

GLEASON PUBLIC LIBRARY

2005 Annual Report

The Gleason Public Library respectfully submits its annual report to the residents of Carlisle. The mission of the Gleason Public Library is to enrich lives through excellent services, programs, and collections that promote lifelong learning. As a valued cultural center of the community, the GPL offers access to a variety of materials and creative services to satisfy the diverse recreational, educational, and cultural interests of the people of Carlisle.

A full cornucopia of ideas were fostered and offered at the Gleason Public Library in 2005. From programs for adults and children, to a broad-ranging collection, Bicentennial exhibits and programs, and planning in accordance with the wishes of the people of Carlisle, the library continued to be a destination for community involvement and learning.

Winter programs for adults included the final part of the “Carlisle Forests: Past, Present, and Future” program cosponsored by the Carlisle Conservation Commission and funded through a grant from the USDA Forest Service and Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. The January talk, “Forests and Community” talk with Dave Small and Michael Mauri, stimulated a dialogue with Carlisle residents about the future of Carlisle forests.

With music in mind, the Carlisle Public Schools music department collaborated with the library to host the saxophonist and artist-in-residence, Kenneth Radnofsky for an afternoon concert. Music appreciation followed with a lecture series offered by Elliot Lilien: “Back to Bartok,” so popular that the Council and Aging and Friends of the Library cosponsored a second visit in the fall “Famous and Not-So-Famous Composers, 1870-1914.”

Other programs included poet Nancy Paquin, a special monthly fall film night, guest speakers provided by the Carlisle Historical Society, author John Mitchell, the American Chestnut talk, hosted by the Historical Society and Garden Club, and a Chess talk sponsored by the Friends of the Gleason Library for ages 8 and up with Glenn Davidson.

Of special note in 2005, many Carlisle residents shared their skills and knowledge with the Carlisle community through programs. Speakers included: Anthony Mariono, PhD, “A Geologic Look at Carlisle,” Claude von Roesgen, documentary film maker, author Corey Lofdahl, author Karen Larsen, the collaborating editors of the Carlisle Historical Society’s bicentennial publication, “Carlisle Images,” Charlie Allman, “Video Editing Workshop,” Richard Ketchen, Gleason Library’s clock expert, Tim Fohl, “Local Archaeology,” and the guest speaker for the Friends of the Library’s Annual Meeting, author Tracy McArdle. These programs were some of the most popular offered

throughout the year. The Library supports efforts by local experts, authors, and artists to share their experience and craft with the community.

In 2005, the Library continued to offer basic computer instruction for the public including eight group trainings and monthly tutoring four nights a week. Library staff member Shelagh Tomaino led the basic computer group sessions. All trainings were devoted to basic computer instruction and searching the library catalog, as well as setting up Internet e-mail accounts.

Prompted by funds awarded through an Early Childhood grant, Babies and Books, from the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, the Library began the implementation of a longtime goal to provide library-led programming for the youngest of library users (under 2 years), more special children's programs, and guest speaker programs for parents/caregivers of young children. The Library, with much support from local day-care organizations and parents, convened an Early Childhood Advisory Committee and offered a full range of programs in 2005.

The adult programs included Mary Leonhardt, "Is Reading Aloud Enough," Gloria Wald, "How Can You Solve That Problem," in conjunction with First Connections, Dr. Peter Geller, D.D.S, "Pediatric Dentistry", Susan Edmonds, "Babies, Books, Brains, and Bonding," and Tufts professor and Carlisle local George Scarlett, author of Children's Play, who led two discussions about children in play.

As part of the grant program, the library hired Seana Rabbito, an experienced storytime provider, to hold weekly drop-in story times for 0-2 year olds and drop-in story times for 2-4 year olds held on Saturdays once every other month and Friday afternoons intermittently. Grant funds with matching support from the Friends of the Gleason Public Library included programming for children, Sparky's Puppets and sing alongs with Liz Buchanan and Penny Kohut. The additional funds have enabled the library to offer a comprehensive host of programs both structured through story times and recreational.

The Children's Librarians offered three sessions of language and literacy-based story times for 2 year-olds to Kindergarten during the winter, spring, and fall. Marty Seneta, Kay Edelberg, and Shirley Pearlman welcomed over 85 children to these regular weekly events and to drop-in pajama story times and visits from local day-care organizations, including the Carlisle Children's Center and Noah's Ark. Outreach visits were made to the Red Balloon and the Carlisle Extended Day Center for story times. Each month the pajama drop-in included children 3 and up. Special children's events included the Hampstead Players' *Pinocchio* during April school break and Happy Dan in August.

"Going Places @ Your Library" was the summer Reading program theme for 2005. Decorated with colorful flags the library was host to 189 of Carlisle's energetic young

readers. Events held between June 23 through August 5 included Scott Jameson, “Summer Reading Magic,” Origami workshops with artist Michael LaFosse, Davis Bates’ “The Places You Go”, and “Celebrating Summer Reading” concert with Gene Stamell.

Children going into Grades 1 and 2 had the opportunity to complete a “Bingo” of different genres of books that they read or had read to them. The 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th graders filled out reading logs of the books that they read. A series of craft workshops were held for all grades in the summer reading program as well as a story time with craft for the children going into kindergarten. Rounding out the program, was a series of story hours for the over 3’s and the under 3’s (funded through the Books and Babies grant) which included special visits by a Carlisle policeperson and firefighter.

Tony Toledo and his spooky stories ushered in the 22nd Annual Pumpkin Spectacle. Judges and the crowd of costumed spectators enjoyed the carved and decorated pumpkins. Trick or treaters found treats and lots of reads as they made their way to the library several days later on Halloween.

To celebrate the bicentennial year, the Library hosted and cohosted programs around local history for adults. In addition, Conni Manoli-Skocay, archivist, developed the “People of Carlisle” photographic exhibit. This exhibit was installed in February of 2005 and resided in the stairwell to the Hollis Room for one year. This exhibit was funded through a grant from the Carlisle Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. The Carlisle Historical Society installed rotating historical exhibits around the library throughout the year.

It was time in 2005 to develop a plan to guide the library’s efforts for the next few years. With the help of a planning committee, the library asked the community to respond to a survey, both online and in print, regarding the services of the library, what they value, and what is needed. The listening did not stop with the survey. The Library also hosted four focus groups representing a cross-section of Carlisle’s population, including regular library users and those not familiar with the library. The results of the survey were articulated in a long-range plan for calendar 2006-2009. Of importance are the goals to actively promote reading, independent thinking, and learning throughout life; providing materials and information in multiple formats for the diverse needs of the community; fostering community; and providing excellent services and inviting facilities.

The Art at the Gleason program, led by Andrea Urban and Brooke Cragan and supported by the Friends of the Gleason Public Library, had a huge year in 2005. The “Essence of Carlisle” bicentennial art show displayed art from the largest number of artists yet at the Library. The highlight of the show was the central theme of Carlisle. Many artists showed their work in 2005, keeping the walls of the library alive with color and light.

Computers, databases, and media in multiple formats are major technical components of the library operations. In 2005 the Library replaced all public computer workstations for

library visitors. The Merrimack Valley Library Consortium, of which the Library is a member with 34 other public libraries, went through software and telecommunications upgrades, resulting in faster access to the library catalog for staff and public alike.

Two key service enhancements were the installation of a surround sound system in the Hollis Room for movies, programs, and speakers, and the offering of wireless access anywhere in the library. Individuals with WI-FI portable devices or laptops can now access the Internet anytime the library is open.

The Library welcomed new staff members Jennifer Stone, Reference Librarian, Charles Schweppe, Technical Services Librarian, and Daniel Brainard, Custodian, all part time staff, to the library team. As the library survey noted in 2005, one of the most valuable parts of the library to the people of Carlisle is the friendly and helpful staff.

Library volunteers are essential members of the library team. Volunteers help the library keep up with circulation and ensure community involvement in the day-to-day functions of the library. Well over 1,000 hours of volunteer time was tracked in 2005. Volunteers provide shelving to gardening to working with historical records to helping with programs and exhibits.

The Friends of the Library held several large community events to benefit the library, including the Book Sale held on Old Home Day and the Harry Potter party in July. The Friends organize and run a monthly evening book group open to the public and held at the Library. The Friends provide necessary volunteer and financial support for most of the programs offered by the library, from refreshments to speaker honorariums. The Library is grateful to have the Friends' encouragement and support.

Over 95% of the library's budget is from public dollars. The Library benefits from and greatly appreciates the public support given by the people of Carlisle. This public support is supplemented by monetary gifts given to the Endowment, through membership and donations to the Friends, and through the generous donations of materials, collaborations, time and expertise provided by many organizations and individuals. Your support is genuinely appreciated, adding to the vitality and relevance of this special community place. This report was prepared by Angela Mollet, Library Director.

GLEASON PUBLIC LIBRARY STATISTICS

Number of items	55,269
Number of Holds picked up	11,562
Number of patrons	5,439
Circulation	119,641

2006/Fine money of \$11,767 was paid to the Town Treasurer.

Brooke Farrell Cragan, Chair
Priscilla Stevens, Treasurer
Felix Conti, Secretary

Term Expires 2006
Term Expires 2007
Term Expires 2008