2020 Town Report for the Library

2020 has been a year of change. It was as if we closed one business in mid-March and opened another. In the process we created different ways to offer library services to the Nelson community. For example, now the library has a whole protocol around health safety, using CDC guidelines, and we added the option of curbside pick up. The librarian gets a call, an email or an order for library materials, packages them up, then finds a convenient time for pick up. Before we could make that happen, it was made clear to us from information gathered from the CDC and WHO and by the American Library Association, the NH Library Association, and the Governor’s Stay At Home order that we should close completely and not circulate anything.

Libraries are different from other businesses in that materials are circulated among many people and are stored in homes under various conditions. Unlike takeout food, the items come back to us and go out again. When the pandemic began, we were informed that because COVID-19 was so new and unlike any other coronavirus, nobody knew how long the virus remained on various library surfaces. When the Olivia Rodham Memorial Library closed its doors on person-to-person interaction in mid-March, the model immediately began to turn to an online, virtual service. This included constantly evolving content development, staffing issues, training, new technologies, realignment of budget expenses, marketing and tracking.

The Nelson Librarian worked remotely learning new technologies; developing the online experience; and offering up suggestions on content through research, working with other NH librarians to compare and learn together; turning on-site programs into virtual where possible and inventing others; and learning to create videos. We constantly monitored the best available advice on sanitation and virus transmission. We constantly monitored the best available advice on sanitation and virus transmission.

The Nelson Library services include internet and wireless access. People are able to sit in the parking lot in the comfort of their vehicle and use the internet 24/7. Virtual content included story times, original videos, software programs, constant updating and launching programs on Facebook and the website, and offering options for downloadable ebooks, audiobooks, movies, magazines, also links to unemployment benefits, and a new virtual summer reading program. Check out our website at [nelsonlibrary.org](http://www.nelsonlibrary.org/) for more. Promoting the new library services required many website postings, phone calls, and emails.

The librarian and staff remained (and remain) busy behind the scenes. When we were not open, the staff did deep cleaning and sanitizing, cataloged new library items, did collection development and ordered books, and kept the statistics for the town and the state up to date. The librarian maintained the sanitized area, created a weekly online story time for kids, checked items in and out, prepared and phoned patrons about any items for curbside delivery, attended meetings with the State Library to learn about best practices to run a library during a pandemic, and attended online classes about libraries serving communities and safe practices during the pandemic. These are all in addition to a librarian’s usual day-to-day activities that keep the library running. The activities that take place at our public library are a direct reflection of this community’s interests. Our website [nelsonlibrary.org](http://nelsonlibrary.org/) contains a community events calendar listing and other community information. So visit your public library often, suggest a new book or activity, or volunteer when the library building is open.

The library is still a place to get books, dvds ,and audio books for entertainment and education. It still offers 24/7 internet. You can still go to a program at your library, but it will be virtual. The library can still answer reference questions. We are here to serve the community. We welcome questions and ideas from the community on ways the library can be part of the community life.

**What the Olivia Rodham Memorial Library offers you:**

* Our library is free and open to the public. This year was varied with building closures and viewing the stacks by appointment. Mostly we serve the community with curbside delivery during the pandemic.
* Nelson residents may borrow books, audio books on CD, magazines, a telescope, DVDs, kids games and puzzles, puppets, craft kits.
* Web page: [nelsonlibrary.org](http://nelsonlibrary.org/) with town events in a town events calendar, links to local groups and events. More online services can be accessed in the library or from home on the web page: downloadable e Books, audio books, Kindle books, and EBSCO, a periodical database.
* Online services include library computers, WiFi printers, ZOOM programs and FaceBook LIVE kids programs. (37 Kids programs on FaceBook LIVE and the web page with 4020 hits.)
* Special programs, such as author talks, wildlife speakers (Susie Spikol with the Harris Center doing “Utterly Otters”), and Nelson history topics.
* Monthly and weekly programs: Coffee hour every Saturday, book group, cookbook book group with a potluck.
* Origami, singing, movies, snap circuits, Lego, and gems and rocks.
* Art shows and openings: recent exhibits included Emily Ottinger and Mary Cornog, local artists.
* Books groups, cookbook potluck and book group, NH Humanities, arts and crafts, Saturday morning speakers, and movies. 44familyevents in 2020 with 595 participants. (some in the library before the building closed and some on ZOOM)

**Meetings.** This year when the library building was open:the library and the meeting room on the lower level were used for 14 meetings by 8 different groups: Agricultural Commission, Conservation Board, Shape Note Singers, Friends of the Library, Library trustee meetings, Monadnock Folklore Society, Cemetery Board, and Library COOP, and the monthly book sale.

**Contributions to the library in time, talent, and material goods.**

The library is thankful for the hours that volunteers put in this year at the library. Once the building was closed to the public, including to volunteers, many other contributions helped keep the Olivia Rodham Memorial Library the community resource it is today. The volunteers, pre-pandemic, were: weekly volunteer Mary Cornog; occasional volunteers Martha Collins, Judy Waterston, Gordon Peery, Bill Dunn, Russ Thomas, and Ted Lenk. Tom Buttrick picked up donuts for coffee hour. Cleaning the library and library gardens: Gretchen Ezell, Kathleen Vetter, Susan Peery, Linda Singer and other volunteers.

Our monetary supporters in 2020 were the Library Friends group, NH Charitable Foundation, Mike French, Al Guida, Marcia Sexton, NH Humanities Council, and Library memorial funds.

Many donations are made also of actual books, audio-visual materials, and magazines.Al Stoops donated the subscription to *Northern Woodlands,* a magazine.

**Friends of the Library**

The Friends of the Library had a fundraiser this year in lieu of the book sale. They collected $1870. Thank you to everyone who donated. This money goes to the library to purchase books and other items.

Respectfully submitted, Kristine Finnegan, Library Director

**Olivia Rodham Memorial Library: Library Collection Statistics for 2020**

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| Library memorial fund purchases of books & audio/visual materials | 3 |
| Gifts of the Friends of the Library | 87 |
| Donated books, DVDs and CDs | 137 |
| Items withdrawn from the collection | 199 |
| Library volumes at the end of the year | 9377 |
| **Library Circulation** |  |
| Downloadable audio books and e Books | 1306 |
| Adult non-fiction | 268 |
| Adult fiction | 412 |
| Juvenile and easy | 294 |
| Adult audio/visual | 65 |
| Juvenile audio/visual | 7 |
| Periodicals | 250 |
| Inter library loan | 551 |
| In House Use | 79 |
| **Total Circulation** | 3232 |
| Computer use | 360 |
| Reference questions | 251 |
| Number of patron visits to the library | 1962 |
| Number of registered patrons | 438 |
| Visits to the nelsonlibrary.org web page | 1,400 |