



Annual Report 2023

Seedy Saturday

BY THE NUMBERS 2023 Library Use

Library Visits

↑ 21%

In Person: 14,100
Zoom: 40

Items Borrowed

↑ 13%

Library Materials: 21,360
InterLibrary Loans Borrowed: 690
InterLibrary Loans Lent: 580
eBooks, etc: 10,765
Kanopy Films: 2,235
TOTAL Circulation: 35,630

Programs & Meetings

↑ 35%
↑ 25%

Programs/Meetings/Visits: 465
Total Participants: 4,380

Computer & Internet Use

↑ 50%

Library Computers: 1,090
Wifi: 1,575
TOTAL: 2,665

Active Library Members

↑ 9%
↑ 3%

Individuals: 1,605
Households/Grps: 715
New in 2023: 165 Hhds

Busiest Months: July & August

2023: Onward & Upward!

In 2022, the Library was pleased to see use returning to pre-pandemic levels. In 2023, we were delighted to see that library use has continued to grow. The number of items borrowed was up, with a jump in the use of our e-collections (p.6). Library visits also increased substantially—partly due to an increase in programs, meetings and class visits.

2023 was a year of collaboration — the Library expanded its partnerships with community groups and individuals to offer more programs (p. 2-3), provide meeting space (p. 4), work together on projects (p. 5), and improve collections and services (p. 6-7). These collaborations allow the Library to better support the goals of local groups and to offer better services and more opportunities to our residents.

Working together, the Library was able to host a variety of learning, wellness, and social engagement activities for the community, including **“Fitness for your Aging Brain”**, the Seed Library, ECO-Champions, StoryTime and other literacy programs, French language StoryTime, the Story Trail, *Off the Shelf*, book club, knitting and art activities, and more, as well as offering meeting space and contributing to community events (p.5).

The Library appreciates the support received in 2023 from the Friends of the Library and other donors. These contributions made it possible for the Library to fund programs and upgrade our collections and equipment (p.7).

The Library strives to be responsive to our community. In 2023, we enhanced the diversity and inclusivity of the collection by adding more LGBTQ+ titles — a subject that received considerable local interest and support this year. We also continue to build our collection of titles by First Nations authors.

See what's new @ your Library:
<https://merrickvillelibrary.ca>



The new Library Board has begun its term and is looking forward to developing a new strategic plan to keep the Library moving **“onwards and upwards”** to meet the changing needs of our communities (p.7) — and to support municipal goals by contributing to the well-being of Merrickville-Wolford and Montague residents.

“As [a class reward], my students voted to spend an entire afternoon reading at the Library.

What a great idea!”

— email from Mme Terpstra,
École Ste-Marguerite-Bourgeoys



Library Programs

Entertain, Educate & Engage

Programs are a great way for the Library to promote community well-being! They support life-long learning and social interaction enabling people to become more engaged in their interests and the community. Programs increase library use by families and children, promoting literacy and learning through play.

Both program attendance and the number of programs offered increased in 2023. Most adult programs are offered in partnership with individuals or other groups and agencies, such as the Merrickville & District Community Health Centre and the ZenMindset Ladies Club. The Library also hosts one book club and provides books for several others in the community.



Participating in Fitness for Your Aging Brain as a group adds a social element to this popular program supporting seniors' mental and physical fitness.

Off The Shelf is a monthly program of literary readings for adult listeners, now hosted by Charles Merridew.



The "Library Readers" book club co-hosted a visit by Canadian author Frances Itani in 2023.

The Library is committed to providing opportunities for both adults and children and is always happy to work with local groups or individuals to offer a broad selection of programs to the community. New programs are planned for seniors and kids in 2024.



Destination: Library!

Our Saturday Play Days make the Library a popular weekend destination for families (also on school PA Days)!

Play Days provide kids with a varying selection of toys and games to play with friends — including LEGO, Thomas the Tank Engine trains, race cars, a play kitchen, & more — and the chance to pick books to take home! Parents also have time to socialize and browse the Library. Win-win!

Program Participation

Adult Programs:	95
Participants:	750
Kids/Youth Programs:	135
Participants:	1,150
Summer Reading Club:	130 kids
Class Visits (in Lib):	47
Class Visits (to Sch):	29
Total Participants:	1,140
Other Librarian Visits:	40
Participants:	400
Snowflake Festival:	200

Adult Programs

- Seed Library / Seedy Saturday & new gardening workshops
- Off the Shelf
- Library Readers Book Club
- Fitness for your Aging Brain
- Guided Meditation
- Ladies Club Art Group
- Grief Support Group
- Hospice Satellite Office

Children & Youth Programs

- StoryTime
- L'Heure du Conte
- Summer Reading Club
- Art4Youth Workshops
- Saturday Play Days
- Special programs for March Break, Halloween, Valentines
- ECO-Champions

Library Visits (to and from)

- École Ste-Marguerite-Bourgeoys
- Merrickville Public School
- Montague Public School
- Merrickville Day Nursery School
- Merrickville PlayGroup

StoryTime celebrating Canada Day



The Library is for All Ages

The Library's weekly StoryTime is our most used program. StoryTime develops pre-literacy and motor skills through stories, songs, rhythm instruments & a craft.

The Library also continues to offer **L'heure du conte**, a French language storytime, in partnership with the Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est (CECCE) and École catholique Sainte-Marguerite-Bourgeoys in 2023.



The Library offers creative and engaging maker programs for kids of all ages!

In addition to our many craft programs for elementary students, our **Art4Youth Workshops** are for teens & tweens. Thank you to our local artists for leading these workshops and to the Merrickville Legion for donating to this program.

The Library Makes A Difference

"[This library] is the best! You have the books kids like. And you're more responsive – not as institutional as big libraries." — K.M.

"Thanks for offering such an amazing variety of activities [during March Break]" — C.C.

"The girls had so much fun [at the Summer Reading Club], and it really helped [my older daughter] with her reading. It got her to read more and she was enjoying it more. Thank you!" — M.M.

"We enjoy [the Summer Reading Club] every year. We were just telling someone the other day how great it is." — L.M.

"I'm a convert to decodable books. We took one at random and [my daughter] was able to sound out the whole book herself. Now she feels like a reader." — S.E.

"We had a great time with all the toys [at the Library]. I think that was [my son's] favourite part of the Snowflake Festival." — D.M.

"I've been along the Story Trail and just loved it. When my grandkids come, we have a place to go... I like how it makes the kids enthusiastic about walking the trail." — K.H. & T.S.

"I so appreciated being able to use your computer and [meeting] room for my [virtual] job interview yesterday. I got the job!" — S.K.

"I'd like to acknowledge [the Library] for offering space... for seniors to participate in person, providing... peer support and socialization." — S.T. (email re: Fitness for Your Aging Brain)



Art4Youth candle making with artist Kenna McCall



March Break Maker Fun

The TD Summer Reading Club combines our very popular Prize Draw (kids earn tickets by reading books) with weekly activities. This year's theme was **"Curiosities"** and included several science-based activities—such as a presentation on animal skulls by the Merrickville Bug Lady, **chemistry fun making "slime" and "snow"**, and a **science show by Dr Four Faces**—as well as magic tricks, and other crafts.

Summer Reading Programs help prevent summer learning loss. We were pleased to see that participation in this program continued to grow in 2023.

Thank You to the Friends of the Library for sponsoring our children's programs



Summer Science Fun



Library Partnerships Connect our Community

Collaboration Supports our Partners & Enhances Community Well-Being

Seed Library

2023 was another successful year for the Seed Library with greater variety and a 30% increase in seeds distributed. We received seed donations from Habitat Seeds and McKenzie Seeds, (and from local growers), which help to make the Seed Library sustainable for the future.

Educational gardening mini-talks from local speakers, including Diana Beresford-Kroeger, were added to our Seedy Saturday seed & seedling exchange. Fall seed-saving workshops were also introduced in 2023.

See the report at: <http://tinyurl.com/uyvzsrzc>



The Seed Library is a joint project with Sustainable Merrickville-Wolford.



Seed Library

Users: 130

Seed Packs Taken: 820 (+30%)

Seedy Saturday: 100 attendees

The Library appreciates our Community Partners

- Sustainable Merrickville-Wolford
- Historical Society (MDHS)
- Trails Society (MDTS)
- Chamber of Commerce
- Community Health Centre (MDCHC)
- Beth Donovan Hospice
- CECCE
- Girl Guides
- ZenMindset Ladies Club
- École Ste-Marguerite-Bourgeoys
- Merrickville Public School
- Montague Public School
- Merrickville Day Nursery School
- Merrickville Cooperative Playgroup
- Christmas in Merrickville
- ECO-Champions

A Place to Meet

Thursday Knitting Club



Meeting Room Use (by Community Groups)

Meetings: 120 + 5 (Zoom)

Participation: 700 + 40 (Zoom)

Community Groups made frequent use of the Library's meeting room in 2023. These included a new Girl Guide troop and a Knitting Club, as well as the Agricultural Fair Board, Chamber of Commerce, Merrickville & District Historical Society, Merrickville & District Trails Society, Theatre Night In Merrickville, Soccer Club, Run Merrickville, Scouting leaders, the Friends of the Library and more.

Virtual meeting space is also available via Zoom.



Excerpt from an email from the Provincial Commissioners of the Girl Guides of Canada:

"Without your cooperation in providing the 2nd Merrickville Guide Unit a safe space to meet, we couldn't provide the quality youth programming that we do – thank you!"



Story Trail



The **Story Trail** (along the Woodland-Toboggan Hill Loop Trail) is a community favourite. This is a joint project with the **Merrickville & District Trails Society**.

See our Story Trail video:
<https://fb.watch/3wgLZ5jEca/>



Working Together Lets Us Work Better”

ECO-Champions



ECO-Champions winners!



2023 was Year 2 of the Library’s partnership with local environmentalists to run this contest for kids. The goal of ECO-Champions is to raise awareness of species-at-risk in Merrickville-Wolford and how we can help.

In addition to being part of the steering committee, the Library was pleased to display the entries through the summer. There were even more this year — including many medal-winning displays!

In 2024 ECO-Champions will become a Lions Club project. The Library looks forward to continuing to collaborate on this contest. See www.ecochampions.ca



The Lions Club joined the Library Board & Friends of the Library during our Public Library Week Open House to celebrate our 15th year in this new building — generously purchased and donated by the Lions Club to benefit the community.

The Library would like to thank the Lions, not only for our building, but also for the many projects they have sponsored over the years—including the Seed Library, our decodable book collection, the Story Trail, and ECO-Champions! Thank You Lions!

Blockhouse Museum

Staff continued the Library’s long-standing partnership with the Merrickville & District Historical Society in 2023 by again acting as supervisor for the Blockhouse’s summer students while management transitions over to the new Museum Board. This collaboration enabled the Historical Society to open the Blockhouse for the summer.



Community Events

The Library loves to join in community events!

The Library was part of the Merrickville-Wolford & District Chamber of Commerce’s Snowflake Festival on Family Day. Over 200 people dropped by the Library for children’s activities and family fun.

The Library also took green screen photos as part of Christmas in Merrickville and the Firefighters’ Halloween Party.



The Library Makes a Difference”

First-time visitors are always so **impressed by the Library’s building.**

“You have a beautiful library here. It’s gorgeous.”

“Your library is awesome! Absolutely lovely!”

“You have an amazing library! I’ve never been in one like this before. Wow!”

“This is so nice – and for such a little town.”

“This Library has such cachet. We don’t have anything like this in Ottawa. If I lived here, I’d be in here all the time.”

“Well, this is the cutest library in the world.”

Popular Services!

Use of the Library's eCollections jumped again in 2023. Members love the convenience and wide selection.

OverDrive

Use of the Library's OverDrive eBook collection rose 23% from 2022. This increase was driven largely by interest in eAudiobooks and eMagazines.



Visit: odmc.overdrive.com

Kanopy Film Collection

Use of our Kanopy film streaming collection grew by 58% in 2023. Kanopy includes 30,000+ indie, foreign and award-winning films, documentaries, and children's content.



Visit: merrickvillelibrary.kanopy.com

Museum Passes & MAPsacks!

The Library partners with area museums to lend family passes to the community.

- Agriculture Museum
- Canadian Museum of History
- Museum of Nature
- National Gallery of Canada
- Space & Aviation Museum
- Science & Technology Museum
- War Museum
- NEW! Upper Canada Village - summer pass available in 2023 as part of a pilot program.



The Library lends MAPsack (Movement And Play) backpacks with stories, nature guides & more - plus a park pass - to encourage families to go outside, explore and move! This award-winning Lanark, Leeds & Grenville Healthy Community initiative promotes healthy living.



Accessible Services

The Library partners with the Centre for Equitable Library Access to provide materials for members with print disabilities.

@ Your Library

- **NEW! Radon Detectors**
- **Books - for all ages!**
- **AudioBooks**
- **eBooks & eAudiobooks**
- **Magazines & eMagazines**
- **DVDs**
- **Kanopy Film Streaming**
- **eResources**
- **Large Print Books**
- **CELA Talking Books**
- **Accessible Services**
- **Jigsaw Puzzles**
- **Genealogy**
- **Local History**
- **InterLibrary Loan**
- **Meeting Room**
- **Museum Passes**
- **MAPsacks**
- **High-speed Internet**
- **Computers & MS Office**
- **Wireless access 24/7**
- **Zoom Meetings**
- **Print / Scan / Copy / Fax**

A Little Help from Our Friends!



The Friends of the Library continued their tireless fundraising efforts in 2023 with their popular plant sale and yard sale, in addition to ongoing used book sales and Christmas book bundles. This year the Friends ventured into new territory by holding a MaxSold online auction which raised \$2,300 for use in 2024.



The Friends contributed almost \$4,000 to the Library in 2023 to sponsor our OverDrive ebook collection and Kanopy film streaming service, plus online reference e-resources, our DVD pool membership, programs for children and adults, our Zoom account, and more.

The Board thanks the Friends for all they do to support the Library

Thank You Volunteers!



A huge thank you to our many dedicated volunteers who donate their time every week for a variety of essential tasks - such as processing, repairing and shelving books, packaging interlibrary loans, scanning genealogy records, setting up displays and assisting in many ways.

Their contribution allows the Library to provide our current high level of service without additional staff.



Our Volunteers

- Kathy Brown
- Nancy Cain
- Kirsten Finstad
- Maureen Gross
- Diana McCavera
- Alice Mills
- Brenda Reid
- Liz Sinclair
- Mary Small
- Gyn Wylie
- & Denise Vanopdenbosch

Thank You to the Merrickville & District (MaD) Gardeners for their dedicated plant care all through the summer

Provincial Funding



The Library receives the annual Provincial Library Operating Grant and funding for our Internet connection and InterLibrary Loan costs from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

Library Operating Grant	\$5,096
Internet Funding	\$1,725
InterLibrary Loan Postage	\$1,070



Thank You Donors!

The Board is very grateful to those who donate to the Library. Many donations are used directly to sponsor books, programs, supplies and equipment or other administrative needs. The Library also received several donations directly to our term endowment reserve fund (administered by the Ottawa Community Foundation [OCF]) to provide supplementary funding for future Library projects.

The Library Board sincerely thanks all our generous donors for their contributions!

In 2023, the Library received over \$3,000 in donations for children's books and programs in memory of Liz Wallace, a former teacher and long-time library supporter.

These donations are being used for the children's collection — especially decodables and other books for struggling or reluctant readers.



This year, the Library used a grant from the RBC and their Corporate Citizenship and Social Impact Initiative (received in 2022) to update our public computers.

The Library also received several Radon Detectors, donated by Simon Air Quality, to lend to the public to test radon levels at home. Concerns about radon gas were in the media in 2023 and the Library is pleased to offer these detectors to allow local residents to assess their risk without the need to purchase equipment.



Library Welcomes New Board in 2023

In 2023, the Library welcomed a brand new Board who are enthusiastic about guiding the Library as it evolves to meet the challenges of new development and population growth that Merrickville-Wolford is anticipating in the near future, and that Montague is also experiencing. The Board is reviewing Library policies and has addressed some needed equipment and mechanical system repairs and replacements, including a new water treatment unit. The Board is also moving forward on negotiations with the municipality regarding the library lease and capital building maintenance.

The Board expects to complete these projects in 2024 and start work on a new strategic plan for the Library. Given the anticipated changes for our municipalities, developing a new strategic plan is a Board priority for this term.

The Board has also been active in developing the 2024 budget and in overseeing Library operations to ensure staff provide excellent customer service and quality library services to support the well-being of the community. This contributes to Merrickville-Wolford's strategic goal of Efficient, Effective Services and Civic Engagement and to Montague's mission to work together to provide services to build and support the community.



Library Board 2023-2024

Chris Eyton, Board Chair
 Kaitlyn Brady
 Jane Coghlan
 Amelia Wilding
 Margaret Gural, Council Representative
 Olivia Enns, Montague Representative

And Your Staff ...

Mary Kate Laphen, CEO
 Linda Purvis-Carriveau

The Library Makes a Difference

"I don't know what we'd do without our Library." — H.G.

"The Library is a valuable asset to the community." — Visitor

"I love the library. The staff are so nice and it's so welcoming." — M.H.

"I was just at a meeting and we were talking about what is good in the community. We all raved about the Library." — S.M.

"Coming to the Library is what I do for myself. It makes me happy to come here. I think a lot of people feel that way." — I.C.

"For [my wife] and I, a Library is essential to how and where we live... our small village enjoys a brilliant Library." — R.S. (from email)

"I marvel at the diversity and breadth of [the Library's] reach, and continue to be so very grateful to be a member of this outstanding library community." — M. L. (from email)



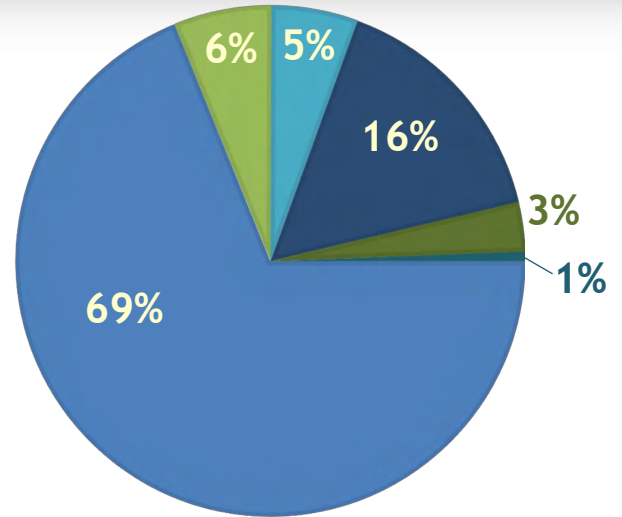
Merrickville Public Library 2023 Financial Summary

Note: Financial data is not yet final

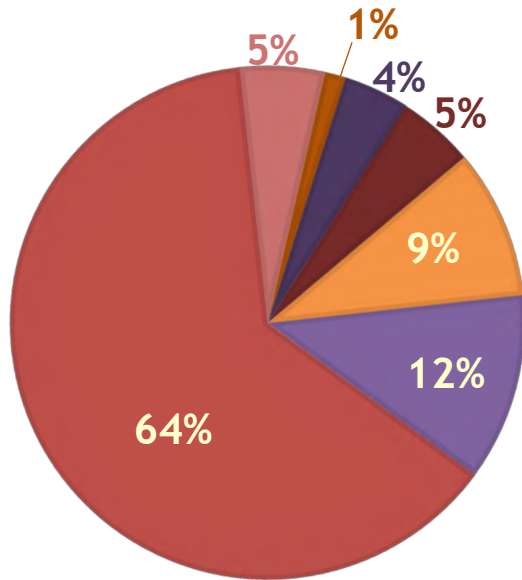
Operating Revenue

Merrickville-Wolford Grant	\$99,000
Montague Grant	\$ 8,900
Provincial Grants (see p7) (Operating grant, Internet & ILL funding)	\$ 7,891
Donations & Special Grants (incl Friends of Library, RBC)	\$22,619
In-Library Revenue (incl bank interest)	\$ 4,505
Transfer from Reserved Funds (2022)	\$ 845
TOTAL Revenue	\$143,760

Where the Money Comes From



Where the Money Goes



Operating Expenses

Staffing (includes professional development)	\$91,202
Facilities (utilities, cleaning, maintenance)	\$17,077
Collections (books, e-resources, pools)	\$13,564
Administration, Supplies, etc.	\$ 6,980
Computer/Internet (includes equipment & IT support)	\$ 5,299
Programs (includes Seed Library & Story Trail)	\$ 1,908
Transferred to 2024 or endowment: (includes Wallace memorial, targeted donations)	\$ 7,630
TOTAL Expenses	\$143,660
Surplus/Deficit	\$100

Capital Revenue

Municipal Building Grant (from 2022)	\$3,000
Library Surplus	\$6,667
Total Capital Revenue	\$9,667

Capital Expenses

Bldg Exterior - Roof	\$6,004
Bldg Int-Mech - Water Unit	\$1,968
Total Capital Expenses	\$7,972

Term Endowment Reserve (OCF)

Balance January 2023	\$99,869
Donations 2023 (Direct)	\$ 6,100
[Transfer from Library Operating] (Processed by OCF in 2024)	[\$ 2,000]
Balance Dec 31, 2023	\$105,969