

Buckland Public Library  
Fiscal Year 2015

While contemplating the upcoming 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the library, the members of the Board of Trustees and I thought it time to signal drivers traveling between Shelburne Falls and Ashfield to meander a bit to the west. With help from the Highway Department, we mounted signs at the intersections of Upper Street and the Western Massachusetts Scenic Byway, a.k.a. Rt. 112, featuring the National Library Symbol. Several new visitors have told us that the signs alerted them to the proximity of a library; others noted that the signs simply reminded them to stop by.

New and recurrent patrons helped us to circulate 15,171 items during fiscal year 2015. This figure is down somewhat from the record-breaking previous year, but up approximately 500% from that first year when residents borrowed treasured leather-bound volumes from the hallowed shelves of the Buckland Church Library!

Summer 2014 programming for children included the librarian's lunchtime visits to the Mohawk Summer Camp, to read aloud as the campers ate lunch, and a handful of story sessions at the library. As has become our custom, we celebrated all that reading with an ice cream social on the lawn, thanks to Mo's Fudge Factor, on a Tuesday evening in August.

The colder months offered time for additional programming for adults and children. Through a series of Soup Nights, we dished up 60 bowls for folks who enjoyed conversation with neighbors. A library team, once again, participated in the Mary Lyon Foundation's annual spelling bee, this time with some notable attire and a bit of a jig. Jenna Smith started a social sewing group, and welcomes participants of all skill levels. The Mohawk Trail Regional School System's Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Program sponsored a couple of children's story hours, as part of its own Science Technology Engineering and Math programming. In addition, Polly Bartlett read a classic children's tale to the delight of local pre-school children and parents.

The community room was used for monthly meetings by a handful of groups and committees, for hundreds of hours-worth of wi-fi by a loyal band of the under-served living up yonder, and for several special events – including a Dungeons & Dragons game. Ann Marie Gardner continued to provide essential help by tracking the schedule and other pertinent details.

Visitors from further afield appreciated our beautiful building. The Greenfield Community College Foundation and President Bob Pura hosted a donor reception, and Sue Samoriski led a group of Wallace Nutting enthusiasts to see Nutting-related features, including the engraved marble plaque above the fireplace, dozens of travel and furniture books, and the recently expanded collection of hand painted photographic prints.

Fundraising efforts for the year included a second annual appeal letter, a third progressive dinner, a bucket drive in Shelburne Falls, a bake sale at Town Meeting, a booth at

Moonlight Magic, and the sale of wreaths and solar lanterns. In addition, we increased the amount and variety of types of items being offered for small donations during library hours; these include “white elephant” items, crafts of various ilks, second-hand jewelry, used books and more. Finally, we were delighted to receive a \$500 donation from a local source, which has enabled us to boost our plans for educational programming for FY17.

We received many gifts-in-kind, both timeless and ephemeral. The family of former trustee, treasurer, and building Committee member Susan Garfield-Wright gave the library one of her gorgeous quilts, soon to be hung in her memory in the Community Room. A stunning piece of Goshen Stone, graciously donated by the company and installed thanks to gifts received previously in memory of former trustee Edie Gerry, now tops the outdoor bench beside the entryway. Susan Shauger donated a luxuriously soft oversized teddy bear; it is much loved by our young patrons. Rob Lord provided hours of skilled and greatly needed computer support.

Businesses donating ingredients for the Maple Breakfast were Buckboard Eggies, McCusker’s Market, Purington Maple Syrup, Shaw’s Sugar House, Spencer Maple Syrup, and Trader Joe’s. Among individuals providing culinary skills and fine service were the full cohort of trustees, Karen Blom, Andrea Donlon, Ann Marie Gardner, Barb Harris, Michael Hoberman, Lois Holm, Laura Iveson, Christopher Lenaerts, Janice Sorensen, Jeff Strube, Alan and Dianna Young; a crew of impressive teenagers including Ben and Madi Boucias, Briel Gibson, Adam Hallenback, Adi and Sam Harris-Fried, and Amanda Taylor. A merry band of bibliophiles, including Sonny Crawford, Steve Howland and Deborah Stevens donated their insouciant instrumentals.

The Historic Upper Buckland Progressive Dinner required hearty donations of goods and services, this year provided by Pam and David Sand, Polly Anderson, Mike McCusker, Kate Davenport, the Bird’s Nest Bed & Breakfast, Ann Marie Gardner and trustees Ann Bodkhe, Amy Love, and Cass Russillo.

For the first time ever, the librarian was able to hire a paid assistant for one hour per week; Marcia Wheeler and Colleen Rauch, whose expertise also allows the librarian vacation time, ably helped out with tasks such re-organizing book shelves and labeling special collections.

I am grateful to Lois Holm, Ron Reniewicki, and Dianna Young, whose dedication to this library is steadfast; their weekly stints shelving, pulling and processing materials keep our collection organized. Further, with their extensive knowledge of literature and film, they provide wonderful assistance to patrons looking for just the right book or movie.

Members of the Board of Trustees and I are tremendously grateful to Ann Bodkhe and Cindy Fisher, whose three-year terms ended with the fiscal year. Cindy’s keen ability to identify priorities and articulate important concerns amidst wide-ranging discussions helped to keep our monthly meetings focused and productive. Ann’s remarkable enthusiasm, creativity and hard work took our fundraising to a new level — and inspired

the rest of us — as she launched several initiatives, most notably the now-beloved progressive dinner.

We would also like to thank the Town of Buckland for its support and collaboration with Buckland Public Library, Incorporated, the non-profit organization that owns the building and co-funds the operating budget. In particular, thank you to the Administrative Assistant, Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee, Highway Department, Town Administrator, Town Clerk, Treasurer, Highway Department, Recreation Committee and Zoning Board.

It is a pleasure for me to serve the patrons of Buckland Public Library who are generous, loyal, patient, learned, fun and fascinating. I am profoundly indebted to members of the board, whose intelligence, hard work and good humor make my job a joy: Chair George Dole, Treasurer Sue Atherton, Kristin Howard (incoming FY16), Secretary Amy Love, Ann Bodkhe (outgoing) Cindy Fisher (outgoing), Cass Russillo, Horace Taft (incoming FY16), Dale Ward, and Richard Warner.

Respectfully submitted,  
Liz Jacobson-Carroll, Director