



Sault Ste. Marie
Public Library

www.ssmpl.ca

"One stop....endless possibilities"



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Year In Review

1

2020 was not what we had expected. It was a year of strife, uncertainty and unrest. Even as the year came to an end we found ourselves still in the middle of a once in a generation pandemic that altered the way we work, behave and interact. The Library did what would have been unthinkable only a year prior. It closed its doors and barred the public from entering. These actions were taken for the greater public health. To combat this virus, everyone needed to do their small part.

Though the doors to the library were closed to safeguard our community members' physical health, what of their mental and spiritual health? For this we remained open and welcoming. The doors may have been temporarily closed but our online portals always remained open. The use of our online resources increased significantly over the year. We found new and inventive ways to reach out to the community through the Library's social media. We established a new lending service, Curbside Pickup, so we could get books safely into peoples' hands while working within the restrictions put in place by the Ontario Government and local health unit.

What this year has shown us is that we are resilient. Both we as a people and also the library as an institution. We have proven that we are able to innovate and adapt.

2021 marks the 125th anniversary of the Sault Ste. Marie Public Library. This means our library had endured a pandemic over 100 years ago, various changes in the community's industry and demographics, economic recessions, the rapid change of technology, and the emergence of the internet age. We shall endure this pandemic and the many other challenges that lay ahead.

I want to say that I am proud of the library staff for all they have done over this last year. They took on an incredible challenge and despite the many difficulties the pandemic had caused, they were able to achieve many successes as you will see in this Annual Report.

Lastly, I want to remind everyone that the library is here for the community and will continue to serve you through good times and bad. We remain a pillar of literacy, information, and culture in Sault Ste. Marie.

We wish you all well in the coming year and I hope to see you again soon among the stacks.



Matthew MacDonald, CEO

Our Vision

Our Library enriches lives, is a community hub that provides access to information and technology and supports and encourages personal growth and creativity.

Our Mission

One stop... endless possibilities

Our Values

Acceptance
Caring
Community
Hospitality
Respect
Stewardship

The following pillars support the vision and mission of the Sault Ste. Marie Public Library

Financial Management
People
Community
Products
Environment



Message From the Board Chair

Libraries store the energy that fuels the imagination. They open up windows to the world and inspire us to explore and achieve, and contribute to improving our quality of life. Libraries change lives for the better.

- Sidney Sheldon

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the SSM Public Library, I extend thanks to the many people who have contributed to the success of the Library during the chaos of COVID. Despite the lockdowns, staff is to be applauded for finding innovative ways of doing business and providing service to the community. The library's success is also due to the extremely important contributions of our extensive volunteer community. We look forward to welcoming them back to the library community. The Friends were on track toward a highly successful year. As soon as it is possible, they'll be available to receive your donations and help with purchases. It is truly my favourite place to acquire new reading material! It would be remiss to not acknowledge our city council. Their continued support in recognizing the value and the service of the library is critical to its success. No other community initiative gives such a high return on tax dollars. There is no Fake News at the library. We're a trusted source of information on all topics. Explore the abundance of resources available at the Library to expand your horizons and interests. Take advantage of the Library's extremely experienced staff to help in your quest for truth and knowledge. There were many exciting events this year, including the successful opening of the North Branch and the dedicated archive space. Our community has a rich and fascinating history that can be explored through the 'Oral Histories' or the archives. The archives grew exponentially with the addition of the stories from the Sault Star. Take the time to explore the collection of oral histories, of past and present community leaders. You will not be disappointed. We look forward to providing continued service to the community. Please take advantage of the James L. Macintyre Centennial Public Library and the North Branch. We are here in your continued quest for knowledge.

"One stop...endless possibilities"

SSM Public Library

Thank you

Wayne Greco
Board Chair



LEADER IN ACCESSIBILITY AWARD 2019

In early 2020, the Sault Ste. Marie Public Library was honoured to receive the Chamber of Commerce's Award for being a Leader in Accessibility for 2019.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2019-2022

Wayne Greco - Chairperson
Luke Dufour (resigned December 2020)
Erin Ferlaino
Ashlee Gerard - Vice Chair
Jami van Haaften

Kevin Harrison
Sara McCleary
Mike Olejnik (joined January 2021)
Frances Ryan
Matthew MacDonald, Chief Executive Officer

Timeline 2020

Korah Branch closed and January was spent cleaning and moving out of the building.

From **January to March 13th, 2020** the library had normal operations including in-person programming.



May 10, 2020 - Launch of the first Online Story Time by the Children's staff members.

May 19 - Staff members were brought into the library on a rotating schedule to start pulling holds, preparing for curbside pickup service and answering telephone reference questions.

May 25 - Launch of curbside pick-up service.

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

March 13, 2020 - Based on escalating cases of COVID-19 within the province, the decision was made to suspend all in-person programming, Visiting Library Service and ILLO.

March 16th - Library Board announced closure of the library to the public on March 17th at 5 p.m.

March 17th - Ontario declared a State of Emergency and implementation of a Lockdown which immediately closed all libraries.

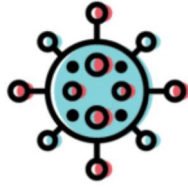
March & April - Full-time staff worked from home doing online training, responding to online submission questions and creating online content to be published on our social media platforms.



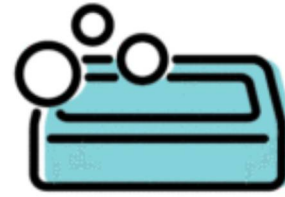


July/August 2020

Launched online summer reading programs for Children, Teens & Adults.



September 25 - October 25th, 2020 - Launched a virtual edition of Culture Days using the library's YouTube channel.



November, 2020 - Annual Paper Festival transitioned to Take Away Craft Kits for both adults and children.

November 17th - North Branch opened its doors to the public on reduced operating hours.

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

August 17, 2020 - Centennial Library opened its doors to the public for reduced operating hours. In-person visits resulted in a marked decrease in curbside pickups.

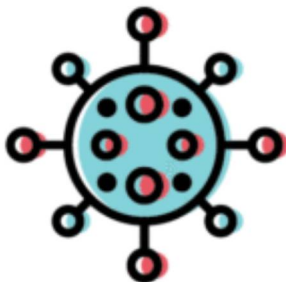
August 17 - Resumed ILLO services.

October 18-24th, 2020 Ontario Public Library Week. Launched a virtual edition of Author Palooza.



December 26, 2020 - Ontario declared a second State of Emergency and Lockdown orders. All libraries closed to public.

December 29th - Curbside pickup service resumed at both Centennial Library and North Branch.





How Did the Library Adapt?

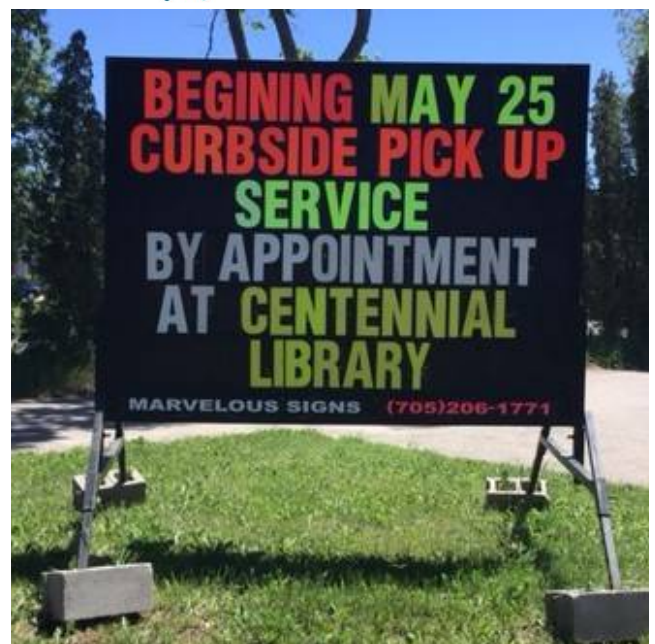
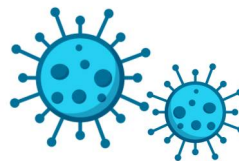
- In-person programming was replaced by online videos posted to the library's YouTube Channel and promoted through Social Media platforms.
- Staff created online contests and programming to engage with our community.
- Patrons coming into the library to browse and select their library materials was replaced by curbside pickup until limited access was permitted in mid-August.
- Reference & Information Service transitioned to fully online submission questions and telephone reference service during lockdown.
- Greater emphasis placed on the promotion of online resources including eBooks, Audiobooks, databases and home access to

For the first two and half months of 2020, Sault Ste. Marie Public Library experienced a normal year of in-person programming and visits by patrons to select their materials and use resources on-site.



On the morning of March 17th, 2020, the province of Ontario issued a State of Emergency and Lockdown Order to be implemented immediately in response to the rapidly worsening COVID-19 pandemic that was spreading across the province. This forced an immediate closure of all public buildings including libraries suspending regular library service, including in-person visits and programming.

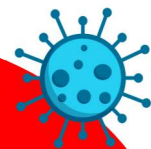
For library staff, 2020 rapidly became a year of trying out new ideas, learning new skills and adapting how library service could be delivered within the community during a pandemic.



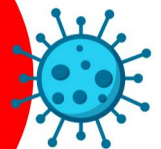
Behind the Scenes in Circulation



Piles of books!!

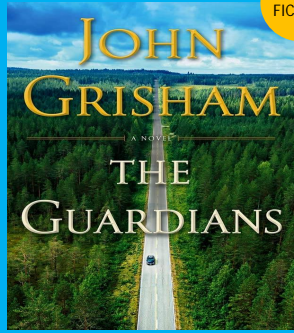


Circulation Staff were kept busy pulling holds and preparing packages for patrons to pick up through Curbside Pickup.



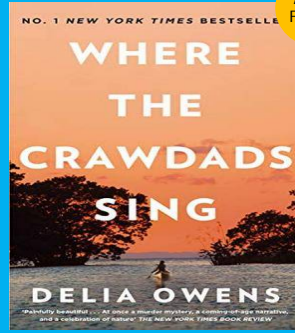
Top Trends 2020

BOOKS



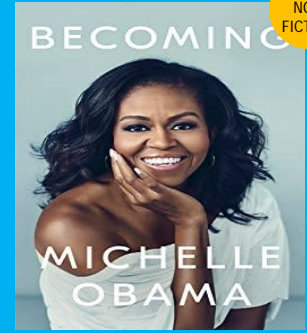
ADULT FICTION

The Guardians
John Grisham



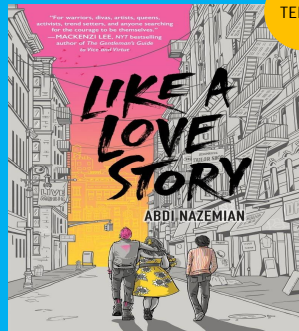
ADULT FICTION

Where the Crawdads Sing
Delia Owens



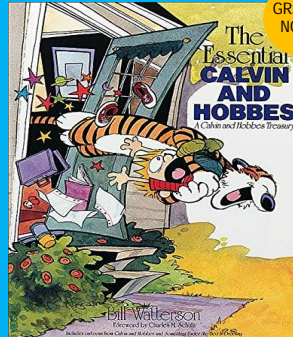
ADULT NON FICTION

Becoming
Michelle Obama



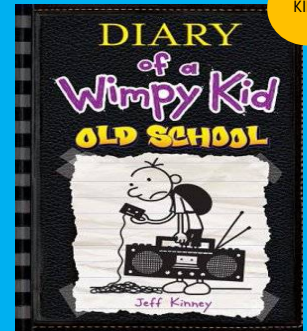
TEENS

Like a Love Story
Abdi Nazemian



GRAPHIC NOVEL

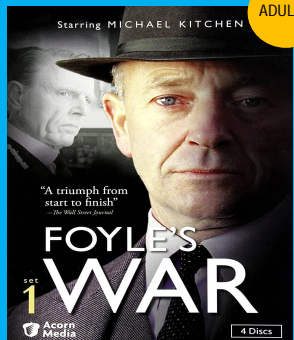
The Essential Calvin & Hobbes: A Calvin and Hobbes Treasury
Bill Watterson



KIDS

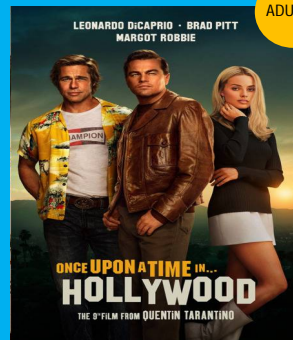
Diary of a Wimpy Kid Old School
Jeff Kinney

DVDS



ADULTS

Foyle's War - Set 1



ADULTS

Once Upon A Time in Hollywood



KIDS

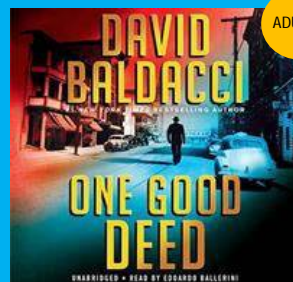
Frozen

BOOKS ON CD



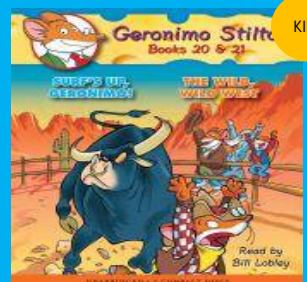
ADULTS

A Midwinter's Tail
Sophie Kelly



ADULTS

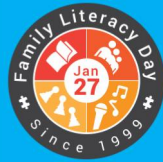
One Good Deed
David Baldacci



KIDS

Geronimo Stilton Books 20 & 21
Geronimo Stilton

Family Literacy Day with the Soo Greyhounds



In January of each year we celebrate Family Literacy Day. In a partnership with the Soo Greyhounds, the aim of this program is to raise awareness of the importance of literacy in a child's development. We are thrilled to have members of the Soo Greyhounds come and interact with the children in reading, crafts and games.



100 Children & 52 Adults Attended



Bon Soo Chess Night

The adult and children's chess programs held a joint event on February 4th, 2020 and welcomed Mr. Bon Soo as a special visitor.

60 People Attended

Bon Soo Story Time

Mr. Bon Soo returned to the library on February 8th, 2020 to participate in the always popular Bon Soo Story Time. Children love to see Mr. Bon Soo in person and be able to give him a big hug!

101 Children and 100 Adults participated.



Reader's Advisory



Surprise Reads for Kids

The Children's Department implemented a new reader's advisory program in the fall of 2020 in response to the reduced access to the library for children during the pandemic. Children (and parents) were invited to register for the program and staff select 3 books for each child on a monthly schedule which parents/caregivers can then pick up either through curbside pickup or inside the library, when possible.

115 children are registered for Surprise Reads

Once the pandemic closures in mid-March began, all in-person library programming was suspended indefinitely. As the lockdown period continued, it soon became obvious that alternative ways to deliver programming to our patrons needed to be developed. One of the library's goals for the development of our online programming was to find ways to increase patron engagement as well as promote library resources that people could access while they were under the "Stay at Home" order. In April 2020 library staff began creating online content.

A new YouTube channel was established for Sault Ste. Marie Public Library and links were posted to our social media platforms to promote the online content.



3,506 views of YouTube videos
7,353 impressions on YouTube
128.3 hours were spent watching videos on YouTube

In the fall of 2020, Daniel Lance was hired under a short term Young Canada's Works grant. Using his background in film studies, we have appreciated his skills in the filming and editing of our online storytimes.



Online Story Times for Children

During the pandemic, book publishers temporarily loosened copyright access to their books so that they could be used in online story times, with some restrictions in place.

Children's staff immediately began developing and filming story times. On Sunday, May 10th, 2020 the first online story time was published and a minimum of 2 story times per week were posted throughout the year.

Craft Kits

Craft kits (with all required supplies included) were assembled by staff so that they could be picked up and taken home as an activity. This proved to be popular with our patrons.

The Children's Department put kits together for the TD Summer Reading Club program and Public Library month in October.

In late November craft kits were assembled for both adults and children to celebrate our annual Paper Festival.

From May to December, 88 online story times were published with 2400 views!

391 kits for Children
87 kits for Adults (Paper Festival)



Online Craft/Activity Videos for Children and Adults

Staff developed how-to videos on a variety of topics including simple crafts for children featuring materials easily found in their homes, demonstration of a Rube Goldberg challenge in partnership with Science North, as well as videos on the popular past-time of baking with sourdough while promoting eBooks on the topics.

Online Tutorials

While not being able to host in-person workshops and programs, staff developed some online tutorials with step-by-step instructions on how to navigate online resources including:

- How to Place a Hold Online
- Tips for Holding Online Book Clubs
- Tips for Using Online Databases

Online videos promoting library materials and collections

- How to Conduct a Family Book Chat
- New Book Promotion videos

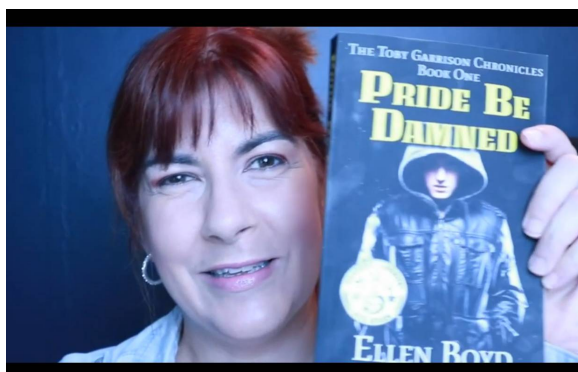
Video & Email Challenges to Entertain and Engage Patrons

- Easter Egg Hunt on our website
- Gardening (series of 5 videos)
- Search and Find Challenges
- Fun Facts Friday
- Photography (series of 3 videos)
- Online Lego Programs
- Online Reading Programs

Author Palooza – Virtual Edition

Eight local authors were invited to submit or be filmed doing a short segment answering questions about their books and their writing process. All videos were posted on a Playlist on the library's YouTube channel and promoted individually through social media platforms with great results.

8 videos with 303 views





153 Radon Detection Kits circulated in 2020

Digital Radon Detection Kit Launch

The Library was pleased to partner with the Lung Association to make Digital Radon Detection Kits available to the public. With the addition of these kits to the library's collection, they could be borrowed with a valid library card making them easily accessible for the public.

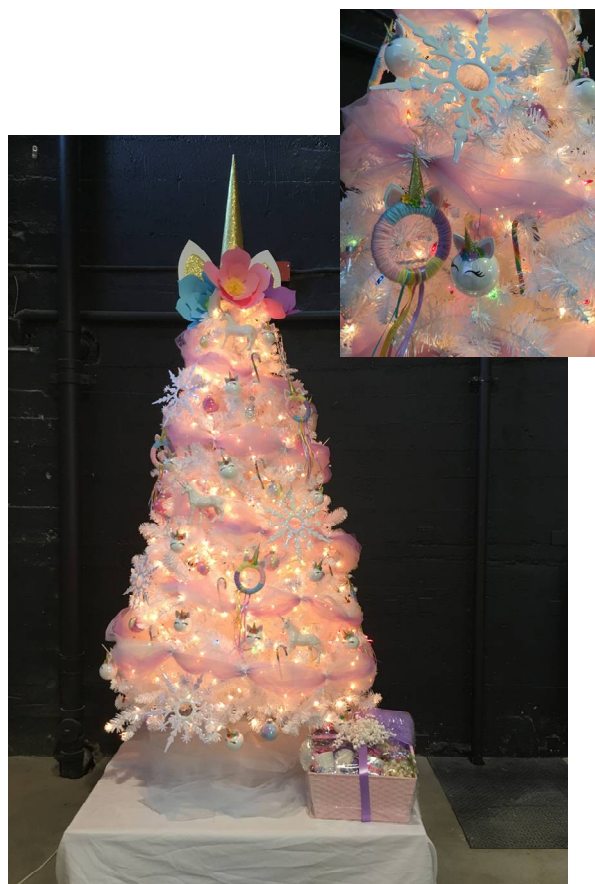
Kits are placed in homes in order to test for radon levels. There was an overwhelming response to the launch of these kits.



Lung Association Festival of Trees

In an annual tradition that became virtual in 2020, the library decorated a tree for the Lung Association Festival of Trees featuring a themed tree and gift basket that is part of their silent auction.

The Circulation department chose the theme of "Sparkle and Joy", a unicorn themed tree this year and once again did an amazing job with their hand-made ornaments.



Culture Days Festival

Our very popular Culture Day celebration of arts and culture in our communities became a month-long virtual event in 2020, instead of the usual 3-day weekend event. Sault Ste. Marie Public Library partnered with our local participating organizations, including the Ermatinger Clergue National Historic Site, the Art Gallery of Algoma, the Sault Ste. Marie Museum and others to post most events online.

A hub was created on the Culture Days website and all organizations posted links to their online events under the Sault Ste. Marie hub and were featured from September 25th to October 25th, 2020.

A playlist was created on our YouTube channel and displayed all of our Culture Day content in one place. A promotional video was put together featuring a lot of the photos that had been taken at the 2019 Culture Day events. This video was shared with the other organizations so that it could be used as part of the pre-promotion.

19 videos
144 views



Community (cont'd)

Improved Wayfinding

Bilingual signs (English/French) were installed throughout the James L. McIntyre Centennial Library at the end of 2020, replacing outdated unilingual ones.

This initiative was funded by a Francophone Community Grant from the Minister of Francophone Affairs. The grant totaling \$9,848 was also used to purchase two bilingual multimedia computers for children as well as French books and ebooks.



Ontario



Environment
12

ARCHIVES

Throughout 2020, a lot of activity has been going on behind the scenes in the Archives.

The support of the community in building the Archive collection is an important factor in its growth. In 2020, despite the extensive period of lockdown, 887 items were added to the Archive collection. The largest of these collections was LACAC (Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee) files from Chris Tossell with about 700 items, including photographs and slides of local buildings. This is an important addition to the Archive collection that documents some of the older homes and buildings in the city that were investigated to determine if they should be given a historical preservation designation.

Sault Star Archives

In late October of 2020, the Library was contacted by the Sault Star with an offer to donate the Sault Star archives, which included photographs, newspaper clippings, city directories as well as other local history material to the public library. The Sault Star had been given a month to vacate their building so the move had to be organized, materials packed and moved on a very quick timeline. During the first week of November, Archive and Reference staff members were able to start packing the collection and with the assistance of Ergo Office Plus the collection was moved on November 16th and 17th. Due to the size of the collection, it was split between the North Branch Archives and the Centennial Library Local History collection.

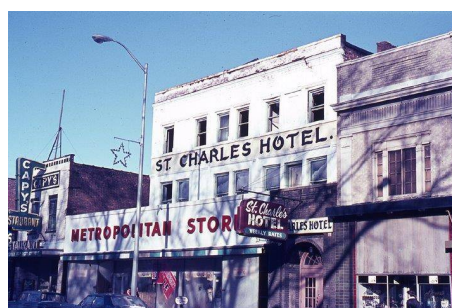
Scanning of the collection was begun immediately and by the end of 2020, 2,289 items had been scanned, mostly photographs and negatives.

Archive Digitization

One of the ongoing objectives is the digitization of the contents of the Archives so that more of the materials will be available online.

One of the collections that is in the process of being digitized is the Algoma Central Railway Survey Journals, a series of small leather-bound notebooks that the surveyors used to record their notes prior to the construction of the Algoma Central Railway.

25 Survey Journals Scanned



Oral History



The Oral History of Sault Ste. Marie project (a sub-committee of Living History Algoma) contributed four new oral histories to the archive collection in 2020 for the following individuals: Bob Cooper, Kay Snell-MacKay, Jean Lajambe and Glorya Nanne. These interviews are recorded to capture the memories and stories of our citizens and preserve them for future generations.



Digital Creator Sault Ste. Marie is a unique space that offers teens and others structured programming as well as open studio access, allowing for opportunities to learn, be inspired, or work independently. Participants can access technology and develop their skills in various digital media including photography, videography, art & design, animation and more.

It has been an important part of the Centennial Library for the past several years and during this time the space has provided an opportunity to engage the youth and give them a safe space to interact with each other.

The Digital Creator Lab was open until March 16th, 2020, when the provincial State of Emergency was announced and it was forced to close.

Once it has been deemed safe to resume in-person programming again, we look forward to re-opening this space.



Between September 19th, 2019
and March 11th, 2020
74% of the visitors were
between the ages of
11 and 19 years old

69% male ; 27% female
3% other

2020 marked the 30th anniversary of the formation of the Friends of the Sault Ste. Marie Public Library however due to COVID-19, planned celebrations had to be postponed.

After a very successful first quarter, the Friends of the Library Book Store closed in mid-March and remained closed to the public until September 15th, 2020. They were able to provide "front-line workers" to staff the Bookstore in the fall. Thanks to all who masked-up! During 2020 the Bookstore got a much deserved refurbishing as well. Even with less than six months of shortened hours, the Friends still made over \$13,000!

During the time that the Bookstore was closed, the Friends were able to provide free books to the community at "pop-up Little Free Libraries" around town, including at the Roberta Bondar Tent, Bellevue Park and the community plaza at the corner of Albert and Gore Street.

We have a core group of great volunteers ready to get back to work as soon as it is safe.



1,300
VOLUNTEER HOURS
IN BOOKSTORE



6 LIBRARY COURIERS
VOLUNTEERED 41 HOURS
on VLS Deliveries and
Inter-branch deliveries

In Person - Circulation

133,154
Total Circulation



60,117

Jan. 1-Mar. 16, 2020



20,097
Library Card
Holders



3,751

Curbside Appointments
=18,495 Items Checked Out



Over **24,994**
DVD & Blu-Ray Check Outs

Curbside Checkouts/Renewals
18,495

Circulation with reduced hours
(Aug. 17- Dec. 23, 2020)
54,542

Digital Media Service Added

In February 2020, Hoopla, a digital media service was added to the library's collection and made available to our patrons. Just in time for the lockdown, this new service allowed patrons to borrow movies, music, audiobooks, ebooks and TV shows that could be viewed on a computer, tablet or phone. A unique feature of this streaming service is no waiting for holds! All materials can be streamed immediately or downloaded to a device to be viewed later.

Electronic Resources – Circulation



Overdrive Audiobooks Borrowed
25,419

Hoopla Audiobooks Borrowed
952

Overdrive eBooks Borrowed
63,335

Hoopla eBooks & Comics
1553

Overdrive eVideos Borrowed
76

Hoopla Media
(including videos/music/television)
1197

Total Overdrive and Hoopla Circulation 92,532



COVID-19 made its impact felt in different ways. Visits to the library's online catalogue, website and social media platforms increased in 2020.



5,537

Public Computer Bookings



WiFi Access **59,459**



243,357

Library Website Visits



785,271

Library Online Catalogue
Page Views



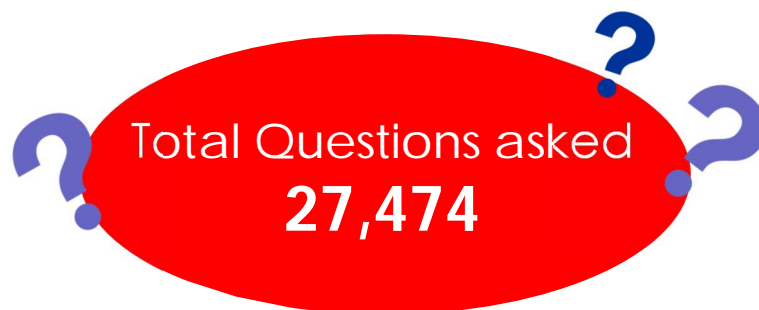
1,022,367

Social Media Impressions

25%
increase

10,255

Database Searches
Conducted



873

Interlibrary Loan items
borrowed for our patrons

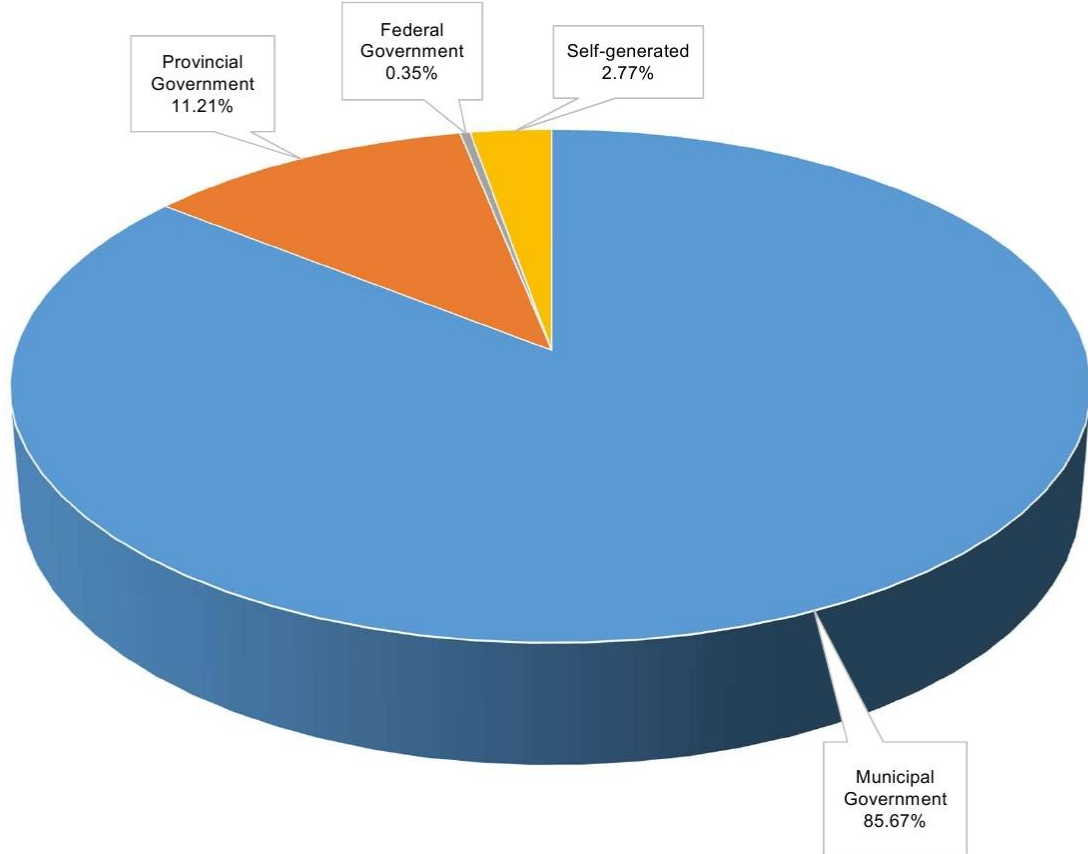
384

Interlibrary Loan items
loaned to other libraries

Year @ a Glance

16

Sources of Funding 2020



Meet our Business Administrator **Rosanne Chan,** MTax BBA

We welcomed Rosanne Chan to the Sault Ste. Marie Public Library as the new Business Administrator.

With a Master of Taxation (University of Waterloo) and Bachelor of Business Administration (Honours) Specialization in Accounting (Laurentian University), Rosanne was a tax accountant for seventeen years at BDO Canada LLP in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario before assuming the role of Business Administrator in June 2020. She was born and raised in the Soo and while growing up, helped her parents operate the "Peacock Gardens Restaurant & Tavern" on Queen Street East until their retirement in 2001.

Rosanne Chan, MTax, BBA
Business Administrator



The Sault Ste. Marie Public Library is very proud of its staff and especially their efforts in ensuring that the residents of our community have a wonderful library experience. During 2020 we had a number of long-time staff who made the decision to retire. We thank them for their collective years of service to the public library and wish them well in their retirement.



Helena Huopalainen - Manager of Community Engagement

Helena began working at the library as a student page at the Centennial Library during high school and was eventually hired full-time in the Circulation Department. In 2014 she was offered a position in Management as the brand new Manager of Community Engagement. Her enthusiasm for libraries and love for people made this job a perfect fit for her. She entered retirement at the end of February 2020 after 40 full time years at the library.



Sandra Gaines - Reference Technician

Sandra was employed as a student page at the Centennial Library during high school. She later returned to work at the Centennial Library, starting in the Circulation Department, then the Children's Department before moving into the Technical Services Department as the Acquisitions Clerk. She completed her career at the library in the Reference & Information Department. After 31 full-time years at the library, Sandra retired at the end of June 2020.



Beverly Budd - Cataloguing Technician

Bev worked in the Technical Services Department for 26 years and was one of the staff responsible for cataloguing the materials that come into the library in order for patrons to be able to borrow them. Bev retired in September 2020 and returned to her home on the East Coast.

Myra Mlynarczyk a part-time staff member retired on January 13, 2020.

Staff Retirements



Sault Ste. Marie
Public Library
www.ssmpl.ca

JAMES L. MCINTYRE CENTENNIAL LIBRARY

50 East Street, Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 3C3

Administration 705-759-5242

Reference 705-759-5236

Circulation 705-759-5271

Children's 705-759-5241

NORTH BRANCH

232C Northern Avenue, Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6B 4H6

Main Desk 705-759-5248

Archives 705-759-5447