

Presidents Report May 2015

The Friends of the Fort Erie Library accomplished much together in our first full year with a constitution and executive. This group of committed and talented volunteers has made a positive contribution to the library in all activities. It has been a privilege to serve as president of the Friends. We are together in our shared love of the library. The Friends met monthly, except for July and August, and averaged about 11 members per meeting. We had an active year!

SUMMER 2014

In June the Friends had a membership table at the library's music concert and volunteer appreciation event.

The Friends hosted a Fort Erie Public Library information table at the Friendship Festival on Canada Day. Amy Roebuck prepared the table, and Terry Gilmour, Beryl Smith and Ann McLaughlin all assisted.

On July 25 we held the Night Fore The Library. It was a golf themed gala, with putting greens, a silent auction, hors d'oeuvres, wine and beer, and a raffle. Sandy McDermott was convener of the silent auction. Event activities involved nearly all the Friends, and key planning volunteers included Ashlea Carter, Ed Chadwick, Lou Coshan, Maryann Madden, Ann McLaughlin, Beryl Smith, and John Van Oirschot. Maryann Madden supervised ticket sales. Many community businesses provided donations for the auction and raffle. Ed Chadwick provided hockey memorabilia. We sold 100 tickets, and had 82 attendees. Our net profit was \$3523.97.

FALL 2014

In September we held another general meeting to pass a special resolution, in accordance with Supplementary Letters Patent, that was a final step towards qualification under the Income Tax Act as a registered charity.

In the fall we launched the first Margaret Feaver artist colouring book. Artist Margaret Feaver chose to share her art sketches to benefit the library. The book contained drawings for children and adults to colour or paint, for \$10 each. Margaret was present at the Cupcake Celebration to launch this fundraising effort.

October 4 was our second annual membership event, the Cupcake Celebration. It was an opportunity for the public to join the Friends. Children and adults entered competitions for the best-decorated cupcakes. The Friends judged the cupcakes. There was music and lunch. Beryl Smith was the convener, and assisted by many Friends. Maryann Madden looked after the membership table. Flo Odding donated cupcakes for all to eat. The prizes were donated. John Wilson provided guitar music for free. Memberships were renewed, and new memberships were purchased at the event.

The Friends also attended town council to recognize Public Library Week and Month in October.

The library held a "How To" event for the first time, and Friends Terry Gilmour and Ashlea Carter assisted by barbecuing. We said farewell but not good-bye to founding member and Executive at Large Mark Vincent, who has moved north. Mark's position became vacant.

WINTER 2014-2015

The Italo-Canadian Club of Fort Erie also assisted us with fundraising. We sold tickets in advance for a Pasta Dinner on December 4, and several Friends assisted with serving at the event. Beryl Smith was the convener of this, and Sandy McDermott, Lou Coshan, Ann and John McLaughlin all helped serve. The Italo-Canadian Club hosts these monthly for community groups, and said ours was one of the busiest evenings they'd had. We shared the night with Our Lady of Victory School. \$795 was raised for our group. We have asked to be given another fundraising dinner for next winter.

At our December meeting the Friends assisted library staff by pairing mittens and books that had been donated for distribution as Christmas gifts to children in the community hampers.

The Friends received notice that we are granted charitable status, and received some donations near the end of 2014 that we could provide receipts for income tax purposes. Maryann Madden prepared and sent out receipts.

In January the Friends entered a table in the Library's Trivia Night.

We also thanked John VanOirschot for his contribution as Library Board liaison. John did not seek another term on the library board, so Friend and library board member Patrick Baichoo took on the liaison position. We welcome Patrick in his new role, and appreciate the ongoing support of both these members.

Our January meeting was followed by a social (each paying our own costs) to celebrate our charitable status, and library staff and Board were invited to join us. Staff member Amy Roebuck has been a great supporter of the Friends.

Friends Ann McLaughlin and Flo Odding supported the library board by attending the budget presentation to council in February.

SPRING 2015

For the March 18 Irish entertainment library program, Terry Gilmour, Maryann and Chris Madden hosted a Friends information table. Margaret Feaver produced a second volume of her artist drawings, which were launched and well received at the March program. Terry Gilmour created a cover for each volume. Margaret intends to make a collection annually of her sketches.

In April the Friends participated in the Seniors Expo held at the Douglas Heights Lions Senior Centre. Terry Gilmour, Flo Odding and Lou Coshan all took part.

In April we applied for a grant from the Retired Teachers of Ontario. If successful, this would support the children's intelligent partition wall project. Sandy McDermott was instrumental in preparing this proposal, with assistance from library staff and Friends. Our first fundraising project is currently being installed. It is a children's play feature, designed for toddlers, called an Intelligent Partition Wall. The Crystal Ridge Branch has recently had a renovation of the children's area. This feature will be part of a larger play area. The cost of this was \$4979.29.

The group has planned our next fundraiser, a BBQ at Sobey's grocery store on May 30. Ashlea Carter and Terry Gilmour are convening this event, and a number of Friends have offered to help at the BBQ, including Chris Madden, Flo Odding, Beryl Smith and Ann McLaughlin. We acknowledge the support of the library board in providing insurance for this event.

The Friends have had a great year supporting the library. FEPL CEO Craig Shufelt and the library board have been unwavering in their support for the group, and it has contributed greatly to our success.

Submitted by: Ann McLaughlin