

Latham Memorial Library 2021 Annual Report to the Town of Thetford

Throughout the challenges of 2021, the Latham Library staff and board members worked together to provide our community a safe way to access the physical and digital collections, attend programs, and benefit from new kinds of collections. The Thetford community recognized long time librarian Peter Blodgett on the occasion of his retirement, and welcomed Emily Zollo in the new position of Interim Library Director, and Colleen Smith in the new position of Assistant to the Interim Library Directory.

By following our *Phased Reopening Plan* and taking advantage of COVID related grants for supplies and equipment, Latham Library was able to welcome visitors in person starting on July 19th. Volunteers returned to the library to work on site. The very popular curbside delivery of materials continues, and so we added a delivery box to the side of the library nearest the parking lot in addition to the one on the front porch. The OPALS online catalog provides a great tool for locating and requesting materials from all the Thetford libraries. For materials not held locally, you will find that interlibrary loan is now more efficient. We are using the Vermont Department of Libraries courier van, which provides a faster, easier, and more economical system of borrowing books from other libraries across the state.

Responding to community interest, we have added or increased new types of collections:

- STEAM kits for families are available for check-out; each kit contains a book plus a variety of activities on a topic relating to Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, or Math.
- A Tool Library provides tools such as a Kill-a-Watt Meter and a moisture meter for firewood.
- The *New York Times* is now available free on site at Latham Library from any device, and from your home with a code that allows for 24 hours of access; contact the library to learn about at-home access.
- Seed Saving Library, to which you can contribute!
- Free streaming movies, digital audiobooks and ebooks are easily accessible.
- Passes to museums and local educational sites are available with your library card.

Latham Library staff and board members made a major commitment to undertake much needed improvements to the lower level of the Latham space in the Bicentennial Building, through the Community Room Project. This project included insulating walls and taking other measures to prevent moisture from further damaging the building and the print collections, and developing a much safer and usable space through adding an air purifier. The audiovisual system in the Community Room has been upgraded to facilitate both in-person and virtual meetings and events. Next steps include installing a full ventilation system, furniture and bookshelves. The Community Room is made possible by your financial support, private foundation grants, and the hundreds of hours of time and expertise contributed by volunteers from the community.

A new edition of the Thetford Directory was prepared and published, to enhance community connections and build awareness of local businesses. These are available for \$5.00 at the Latham Library. Due to generous donations of funds and labor, all proceeds go towards support of the library.

Highlights of programs in 2021:

- Family programs outside and in person: VINS, Modern Times Theater, and Pollinators
- Book discussions for all ages
- Readings with local authors
- Open Mic performances both on site and over Zoom
- A Community Read Aloud to celebrate National Library Week
- Halloween book giveaway
- Summer Reading Program
- Storytime over Zoom, outside on the Thetford Hill Green, and in person at Latham
- Book Sales
- Presentation on the films of Alfred Hitchcock

Statistical summary for Latham and Peabody Libraries:

We provide a combined statistical summary in this report because the Latham library staff handle all collections, circulation and programs that are provided through Latham and Peabody Libraries.

- 6570 books borrowed
- 238 items borrowed from other libraries
- 2527 movies watched through Kanopy
- 4614 audiobooks and ebooks downloaded from Listen Up Vermont
- 61 museum passes loaned
- 129 programs
- 1733 people attended programs

Latham Library services to the Thetford Community are made possible through:

- The appropriation from the Town of Thetford that is warned on your ballot for the Thetford Library Federation
- Private and public grants
- Generous donations from individual citizens



The librarians and Board members are always happy to hear from you!

