls'	<u>55,179</u>	<u>33,661</u>	<u>13,846</u>	<u>4,187</u>	<u>106,875</u>
Total	109,115	49,950	30,533	7,412	197,010

Membership

	<u>Adult</u>	<u>Boys & Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
Main (Jan. 29 to Dec. 31, 1951)	3,816	1,805	5,621
Bookmobile	1,831	2,800	4,631
Mount Dennis (from March 19, 1951)	1,057	611	1,668
Jane Street (from Nov. 13, 1951)	<u>689</u>	<u>496</u>	<u>1,185</u>
Total	7,393	5,712	13,105

Book Collection

	<u>Adult non-fiction</u>	<u>Adult fiction</u>	<u>Boys' & Girls'</u>
Main	5,477	4,103	7,412
Bookmobile	2,167	2,639	6,885
Mt. Dennis	3,876	3,031	3,646
Jane Street	<u>1,905</u>	<u>1,677</u>	<u>2,272</u>
* Total	13,427	11,450	20,215

Adult books - 24,877 Boys' & Girls' books - 20,215

Grand Total 45,092