

HURON COUNTY LIBRARY
2021
ANNUAL REPORT





“ You have been a ray of sunshine in my life during these crazy times.



2021 Annual Report

Huron County Library

The Huron County Library is a county-wide library system with 12 convenient locations serving residents throughout the County. The Library serves as an inclusive and vibrant community hub that offers the traditional library services with new and innovative offerings to meet the changing needs of our diverse communities.

The Library has adopted the following vision, mission and values statements as guiding principles to delivering Library services in Huron County.

Vision

Huron County Library is an inclusive and vibrant community hub. It builds community, enriches lives and fosters creativity by providing access to information, skills and ideas.

Mission

Huron County Library provides the community with inviting and accessible facilities, engaging virtual spaces, comprehensive collections and user-friendly technology. Welcoming and knowledgeable staff and volunteers provide innovative services and programs that contribute to community vitality.

Values

- Inclusive and equitable access for all
- Literacy and lifelong learning
- Intellectual freedom and protection of privacy
- Customer services
- Community focus
- Collaboration
- Creativity
- Accountability, integrity and teamwork
- Balancing tradition and innovation
- Embracing a changing world

2021 IN NUMBERS...

17,030

Library card holders

29,530

In-branch visits

12,308

Curbside pick-ups

41,365

Catalogue visits

A Message from the Director



Beth Rumble
*County Librarian and
Director of Cultural
Services*

This year has continued to serve up challenges as we continually adapted to balance library access with the health and safety of our community. The on-going pandemic has inspired us to find new ways to provide access to information, skills and ideas.

Returning from maternity leave part-way through the year highlighted the tremendous achievements of staff on top of the adversity they were already facing. In 2021, a new, dynamic brand for Huron County Library was developed. Self-checkout stations were added to enhance safety measures and a new, collaborative catalogue was launched.

During mandated closures, staff turned lemons into lemonade by using that time to add value in new ways, such as facility updates. As always, we continued to demonstrate the many ways libraries can serve their community, including the free printing and laminating of thousands of vaccination receipts.

Through it all, I have been so impressed by the resilience, perseverance and adaptability staff have shown. It has not been an easy road but together, we are making through. It is not lost on me that this pandemic – that has demanded distance and separation – has brought our staff closer together; To collaborate and also to support one another.

In truly a year like no other, I am happy to share some of the highlights from 2021.

A Message from the Board Chair

2021 was another unprecedented year for the Huron County Library, its patrons and the communities we serve. While the year brought with it great change, one thing that held strong through it all was our commitment to our communities and our ability to respond to meet the needs of our patrons.

The services the Library offers are more important than they have ever been. Through these challenging times, access to library services have increasingly become a priority as a way to engage and support the physical and mental well-being of our communities. The Board was proud to support a number of initiatives that ensured our spaces and services remained accessible, safe, and engaging, including virtual programming, branch upgrades, self-checkout kiosks, a new user-friendly catalogue, and the permanent removal of overdue fines, to name just a few.

On behalf of the Huron County Library Board, I want to share my deep gratitude to Library staff who remained determined to use these unprecedented times to create extraordinary moments of progress, creativity and innovation. And I am very pleased to share with you a snapshot of some of these moments through this report.

I would like to also share a big thank you to the people of Huron County who remained patient and supportive as we work through these challenging times. You are at the heart of what we do and we will continue to work hard on our mission to provide innovative services and programs that contribute to the overall vitality of our communities.



Jim Dietrich
*Huron County Library
Board Chair*

Shift, change, and carry on

Branches opened, branches closed, services adjusted, and staff responded to all of the plot twists and turns the COVID-19 pandemic threw their way in 2021. But despite all the ups and downs, one thing that remained constant was the Library's commitment to respond to the needs of the public in creative and innovative ways.

- While branches were closed to browsing, staff invited patrons to 'window browse' by setting up window displays patrons could safely explore.
- Once open, staff recognized that not everyone would feel comfortable visiting us indoors and ensured that curbside services remained an option.
- Technology became more important than ever to keep us connected. For those who needed extra support using their technology, the Library was there to help with Virtual Tech Time services.
- With in-person programming cancelled, virtual programs provided ways for people to still connect with one another and learn together.

“ Thank you for still offering curbside. I think this is important for people's mental health.



2021 IN NUMBERS...

64,021

E-book
checkouts

34,292

Audiobook
checkouts

20,828

Music
streamed

7,117

Movies & TV
streamed

A modern, new look

The Huron County Library underwent a rebranding in early 2021 to modernize the overall look of the Library. The new logo fully reflects the inclusivity, vibrancy and creativity found at all 12 branches.

The new Library logo features a modern design that utilizes a classic book cover shape. A conversation bubble at the heart of the logo illustrates the Library as a place for people, ideas and conversations. The vibrant colour palette used in the logo design features 12 colour blocks that represent each of the Library's branch locations.

This colour palette is shared by other County of Huron brands, including the Huron County Museum and Historic Gaol, and Ontario's West Coast.

Highlights of the rebranding include:

- A stronger, more consistent presence on social media with colourful designs to draw attention to all the Library has to offer
- An improved, more accessible online presence with the development of a new Library website, launched in early 2022
- The redesign of Library cards, and staff name tags and business cards
- Improved branch signage featuring more accessible font usage and unique identifying colours for each branch



Huron County
Library



2021 IN NUMBERS...

3,358

Facebook
followers

788

Instagram
followers

88,331

Website
visits

154,491

Website
pageviews



New and improved online catalogue

The Huron County Library ended 2021 with the launch of a new, mobile-friendly online catalogue through Bibliocommons.

The new catalogue offers smarter searching, better browsing and improved personal features that allows patrons to create personal reviews, build lists, and share their favourite reads with the Library community!

To start browsing, visit:
Huron.Bibliocommons.com

2021 IN NUMBERS...

52,982

Adult Fiction
checkouts

21,597

Adult
Non-fiction
checkouts

16,790

DVD
checkouts

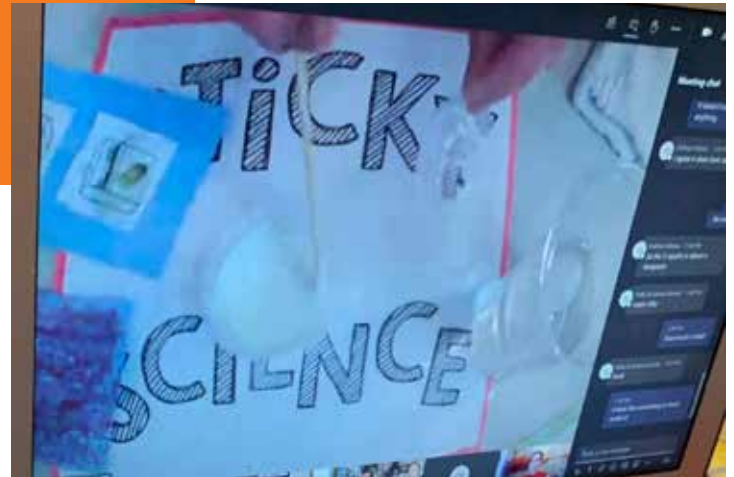
19,651

Junior
Picture Book
checkouts

Library from home

Whether the Huron County Library's branches were open or closed, patrons could still easily access library services from the safety and comfort of home.

- All Library online resources were available to Huron County Library card holders anytime and anywhere! Patrons could access movies, e-books, audiobooks, magazines, music, genealogy resources, and more all from home.
- For those without internet at home, parking lot wifi was available at all branches and patrons could also borrow the internet with our wifi hubs. Wifi hubs were checked out 405 times through 2021.
- While in-person programming was not possible, virtual programming provided access to a variety of learning opportunities for all ages and interests. Library spaces have traditionally provided places for people to connect with one another and, while online is not always the same, virtual programs also provided the chance for patrons to connect with one another over shared interests. Programs explored gardening, cooking, writing, travel, science, storytimes, and author talks.



“ Our homeschool experience owes a huge thank you to the Huron County Library!

2021 IN NUMBERS...

228

Virtual Meeting Space Bookings

402

Virtual Programs & Craft Kits

5,492

Program participants

54

Nursing Home book drop-offs

A place where we belong

At the Huron County Library, everyone is welcome! Even as branches were closed to the public, staff worked hard to find unique ways to help make people feel welcomed and supported in our communities.

- To celebrate the diversity in our communities, staff frequently shared reading recommendations to help expand our understanding of one another. Highlights from our collection were shared to honour Black History Month, Pride Month, Ramadan, National Indigenous History Month, and more.
- Library branches painted the County the colours of the rainbow to celebrate Pride Month in June. All branches showed their support for our LGBTQ2S+ community with creative window decorations and book displays.
- In celebration of Newcomer Welcoming Week, the Library partnered with the Huron County Immigration Partnership to present author readings, distribute Welcome to the Neighbourhood bags, and create vibrant, inviting window displays.
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation was celebrated for the first time on Sept. 30. Staff commemorated the day by wearing orange shirts to honour the lost children and survivors of residential schools.

“ This is the first place I came when I moved to town. You all have helped me with my questions and made me feel welcome. It is a beautiful library with such kind, helpful staff.



In celebration of Newcomer Welcoming Week, newcomers to Canada and to Huron County were invited to pick up a 'Welcome to the Neighbourhood' bag from their local branch.



Staff commemorated National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day to honour children who survived residential schools and to remember those who did not.



Stronger together

Together we can do great things for our communities and it was a pleasure to work closely with several community partners to provide learning opportunities and activities for all ages and interests.

- Huron County sewers were invited to support the Exeter Fidget Makers who were looking to expand their fidget apron project across the County. The aprons support Alzheimers and Dementia patients and include activities to help stimulate brain activity. Sewing kits were distributed through all Library branches to help sewers add to the more than 1,500 aprons that have been made and donated to local long-term care homes and individuals to date.
- While schools remained closed in June, we partnered with the Foundation for Education to support their Paintings on the Pavement campaign through Pride month through the distribution of sidewalk chalk. School-aged children were invited to create chalk drawings that promote inclusivity and celebrate our LGBTQ2S+ community.
- Scientists in School helped us bring virtual, hands-on science programs to young scientists across the County.
- Maitland Valley Conservation Authority provided snowshoes our patrons could borrow to get out and get active through the winter.
- Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority supported our Seed Library by leading a virtual series of workshops to help patrons get growing.

2021 IN NUMBERS...

1,500+

Fidget aprons
made to date

48

Welcome bags
distributed

200

Rainbow chalk
kits distributed

32

Snowshoes
borrowed

The power of a book

“ I think we can all think back to our childhood, and that one book that left a lasting impression on us.

- Trina Huffman, North Team Branch Manager
CBC Afternoon Drive interview

In the fall of 2021, the Huron County Library's Alice Munro Branch received a pleasant surprise in the mail when a long-lost library book was returned to the branch. Sigmund Freud's *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* found its way home after being checked out in the 1970s!

An accompanying letter from the borrower shared how the book was lost, then found, and potentially led to a career in psychoanalysis.

"I like to think that unconsciously when I borrowed, read, then lost this book from the town library, that the seed was already planted to only fully grow nearly 40 years later," the borrower wrote. The letter and book have been on display at the Alice Munro Branch since its return.

We all love a good story with a happy ending!

13 October 2021

Alice Munro Public Library
281 Edward Street
Wingham, ON
N0G 2W0

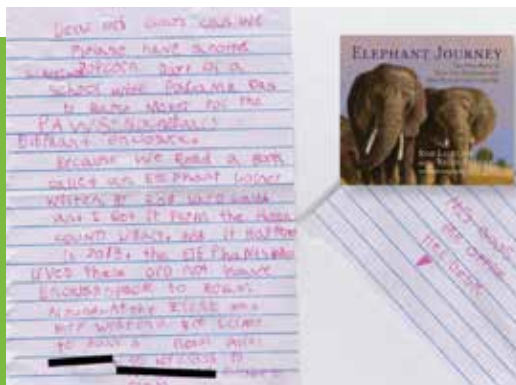
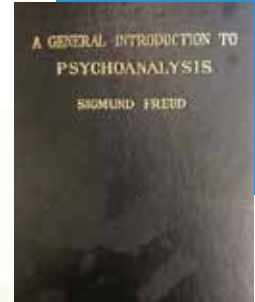
Dear Librarian,

I grew up in Wingham. In the late 1970's I borrowed the enclosed book (Freud, S., (1963) *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*) from the library. Unfortunately when it was time to return it, I could not find it and ended up paying the Library for it. A few years later I found it under the seat of my car which was heading to Marks' Bros. Wreckers. Unconsciously I must have wanted to retain it! This was at a time when my high school guidance counsellors and a math teacher were telling me I "wasn't smart enough" and "wasn't university material".

My subsequent education through Photography at Fanshawe College, an Honours Physiology degree at Western, medical school at Ottawa, Family Medicine at McMaster, Psychiatry at Western, I have proven them wrong. My original plan after practising for a few years in Northern Ontario, was to return to Wingham as a Family Physician and work with Drs. Corrin and McKim. Sadly they both died before I could enact that plan, and various things led me to a career in Psychiatry. This led me eventually to become a psychoanalyst at the Toronto Psychoanalytic Institute.

I like to think that unconsciously when I borrowed, read, then lost this book from the town library, that the seed was already planted to only fully grow nearly 40 years later. Recently, given the psychoanalytic library I now own, including the complete 24 volume Standard Edition of Freud's writings, it was time to return this volume to its home. Perhaps it will inspire someone in the next generation of psychoanalysts with Wingham origins.

Thank you for indulging my tale and accepting this precious volume.



Young Ariel was so moved after reading *Elephant Journey* that she wrote a letter asking her school if they could host a fundraiser for Elephant Enclosure.



When Asher celebrated his 7th birthday in 2021, he generously donated half his birthday money to the Exeter Branch to help buy more books for everyone to enjoy!

12 Branches serving Huron County

Alice Munro Branch

Address: 281 Edward St., Wingham
Phone: 519-357-3312
Email:
WinghamLibrary@HuronCounty.ca

Bayfield Branch

Address: 18 Main St., Bayfield
Phone: 519-565-2886
Email:
BayfieldLibrary@HuronCounty.ca

Blyth Branch

Address: 392 Queen St., Blyth
Phone: 519-523-4400
Email:
BlythLibrary@HuronCounty.ca

Brussels Branch

Address: 402 Turnberry St.,
Brussels
Phone: 519-887-6448
Email:
BrusselsLibrary@HuronCounty.ca

Clinton Branch

Address: 27 Albert St. S., Clinton
Phone: 519-482-3673
Email:
ClintonLibrary@HuronCounty.ca

Exeter Branch

Address: 330 Main St. S., Exeter
Phone: 519-235-1890
Email:
ExeterLibrary@HuronCounty.ca

Goderich Branch

Address: 52 Montreal St., Goderich
Phone: 519-524-9261
Email:
GoderichLibrary@HuronCounty.ca

Hensall Branch

Address: 108 King St., Hensall
Phone: 519-262-2445
Email:
HensallLibrary@HuronCounty.ca

Howick Branch

Address: 45088 Harriston Rd., RR 1
Gorrie
Phone: 519-335-6899
Email:
HowickLibrary@HuronCounty.ca

Kirkton Branch

Address: 70497 Perth Road 164,
RR 1 Kirkton
Phone: 519-229-8854
Email:
KirktonLibrary@HuronCounty.ca

Seaforth Branch

Address: 108 Main St. S., Seaforth
Phone: 519-527-1430
Email:
SeaforthLibrary@HuronCounty.ca

Zurich Branch

Address: 10 Goshen St. N., Zurich
Phone: 519-236-4965
Email:
ZurichLibrary@HuronCounty.ca





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