

## **Chair's Report - 2020 Galiano Library AGM**

### **Jennifer Margison**

Welcome to our second but even more remote COVID AGM! Our 2019 AGM was held later than usual last September due to the pandemic and we were able to gather at the Lions' Hall then, albeit with masks and chairs spaced out. Although our library services were significantly reduced at that time, I am not sure that any of us imagined that our next AGM would only be possible by Zoom.

But here we are, meeting virtually today, acutely missing what was possible in our lives and in our library only just over a year ago. I want to acknowledge that our Board of Directors and our library volunteers have all done more flexing and pivoting in their personal and business lives and in delivery of our library services to replace **any** missing yoga classes. We have been able to safely bring our library back from only a delivery and pickup service at the start of COVID to being open once again four of our normal five day schedule.

Sadly, our library is still not a place to linger, to settle down in one of our comfy chairs to flip through a new book with the sun streaming in through the window, to chat with a neighbour who wanders in, to get stuff done on one of our library computers, to view some wonderful art or to gather for an event or ongoing programming in our meeting room. Though our library is bare of furniture and computers, it is still warm however with a love of literature and the determination of our volunteers and Board of Directors to serve our community in these challenging days in the best way we can. So on with the review of the 2020 year.

Looking back, I see we began to discuss our response to the just unfolding COVID situation at our still in-person mid-March board meeting where we approved enhanced cleaning time for our library. By May, we were meeting online and outdoors on the Library deck. We closed the library doors to in-person services on April 19, put in place a request by email or phone delivery service for our patrons and suspended all book returns for a time, eventually quarantining returned books. We instituted enhanced cleaning, in fact a top-to-bottom cleaning of our library by our custodian Chris Kennedy who I particularly want to recognize for his exemplary service during this especially worrying and difficult time when we still had much to learn about the pandemic.

In June, Marek and I interviewed all 8 of our Summer Student applicants on Zoom, on a porch during the rain and in a garden on sunny days, in order to give them all some interview experience, eventually selecting from a wonderful group, local university student, Rana Harris. As it was early on in the pandemic, it was an opportunity to hear first-hand how the lives and aspirations of these young students had already been altered and how they were coping. 2020 would mark the third year we have successfully obtained funding for a summer student and while requiring extra admin and supervisory work (thank you Marek Czuma and Lori Seay) these young people have contributed immeasurably to our summer and ongoing services. As a result of their work, we now

have a YouTube channel, that allows our residents to access our speaker events at any time.

We purchased additional furniture for the library deck, umbrellas, tables and chairs so patrons could more comfortably work out there.

We developed a COVID-safe plan, had plex-glass installed around our circulation desk, and re-opened the library June 17 for patrons again two days a week, two people in the library at a time, masks mandatory, eventually expanding to three days in September, unfortunately with no public access to our meeting room. We made laptops available for use on our deck. In October, we increased number of patrons in the library at any one time to three, and reopened the Skype room, continuing as well with our curbside pickup.

### **Circulation Information**

What have people been borrowing from the library? Our total collection size in 2020 was 13,145. Understandably, our statistics are down for 2020 due to Covid and library service restrictions. In 2020, 6410 items were borrowed compared to 12,402 the previous year.

1792 DVDs -1622 adults' and 170 children's - were borrowed, indicating there is still a demand for these on our island, likely a result of our poor internet.

3469 adult books, with Mysteries again leading the way at 1153, were borrowed. The top mystery was *Big Sky* by Kate Atkinson; the top Biography was, not surprisingly given the times: *Too Much and Never Enough: How My Family Created the World's most Dangerous Man* by Mary Trump; the top Fiction was *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens and *Olive, Again* by Elizabeth Strout; the top science fiction was *The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms* by N.K. Jemisin and *Red Moon* by Kim Stanley Robinson and the top Non-fiction was *From the Ashes: My Story of Being Metis, Homeless, and Finding My Way* by Jesse Thistle.

38 Young Adult books were borrowed and we recognize the need to expand our collection in this area.

1064 Children's books were borrowed.

17 Passes (10 Museum and 7 Art Gallery), 10 Magazines and 6 laptops were borrowed.

### **Volunteers Make It All Happen**

Our volunteer workforce has been amazing during this past difficult year and we are so grateful for their flexibility and determination to keep going in whatever way possible.

## **Circulation Desk**

Volunteer training and scheduling is the purview of Board members Pauline Maitland, Marek Cuzma, John Courtland as well as Liz Harmer. In 2020, 23 Circulation Desk volunteers worked 778 hours delivering library services, not that much less than the 898 hours worked the previous year, in spite of our closure. This included pulling materials from the shelves for pickup and delivery to patrons.

## **Operations**

Under Board member Margaret Howell, Operations saw eight Acquisition, Shelving, Culling and Overdue Management volunteers work 920 hours. Three cataloguing volunteers under Liz Harmer worked additional hours. One volunteer, Coral Fisher looks after our inter-library loan program, and Kris Dartnell, Board member and a team of 9 comprise the Programs and Events Committee. John Coulthard, Board member manages our computer support and Karen Harris, Board member, takes care of Meeting Room Bookings. Our Art Committee of a half dozen volunteers, with Pearl Roberts as Chair mounts shows in the Catherine Holahan Gallery, events that sadly were put on hold for most of 2020, except for our glass case displays.

## **Communications**

Board member, Sher O'Hara is our go-to person for outreach into our community, letting residents and visitors know what's happening at the Library through our Facebook and Instagram accounts, and the design of our general information and event posters. She is assisted by other volunteers who put up posters around the island. The other key member of the Communications team is Pat Van Holderbeke who faithfully writes our always entertaining monthly Active Page column.

*Communications Committee: Sher Andrusiak (Chair), Pat Van Holderbeke, Hannah Sandilands, Carol Guin, Susan DeBeck, Rolyn Potter*

## **Programs and Events**

The Programs and Events (P&E) Committee continued a busy schedule and transitioned and repositioned quickly to meet the restriction of COVID. The 2020 speakers' series included 5 events plus a movie showing in partnership with Cinema Galiano. Attendance averaged 30 per event. The final events, *Privacy During a Pandemic* and *Tea with Tanya* were online events due to the pandemic. The P&E Committee established a YouTube channel mid 2020 and during the summer, with the help of our summer student, the Galiano Author's series got up and running. This inaugural series saw 7 authors participate, creating short, videotaped readings. These readings are now up on the library YouTube channel, along with recorded speakers' series events. As of March 31, 2021 the YouTube channel has had 1,032 views. The P&E Committee also held 3 Tech Café events in 2020. The P&E values and is grateful for our ongoing and developing relationships with Cinema Galiano, the Galiano Activity Centre Society, the Galiano Health Care Society and the Galiano Museum Society.

*Programs and Events Committee: Kris Dartnell (Chair), Sher O'Hara, Virginia Monk, Karen Harris, Lea Seay, Lezlie Wagman, Cate Sandilands, Christina Stechisen (Chair - May), Joan Robertson (interim Chair-December), Rana Harris (Summer Student), Jennifer Margison (frequent visitor)*

### **Arts Committee**

The year began with a full schedule through to December of exhibits and displays by artists from Galiano and beyond. But due to the closure of the library art gallery because of the COVID pandemic, we were only able to mount a few displays. In January and February, Michael McLean exhibited his expressionist paintings and mixed media sculptures made of found objects. In March, we mounted a retrospective of work by the late Elizabeth Steward, thanks to the generosity of island residents who lent us work from their private collections. We were also able to exhibit photos and artifacts from the Galiano Museum in our display cabinet. All shows planned after March were cancelled and we hope to be able to resume our plans in the coming year.

*Library Arts Committee: Pearl Roberts (Chair), Liane Dickson, Joan Henriques, Keith Holmes, Willow Jewell, René Mahlow, Pauline Maitland.*

### **Building Maintenance**

The Building Maintenance Committee continued communication with the library's custodian about establishing a cleaning schedule which responded to both COVID protocols and the gradual extension of the library's opening. The Committee assembled new tables, chairs, and umbrellas for the library's deck; storage of umbrellas during the winter was organized. Garden maintenance included extensive weeding, mulching, and the addition of a transition strip of stone along the edge of the covered patio.

The CRD completed annual maintenance to the building's roof and gutter systems, as well as electrical maintenance of library heaters and light ballasts. The CRD was also consulted about a solution to the problem of a security light timer which was frequently malfunctioning and causing an issue with a neighbour of the library. The CRD will likely install a new timer mechanism in 2021.

The Library Building Maintenance Committee also consulted with other interested groups (Activity Center, School District, Parks and Recreation) about locating a vault toilet in the area for public use. These discussions continue.

*Building Maintenance Committee: Pat Van Holderbeke and Chris Kennedy*

### **Southern Gulf Islands Library Commission**

In 2020 Board members, Kris Dartnell, Jennifer Margison and Marek Cuzma were members of the Southern Gulf Islands Library Commission (SGIL), a Capital Regional District Commission, our mother-ship so to speak, that meets twice a year. Officially Pender Island is the library registered with the provincial government and the libraries on Mayne, Saturna, Piers and Galiano operate as "reading rooms" under the Pender Island Library. But each library operates locally as stand-alone and autonomous

organizations. On Galiano, the Galiano Library Society runs the library. We have full control over our budget and make all our decisions locally.

The SGI Library Commission was established in 2001 and provide our key library resources: the Sitka Evergreen system, a joint library website and social media and inter-library loan service. As well, we receive access to online resources from the BC Libraries Co-op such as audio and e-books through the Libby app, and RB Digital for magazines, Artistworks for music and art lessons, Rocket languages for access to over a dozen languages including sign language, the Tumble book interactive book library for K-6 and "teen book cloud". The Museum and Art Gallery passes are also part of the SGIL system. I would like to recognize the wonderful support we have received this past year, including input on our COVID safety from the SGIL Library Director, Carmen Oleskevich and her staff - Melody Pender, Bookkeeper and Collette Clarke, Library Technician - all based in the Pender Library. Carmen is always looking for ways in increase budgets to meet island needs and ensure sustainability of our services.

### **Friends of the Library**

Instituted in 2019, the "Friends of the Library" program was aimed at members of the community who would like to help out but could not commit to an ongoing task or committee. Due to the COVID restrictions the opportunities for Friends were minimal, but they did help with the distribution and posting of posters for library events.

### **Board Governance**

As a new Chair in "the time of COVID" I would have been much more anxious had it not been for our incredibly experienced and hardworking Board of Directors, many who have been involved with the Library prior to our building's construction and some who have professional library backgrounds. Prior to becoming a Board member, I was told it was a 'working board' and that is indeed true. I have tried to recognize their varied roles earlier in this report. No doubt I have missed some. They all bring unique skills, invaluable backgrounds, dedication and most importantly, compassion and humour to their Board commitments and I continue to learn from them. I and the Galiano community are very grateful for the contributions of Pauline Maitland, Vice-Chair; Kris Dartnell, Past Chair; Marek Czuma, Treasurer; Sarah Strang, John Coulthard, Lori Seay, Lee Trentadue, Pat Van Holderbeke, Margaret Howell, Karen Harris and Sher O'Hara. We are all hopeful about a resumption of our normal Library services and programing in the not-to-distant future!