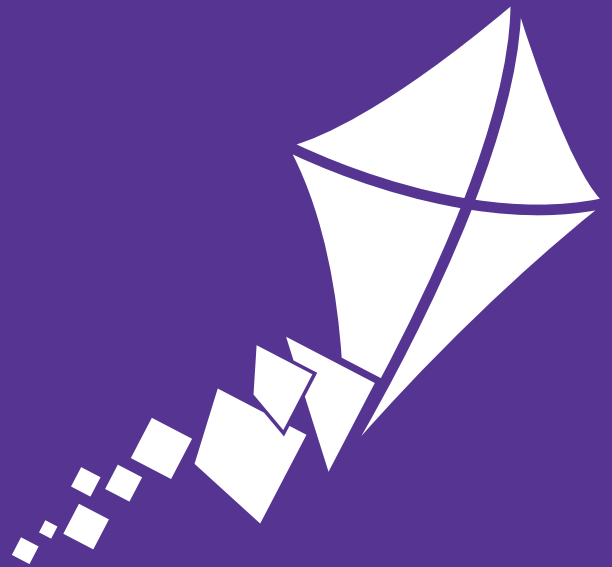


STRATFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

2023
ANNUAL
REPORT



Our Mission

We are an equitable, safe and welcoming community where everyone can explore, learn, create and be inspired.

Our Vision

We are a place where hope and wonder fly.

We envision a Library which connects people, inspires learning, literacy and curiosity; and sparks change for a better community.

2023 - 2026 Library Board

Michael Corbett - Chair
Mackenzie Kipfer - Vice Chair
Jo-Dee Burbach - City Council
Laurie Brown
Philip Connolly
Kaitlyn Kochany
Patricia Lewis
David Mackey
Emma Perrin
Arnab Quadry
Chris Zonneville

Dear Friends

2023 marked a significant period of growth and positivity for the Stratford Public Library. Throughout the year, we embodied the true essence of a library: resilience, adaptability, and the pursuit of ambitious goals, all while nurturing meaningful interactions.

We embarked on the year with renewed vigor and enthusiasm, welcoming a new CEO, a fresh Library Board, and an invigorating Strategic Plan. Looking ahead, our commitment remains steadfast to addressing our library's spatial challenges, exploring innovative avenues to engage with our community, championing equity, fostering valuable partnerships, and above all, prioritizing the well-being and development of our exceptional team.

During this past year, our library solidified its role as a vibrant hub for diverse activities and interests, attracting visitors for a multitude of reasons: to expand their knowledge, forging community connections, seeking reading suggestions, honing skills, or simply finding solace within our welcoming spaces. Each day, over 1,200 individuals visited SPL or utilized our extensive online resources, underscoring the profound impact our library has on our community.

Engagement initiatives soared to unprecedented heights last year. The Summer Reading program witnessed record-breaking attendance, with an impressive one-third of Stratford's youth participating in the reading club. Overwhelming community support for events like Drag Storytime and eco-friendly programs such as Drop n' Swaps further underscored our commitment to inclusivity and environmental stewardship. To accommodate our burgeoning attendance, we extended our outreach efforts to venues such as the Stratford Mall, Stratford Perth Museum, and local parks, ensuring that everyone had the opportunity to participate.

Looking forward, we are eagerly anticipating the journey ahead, with the community at the heart of our endeavors. In the meantime, we invite you to savour this retrospective glimpse into another extraordinary year. We extend our heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support, which fuels our passion and propels our mission forward.



Krista Robinson
CEO / Library Director



Michael Corbett
Board Chair

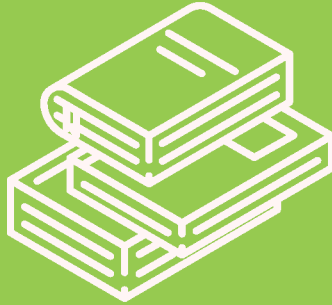
"This is an amazing place to come after school. It's a super welcoming place. I can sit here for hours reading. Thank you for being here and thank you for being so close to Stratford Intermediate School!"

By the Numbers

Numbers are one way to reveal the incredible impact of the information gained and shared by library users. In 2023, usage soared with just under half a million physical and digital items used, which was a 9% increase over 2022.

353,661

physical items
used



134,884

in person
visits

109,779

digital materials
borrowed



46

items borrowed
per active
member



1,713

new library cards
issued



11,342

reference questions
answered

9,590

public computer
sessions
and **12,288** wireless
connections



"I recently renewed my Library card after a long absence and I'm so glad I did. It is truly a wonderful place with great programs for everyone and friendly helpful staff... I LOVE THE LIBRARY!"

Customers saved just under

\$2 million

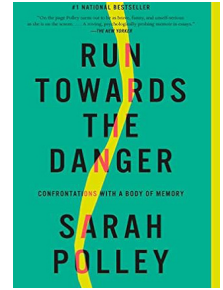
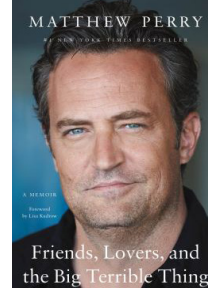
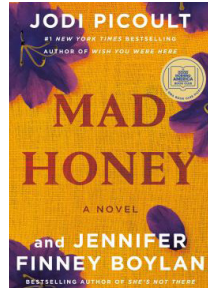
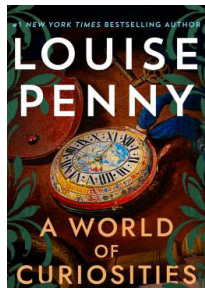
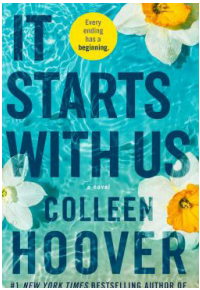
by checking out physical library materials in 2023!

Thank you for using
Stratford Public Library

Check out how much you have saved
at the bottom of your receipt.

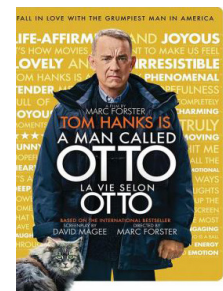
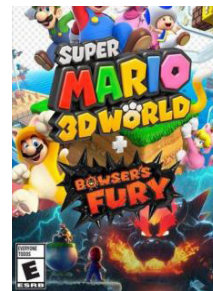
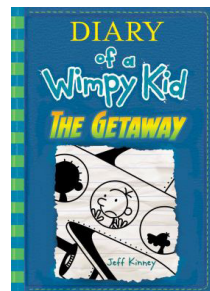
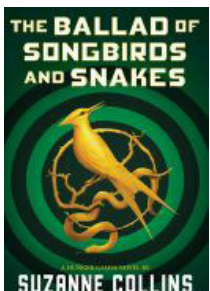
Your Favourites

The community's love for bestsellers and blockbusters was evident in 2023. Here are the most borrowed titles in various categories.



Fiction

Non-Fiction



Young Adult

Youth

Video Game

Youth & Adult DVDs

"Our library is phenomenal. Great programming, resources and staff. It's one of my family's favourite places in the city."

Programs and Outreach

The library takes great pride in providing not just fun and entertaining programs and services, but also those which are impactful and educational. They support the community and change lives by providing community connections, engagement and inclusivity.



21,937 people attended **676** programs

2,255

residents met
with us at **15**
community events

840

people attended
54 STEAM
programs

4,147

students were
visited in **132** class
visits

495

deliveries made by
volunteers to people
who are unable to visit
the library

134

people helped
by our volunteer
Tech Tutors

153

newcomers helped
at SPL by the YMCA
Settlement Services
program

"How has the library helped my family grow? Free access to books and entertainment has given us lots of close family time, and helped instill a love of reading. The MakerSpace has taught us how to print our own t-shirts!"

TD Summer Reading Club

**2023 was a record
breaking year!**

1,066 kids took part in SPL's
TD Summer Reading program.

In total, **5,058** people participated
in **144** summer programs!



"The gift of summer library programs goes beyond the skill and exposure of literacy. Creating summer memories for me and my family is what I will always be thankful for."



MakerSpace

In 2023 **2,122** people visited the
MakerSpace to learn and create.

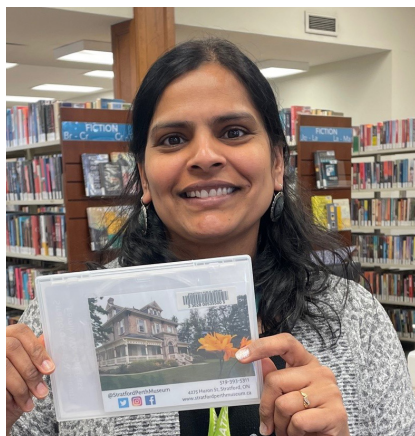
Located on the main floor of the library, the
MakerSpace is a space filled with technologies,
tools, and toys, including 3D printers,
vinyl cutting machines, button makers and
digitization tools - all available for you to come
and use.

splibrary.ca/makerspace

"No way! This is cool. Libraries *really* do have everything."

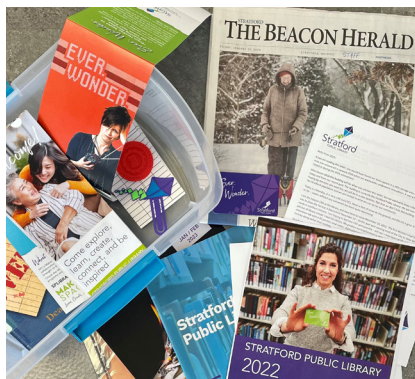
2023 Highlights

We are always looking for new and exciting ways to meet our community's needs. Here are some of the many new ways we supported you in 2023.



Wonder Passes

Passes to a Stratford Festival Set Changeover Experience and to the Stratford Perth Museum passes were added to our popular WonderPass collection.



Time Capsule

While undergoing bathroom renovations, a small closet was discovered. Before it was enclosed again, a time capsule was left for future generations to discover.

Artificial Intelligence

With a panel of community leaders, we explored the impact of AI on culture, health and agriculture in Stratford.

Tales & Trails

In partnership with the Rotary Club of Stratford and the Stratford Perth Museum, a number of storywalks were installed at the Museum for all to enjoy.

Drop n' Swaps

Community treasure exchanges, helped rehome books, garden supplies, home decor and games.

Drag Storytimes

With the community, we celebrated inclusion, diversity and acceptance with Stratford Pride Community Centre and Fanfare Books.

Puzzles & Games

Dozens of puzzles and games were added to our Library of Things collection.



Snack Stop

Snack foods, nonperishables, and some fresh produce are freely available whenever the Library is open, to anyone in need.



Garden Renewal

We celebrated the completion of the library garden renewal project. Thank you Garden Stratford!

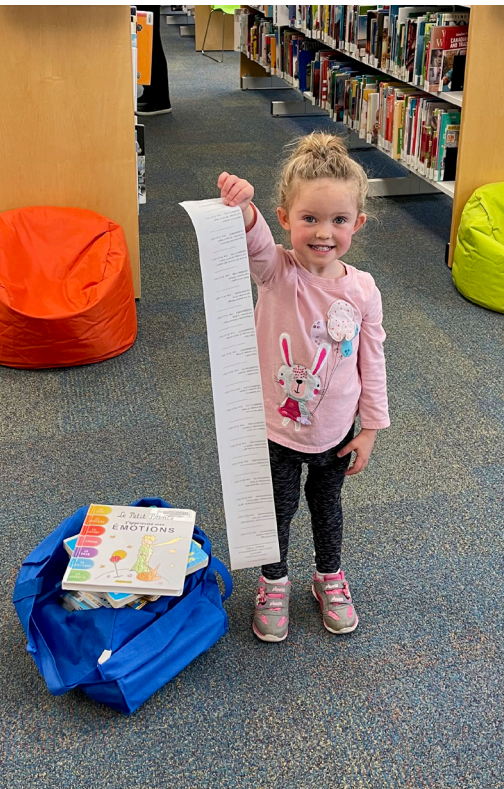
"The length you all go to put a smile on the kiddo's faces is absolutely moving!
Thank you for making this community a space of belonging for everyone!"

A Special Thank you to our 2023 Community Partners

Alzheimer's Society of Huron Perth
Avon Maitland District School Board
Canadian National Institute for the Blind
Chartwell Anne Hathaway Retirement Residence
City of Stratford
Conestoga College
Connection Centre
Destination Stratford / Lights On
Family Services Perth-Huron
Huron Perth Catholic District School Board
Huron Perth Poverty Task Force
Livery Yard
Ontario Caregivers
Ontario Parks Lending Program

Perth Community Futures Development Corporation
Perth County Information Network
Rotary Club of Stratford
SpringWorks
Stratford & District Horticultural Society
Stratford Business Improvement Area
Stratford Mall
Stratford Festival
Stratford Perth Centre for Business
Stratford Perth Museum
Stratford Pride Community Centre
Stratford Reads
Upper Thames Conservation Authority
YMCA of Three Rivers

"The library builds real community! So appreciate you guys!"



**Libraries are important
community hubs.
Please support yours!**
splibrary.ca/donate

splibrary.ca
19 St. Andrew St, Stratford
519-271-0220 | askspl@splibrary.ca