

Abington Public Library Annual Report - 2017

To the Inhabitants of the Town of Abington:

The Abington Public Library was bustling with activity in 2017. Programs which encourage community participation, such as book discussion groups for adults, teens and children saw record attendance numbers. The Friends of the Library donated funds to purchase a telescope for library users to borrow, as part of a program sponsored by the Aldrich Astronomical Society to encourage interest in space science. Also, in accordance with its mission, the Abington Public Library provided information services for the residents of Abington: 101,110 items – books, eBooks, audiobooks, DVDs, videos, music CDs, magazines and museum passes were borrowed and 76,384 user visits to the library were recorded.

Downloadable materials, electronic books, audiobooks and magazines, continue to be popular with borrowers; use of these items increased by more than 27% over 2016: digital materials accounted for 11.2% of total library circulation in 2016, up from 8.5% in 2016. A new digital platform, hoopla, was added in February; hoopla includes downloadable books, audiobooks, music, movies and television shows. Library staff conducted workshops and worked individually with many patrons to teach them how to borrow downloadable materials. Demand for library computers remained high as adults, children and teens used the computers for work, schoolwork, research, job seeking, filing federal and state taxes, email, social media, word processing and countless other applications.

Abington Public School classes in grades K, 1, 3, and 5 again visited the Abington Public Library. Visits to Kindergarten and Pre-K class by Children's Librarian Amy Hindle increased in frequency with the August opening of the new co-located Middle, High and Preschool. The Children's Librarian also visited classes in grades 5, 6 and 7 to promote summer reading. 2,025 middle, elementary and preschool students in 76 classes participated in these school class visits.

Abington Reads 2017 continued the "one book, one town" programming begun with a federal grant in 2013. The 2017 program encouraged members of the community to read *Lost in Shangri-La* by Mitchell Zuckoff and to meet for book discussions and other related activities, including a theatrical performance, concert, historical lecture and movies for adults and teens. Author Mitchell Zuckoff visited both the public Library and Abington High School to discuss his non-fiction work about World War II. More than 275 people participated in Abington Reads 2017 by reading *Lost in Shangri-La* and/or attending a related event.

In addition to Abington Reads programming, a number of other events were offered for adults. Author Kate Clifford Larson spoke about her book, *Rosemary, the Hidden Kennedy Daughter*. Local author Abington resident Michael Brophy spoke about genealogy research and Supervisory Park Ranger Alan Banks lectured about Frederick Law Olmsted. In the fall, historian Dr. Gary Hylander entertained history buffs with a lecture about the Cuban Missile Crisis. Chef Liz Barbour taught a class about cooking with edible flowers to a capacity crowd. A large audience enjoyed a presentation about sharks by Marianne Long of the Atlantic White Shark Conservancy. The Non-Fiction and Popular Fiction discussion groups continued their monthly meetings. Monthly craft evenings for adults were again extremely popular and attracted capacity crowds.

The Friends of the Library conducted fund raising activities including their annual membership drive and the spring book sale, as well as maintaining their popular "Everyday Sale Shelf" in the Library. In December the Friends sent out donation requests to the business community. The Friends provided

Museum passes and funding for children's programs and teen programs, including a new pass to The Hall at Patriot Place, funded by a donation to the Friends in memory of Johnny Kelley. The group continued their very successful daytime literary fiction book group, and continued to fund the popular evening mystery book discussion group.

The community was again generous to the Library in 2017. Gifts were received for children's programming from the Anderson Foundation and in memory of long-time library trustee Melba Smith. The Abington Lions Club continued funding the family pass for the Boston Children's Museum; this pass has been funded by the Lions for more than 30 years. Timber Lanes Bowling Center again donated a family pass for Zoo New England, and gifts were also received from the Thimbles and Friends Quilt Guild and the South Shore Writers. A donation from the proceeds of Jack and Kathy Bailey's daylily sale again supported Sheila's Garden. Abington resident Elizabeth Brown donated a three year pass to the Adams National Historical Park in Quincy. The Abington Bank continued to fund bookmarks. Many individual residents made donations for library materials, including the many members of the community who contributed to the Donation Jar, which provides additional funding for children's materials.

The Teen Advisory Board (TAB) continued to meet and to guide program offerings for teens. Barn Babies made their annual visit to the library and the teens spent an afternoon playing with baby farm animals. We held several after-hours programs this year. In March the teens took part in a Fear Factor Food and Newspaper Fashion Show after-hours event, June saw the return of Animal World Experience for a Zombie Survival Course, and in October Rory Raven returned to the library for his Illusionist program, which enthralled teens and adults alike. We held our popular Chopped program on an evening in July, and Pinto Bella returned to the library to teach the teens various hoola-hooping techniques while talking to them about leading a healthy lifestyle. TAB members also worked on programs for younger children, running family movies and assisting with craft workshops. A large group of TAB volunteers supervised activities including a temporary tattoo station, crafts and games during the Summer Reading Program Kickoff event; TAB members also volunteered to maintain the records for the Summer Reading Program.

In summer 2017 the Library, once again, hosted several children's cultural programs generously funded by the Anderson Foundation. Large audiences enjoyed interactive programs by Otha Day and Pumppernickel Puppets, as well as musicians Hugh Hanley, Karen K and the Jitterbugs, and Mama Steph. The Hampstead Stage Company returned to the library to perform the very popular *Beauty and the Beast*, which was funded by donations made in the memory of Melba Smith. The Friends of the Library funded performances by Rob Rivest and Mr. Vinny. In response to the growing popularity of our science programs the Friends provided funding for several more in summer 2017. The Friends of the Library and the Joyce Lee Bumpus Fund continued to provide for the library's preschool and toddler story times, Lego Club, afterschool story craft and science activities, the popular book discussion clubs for children and teens, additional performers and the summer reading program. 297 children and teens registered for the summer reading program, reading for a total of 1,183 hours.

The Library Trustees and Library Director thank the many generous residents who donated to the Friends of the Library and provided direct financial support for Library services.

Trustees Betty Henderson, Jake O'Neill and Barbara McLaughlin were re-elected in April. There were no staffing changes in 2017.

The Trustees and Director also recognize the dedication and professionalism of the Library Staff: Sandy Bumpus, Ann Bunszell, Susan Durand, Heidi Hernandez, Amy Hindle, Barbara Libby, Lynne Nickley, Joanne Plunkett, Linda Sampson, Elizabeth Shea, Terry Taylor and Marcie Walsh-O'Connor.

Selected 2017 Library Statistics

Circulation: 101,110

Registered Borrowers: 6,616

Hits on the Library website: 1,926,475. www.abingtonpl.org

Abington Public School Class Visits: 76

Total programs offered: 365

Total program attendance: 6,835

Library Budget for 2017: \$479,918 (½ of the FY17 budget + ½ of the FY18 budget)

Respectfully submitted,
Henry DiCarlo, Chairman
Betty Henderson, Vice Chairman
Laura Nuttall, Secretary
Gail Bergin
Mary Gillis

Gerry Haas
Barbara McLaughlin
Carrie Murray
John O'Neill
Deborah Grimmer, Library Director