

SHEDD-PORTER MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Town Report 2023

In 2023, Shedd-Porter Memorial Library was lively and robust! I am so happy to report on the events of this busy year:

- Patrons visited Shedd-Porter over 10,000 times in 2023.
- We welcomed 61 new patrons to the library.
- 18,357 items circulated throughout the community.
- Shedd-Porter is pleased to participate in resource-sharing with other NH public libraries. In 2023, the NH Inter-Library Loan system delivered 826 items to us, while we lent 927 items to other libraries throughout the state.
- Our public access computers were used over 400 times, while many more patrons made use of our free wifi.
- We added 1,049 new items to our shelves.
- By using the library instead of purchasing materials, patrons saved over \$113,000.

Programming is an important part of our mission at Shedd-Porter. For area youth, we began the year hosting Storytimes on Friday afternoons. Due to high attendance (a problem we were thrilled to have), in the fall we split the program into two! We are now excited to offer Storytime on Thursday mornings at 11:30 for children aged 1-5. On Fridays, our creativity flows during Crafternoons at 3:30pm – this regular event is geared towards grades K-4. Of course, all children and their caregivers are welcome to join us!

School outreach is another component of our programming. We lead Storytimes and share books with Sarah Porter School as well as in Alstead Primary School classrooms. This school year we are excited to provide books for a new Book Club at Fall Mountain High School.

I love telling you about our summer highlights: The Marion Holmes Summer Reading Club and our Summer Reading Program: All Together Now! I am so grateful to the Holmes family for continuing to financially support this program. We hosted eight programs over six weeks this past summer. I'm pleased to share some of the ways we read, learned, and created together in 2023:

- We started the summer with the crowd-favorite Wildlife Encounters – over 65 people joined us to learn about, see and touch many furry, and not so furry friends!
- A special thank you to Library Trustee Carol Reller who joined us as we delved into science. We made some fabulous solar ovens, and the Diet Coke and Mentos geysers are a hit for all ages.
- We are grateful to the Children's Literacy Foundation (CLiF) for a generous Summer Readers Grant. A local children's author came to talk with us, and each child got to take home two new books to keep. Thank you CLiF!
- We had to skip our popular River Walk this year due to a flooded Cold River. However, we send special thanks to local resident Kate Buckman of the Connecticut River Conservancy for joining us anyway! She talked with us about the river and its residents, and we had a great time making dragonflies. Thank you, Kate!

- At the end of the summer, we celebrated! We are so thankful to the Alstead Area Masons who graciously donated two new bicycles to our program for Grand Prizes! Thank you, Masons, for creating such excitement!
 - A total of 56 children signed up for the Marion Holmes Summer Reading Club!
- We invite all children in pre-school through 8th grade to join us for Summer Reading in 2024: Adventure begins at your Library!

The library hosted many programs in 2023 for patrons of all ages, and each program I am happy to report continues into 2024. Come join us!

- Civil Conversation meets every 3rd Saturday from 9:30 to 11am. This is an opportunity for stimulating discussion about politics and the events of the day. All are welcome. Thank you to Joel McCarty for being a great host and moderator!
- Cinnamon Bun Saturday is a community favorite on the last Saturday of the month. Please join us at this fun gathering and opportunity to connect with neighbors! Karn McShane's delicious cinnamon buns are marvelous and not to be missed.
- This fall, Shedd-Porter returned to the Langdon Fall Festival, reading to children, sharing many books for children to keep, and painting pumpkins! It was such a fun community day, and I look forward to the 2024 Festival!
- Online, Shedd-Porter hosts the "Page Turners" Book Fan Club on Facebook. This is a great way to connect with other readers, get recommendations, and if you want, join us in monthly reading goals. It's fun! Please contact the library if you would like to join in.
- The library hosts a monthly in-person Book Club – all are welcome! Please contact the library to hear about the current book pick, and to get your copy.
- Our Needlecraft Group continues to meet on the first and third Wednesdays of the month. Anyone with a handheld project is welcome to join in. This year, some members collaborated with the Knitting group at the Walpole Library to make knitted and crocheted squares for WarmUp America.
- We had a wonderful Scarecrow Party this year! Over 60 people joined us on the front lawn to decorate our annual scarecrows. Because the event is so popular, we added more scarecrows in 2023 – I hope you liked them!
- In years past, Shedd-Porter has hosted a gingerbread decorating event for children in December. I am thrilled to report that we brought this popular event back in 2023 as an Annual Holiday Party! Fifty-five people joined us in the Children's Room for this wonderful event. Thank you to Trustee Kathy Torrey for reading us some beloved stories and sharing gingerbread cookies as the festivities began!

In very exciting news, we have begun the renovation project of the Downstairs Restroom. We are thrilled and grateful for grants from the Mascoma Foundation as well as from individuals who wish to remain anonymous. In addition, community members have contributed funds towards this effort at the library, and we are so grateful. It's wonderful to see this project progress. Thank you to Bellows Construction, Matt Beam Plumbing and Heating, and J.A. Allen and Son Electric for your excellent work.

I am also thrilled to report that Shedd-Porter was awarded a Technology Grant from the NH Charitable Foundation. This generous grant will allow us to upgrade the devices and technology in the building. Thank you, NH Charitable Foundation!

Many of you filled out a Strategic Planning Survey about the library, and we are very grateful for the community feedback. Thank you to Priscilla Sawa and Joy Nalevanko for helping to create the survey. Look for our new Strategic Plan in 2024!

I am so very grateful for the many ways members of our community volunteered their time and talent at the library in 2023. Thank you all!

- Joanne Wildes graciously covered books for us, helping to get books out into the community as fast as possible.
- Rylie Porter was an invaluable help at our children's programs.
- Technology set-up and general assistance provided by Charlie Brady – we are so grateful.
- Barbara Harper used her skills with technology and YouTube to help create a wonderful “welcome” video for Shedd-Porter.
- Ella VanAlstyne helped us both reshelve books and with other book processing tasks.
- Jodie Brown provided a tremendous amount of assistance, support, and good cheer at our children's programs.
- Marcy Buckman has brightened our stairwell with adorable quilts for every season.
- The students in the Job Experience Program at Fall Mountain Regional High School reshelved books, as well as helped to keep the Children's Room organized and tidy.

Many community members have donated financially to the library, and we are immensely grateful. Shedd-Porter cannot run with vibrancy without you. Thank you sincerely.

I am always thankful for the staff at Shedd-Porter. Sharon Iozzo joined us this year as a substitute. Thank you, Sharon! Gaale Klein and Lindsey Elsesser, I love working with you and am so glad you both are on the team. Laura LaMears takes wonderful care of our building - thank you so much Laura!

I am especially grateful to the Library Trustees: Matt Saxton, Susan Norlander, Karn McShane, Carol Reller, Kathy Torrey and our alternates Joe Levesque and Jeff Smull. They all devote countless hours to the library, ensuring through their stewardship that this treasured resource will continue well into the future. Thank you so very much for your guidance, support, and efforts!

As always, I am happy to help patrons find a book of interest to them or to make reading suggestions. Please never hesitate to ask! I'm also always happy to provide technology help with Libby (our ebooks and audiobooks) over the phone, email, or in-person. Feel free to check out our website - www.sheddporter.org and Like us on Facebook and Instagram.

I look forward to seeing you all in the library in 2024!

Respectfully submitted,

Alyson Montgomery