



2020

Oshawa Public Libraries Annual Report



Message from the Board Chair and the CEO

2020 was an extraordinary year that brought unprecedented challenges for the world. We are proud of the accomplishments made by the staff at the Oshawa Public Libraries (OPL) as they swiftly learned how to pivot and be innovative, and at the same time resilient, providing our customary superior services in order to support the community throughout the pandemic.

Armed with its Operational Continuity Plan, OPL quickly shifted its priorities to promoting our digital services and virtual programs, delivering reading materials to vulnerable groups, as well as suspending overdue fines, making personal protective equipment (PPE) for front-line care workers using its 3D printers, and conducting care calls to homebound customers.

OPL became the first library in Durham Region and one of the first in the Province to safely begin offering Take-Out service in May. We were also the first library in Durham Region to re-open multiple branches to the public in July as we moved to the next stage of the Province's Reopening Plan.

In the summer of 2020 we undertook an online customer service survey to gauge the public's perception of how well we had provided service during the pandemic and in the subsequent recovery phases. Overall, 77% of the respondents surveyed were either satisfied or very satisfied by how OPL met their needs during the pandemic, and 91% of respondents were excited to come back when the library re-opened.

Our tagline Find Yourself Here now has a broader meaning, as 2020 demonstrated to OPL customers that our services can easily be accessed from the comfort of their own home, making an uncertain time more manageable, and enjoyable. As we transitioned back into lockdown at the end of 2020, OPL continued to prove to our customers, whether in person or virtually, that the library is, and will continue to be there for them.



Doug Thomson, Board Chair

2020 Board Members

Doug Thomson, Chair

Eric Guernsey, Vice-Chair

Mark Ashcroft

James Clapp

Croydon DeMello

Elizabeth Jamischak

Michelle Lawson

Melissa Pringle

Jacqueline Quinn

Linna Tam-Seto

Councillor Tito-Dante






Marimpietri



Frances Newman, C.E.O.

Accomplishments

Developed a new Strategic Plan for 2020-2023.
The main goals of the Plan are:

-  Enhance our Programming Capacity
-  Increase Public Awareness of Programs and Services
-  Promote Accountability and Efficiencies
-  Support Curriculum and Life-long Learning
-  Provide Opportunities for Cultural Experiences

A Diversity and Inclusion Strategy was developed and implemented.

Five staff presented workshops at the annual Ontario Library Association conference on topics as diverse as local history, to leading with empathy.



Take-Out Service launch, before mandatory mask requirements

Our Economic Impact Study determined that for every dollar invested in the Library, **\$4.80** is returned back into the community in direct and indirect benefits.



Winner of the 2020 Ontario Library Association Preservation and Archival Achievement Award for our local history projects and Local History Room at the McLaughlin branch.



Winner of the 2020 City of Oshawa Culture Counts Innovation and Creation Champion Award.

Pivot

When the pandemic was declared in March, we successfully pivoted to a new digital service model that allowed us to promote our online collections and services and introduce our regular programs, such as story times, book clubs, and educational activities on popular virtual platforms. A virtual help desk and live chat options were also introduced to assist people with questions about library services or their research.

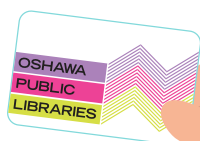
We suspended overdue fines and extended loan periods to support our members during this difficult time.

Once government regulations allowed us to provide Curbside Take-out, we began providing this service in late May.

In early July, Ontario's Reopening Plan allowed us to take public computer access appointments, a vital service for those who cannot afford their own computer or connectivity fees, and access to printers and photocopiers at three of our four locations. We began offering these services at our Delpark Homes Centre branch when the recreation centre re-opened in August.

All locations re-opened for in-person service including browsing and studying, by following safety protocols such as COVID screening questions and contact tracing, by mid-summer and stayed open the remainder of the year.

Despite being closed to the public, **679** new people signed up for library membership through our website in April and May so they could access our digital content.



Preparing to launch Take-Out Service

In the first ten days
of Take-Out service,

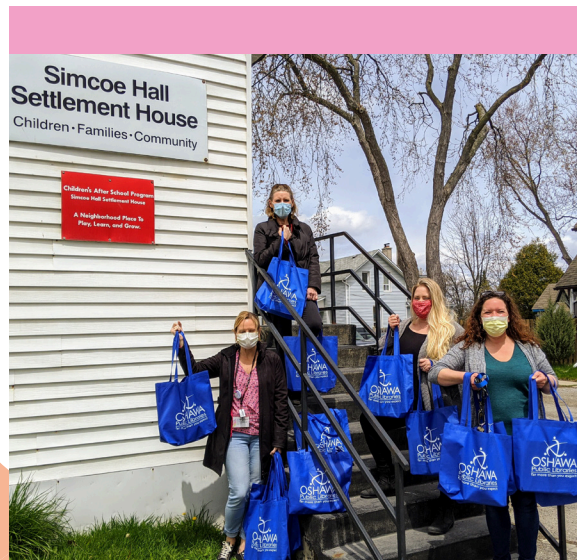
674

people picked up

3,454

Library items

Donations to Simcoe Hall Settlement House



Being at Home Didn't Mean Being Alone

In early 2020, we pivoted from in-person programming to live virtual programming and you welcomed us into your homes through your computers, mobile phones, or tablets. Some of our online programs included:

- Live-streamed story times on Facebook with interactive stories, songs, and activities for preschoolers
- Online book club discussion groups for adults and children
- Genealogy Club for researchers of all experience levels
- English Conversation Circle for newcomers to Canada
- Beyond the Walls lecture series in partnership with Ontario Tech University
- Crafters Corner provided people with a way to socialize while working on their craft projects remotely
- Guest speakers informed and inspired at several online sessions as diverse as local history to astrology
- STEAM activities for school-aged children were produced weekly on "Figure It Out Fridays". These videos showcase activities and experiments that parents can do at home with their children.
- TD Summer Reading Club for children & teens



Virtual Paint Afternoon program



Figure It Out Friday STEAM experiment

1,144

Programs offered

14,819

People attended
in-person or virtually

Social Media Growth



Facebook

102% increase in engagement.
21% more page likes



Instagram

100% more people saw us in their feed
25% more followers



Constant Contact

116% more people opened our emails
24% net new contacts



Twitter

31% more retweets

Supporting our Community



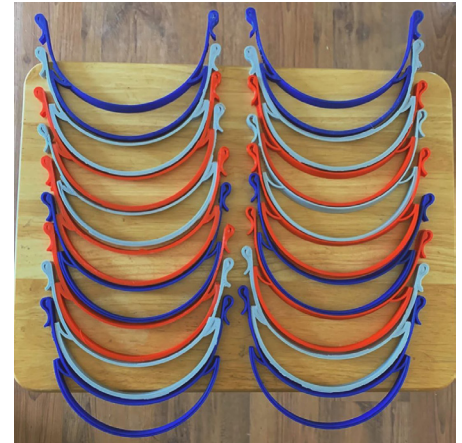
Donations of books and magazines to Seniors

During lockdown, we delivered books and movies to Community Living Group Homes, Settlement House for Newcomers to Canada, Children's Aid Society families, and Denise House women's shelter. We partnered with the Oshawa Senior Community Centre's (OSCC) meal delivery service by providing books and magazines to seniors.



Donation of craft supplies to The Refuge Youth Outreach Centre

Staff worked with the City on the virtual Peony Festival and Canada Day activities, and delivered virtual programs for the Boys and Girls Club. We also supported The Refuge Youth Outreach Centre building relationships with at-risk youths.



Face shield headbands

OPL's 3D printers were put to good use to produce headbands for face shields for frontline workers.

Staff conducted regular phone check-ins with our homebound Visiting Library Service (VLS) customers to provide a friendly voice during a troubling time.

These calls provided our customers with reassurance, advice on services available, and social and mental support as many of these customers live alone.

As parents and children struggled with learning from home, we provided online homework help and educational support for students, parents and caregivers.

Supporting our Community



Making book donations

As social bubbles grew, small social gatherings such as book clubs became invaluable to supporting mental health and combatting social isolation. To support the growth in book club popularity, we increased the number of book club sets available for the public to borrow. Some of our older sets that were no longer circulating well were donated to Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences to create their own in-house book club for patients.



STEAM program experiment

In addition to over 100 STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) programs offered by OPL in 2020, we also partnered with Durham College to participate in the national “Girls Who Code” program to promote math and science careers to girls.



Beyond the Walls virtual lecture series

We collaborated with the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities at Ontario Tech University to present “Beyond the Walls”, a virtual liberal arts discussion group featuring various thought-provoking topics.

Preserving our Past

We completed the following digitization projects:

- The Oshaworker magazine
- Oshawa Civic Auditorium photograph collection
- Air Force Memories Scrapbook containing handwritten letters from local Air Force personnel in 1942.



L.A.C. Donald Brown

We Asked, You Answered!

Here's what you told us you liked the most about the Library

During the pandemic I have picked up many books for myself and my son, used the photocopier and received a new Library card. The staff are friendly, positive and helpful. Thanks for everything!

I love the staff who are so friendly in person and equally as helpful and friendly when picking up holds during the pandemic. So well organized and appreciated!

Thank you so much for the great job that the Library has done with the curbside pickup!

Kudos to all Library staff and everyone running the curbside program. It's been really good and appreciated. Thank you.

The fact that we have this wonderful service in our community. The amazing help I have had from staff to navigate the online services during COVID. Many thanks to everyone!

The hoopla movies and TV. shows as well as eBooks and audio books since I am mostly housebound.

I am so thankful for eBooks! My husband and I both love reading. The nice selection of eBooks has made being shut-in far more pleasant than it would have been without this option.

Just being able to read as much as I would like even though I don't have money for books. Thank you.

I want to say a big shout out and thanks to the Library staff that is so dedicated even during the pandemic to deliver book services to all Library customers and visitors.





Collections and Connections

4,922

New Members

293,575

Visits to our website

299,710*

People visited our branches

14,297

Reference questions answered

32,207

Public computer logins

7,023

Take-Out Service bags packed

922,219

Total check-outs in 2020

542,347

Books Magazines, DVD and Video Game check-outs

379,872

Digital check-outs including eBooks, eAudiobooks, eMagazines, eMusic, and eMovies

459

Wi-Fi hotspot Loans

eBook and eAudiobook circulation increased by

140%

**Closed to the public for part of the year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.*

2020 Revenue and Expenses

Revenue

City of Oshawa Grant	\$ 8,526,119
Ontario Provincial Grant	\$ 215,441
Other (fines, donations, external grants)	\$ 332,465
Total Revenue	\$ 9,074,025

Expenses

Salaries & Benefits	\$ 6,402,581
Library Materials	\$ 849,052
Other Operating	\$ 1,089,062
Reserves	\$ 733,330
Total Expenditures	\$ 9,074,025



Take-Out Service introduced May 2020



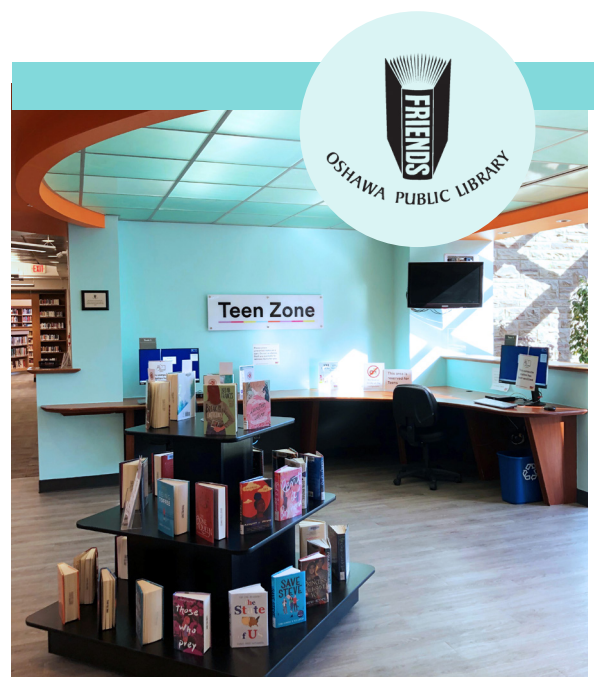
Investing in new readers

Friends of the Library

Generously sponsored by the Friends of the Oshawa Public Library in 2020:

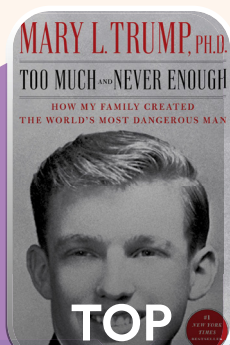
- Continued sponsoring Wi-Fi Hotspot connectivity charges
- New technology charging stations for each location
- Annual Seniors Writing Competition
- Refresh of the McLaughlin Branch Teen area

Thank you



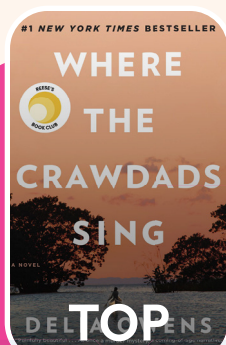
Refreshed Teen Zone at the McLaughlin Branch

Most Buzzed About Borrows of 2020



Non-Fiction Book Borrowed

*Too Much and
Never Enough*
by Mary Trump



Adult Fiction Book Borrowed

*Where the Crawdads
Sing* by Delia Owens



DVD Borrowed (TV & Feature)

Game of Thrones



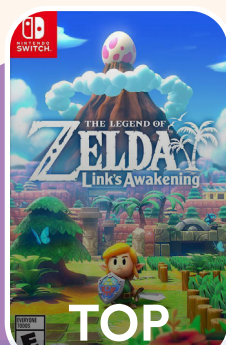
Non-Fiction DVD Borrowed

Country Music
by Ken Burns



Digital Comic Borrowed

Locke & Key, vol. 1
by Joe Hill



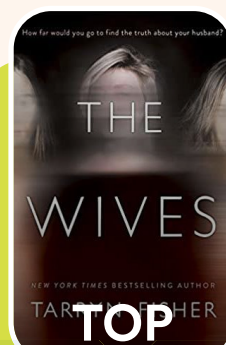
Video Game Borrowed

The Legend of Zelda
on the Switch



Streamed Movie

The Gentlemen



eBook & eAudiobook from Cloud Library

The Wives
by Tarryn Fisher



Delpark Homes Centre Branch



Jess Hann Branch



Northview Branch



McLaughlin Branch

Delpark Homes Centre Branch, 1661 Harmony Rd. N.

Jess Hann Branch, 199 Wentworth St. W.

McLaughlin Branch, 65 Bagot St.

Northview Branch, 250 Beatrice St. E.

oshlib.ca 905.579.6111

