

PUBLIC LIBRARY

To the Honorable Board of Selectmen and the Citizens of Edgartown:

WE ARE HAPPY to be able to report that 2009 was a year without major disasters affecting our library's physical plant.

Seizing the comparative calm of a year between building crises, the library staff mounted a series of educational and entertaining public programs that enriched the civic life of Edgartown and the Island as this library has never done before.

Lacking space for programs, we had to be creative: "Sounds Like Summer," a series of seven free music

events featuring Island performers, was organized by Virginia Munro and presented on Tuesday evenings on the library front lawn. "Edgartown 101," a series of six hour-long programs introducing citizens to the workings of their town government, was hosted by reference librarian Nis Kildegaard and presented on a makeshift stage in the Children's Department. The series was filmed for a wider audience on the Island's community television station, MVTV, and is available at the library on DVDs.

The library collaborated with the Edgartown Council on Aging to present "Motown Night," a movie-and-dinner program at The Anchors, in February, and a concert of classical music by the Noteworthy Duo in October. A highlight of all the Island libraries' programs this summer was an initiative led by our own children's librarian, Deborah MacInnis, who brought real lunar rock samples from NASA to the Vineyard for a week of educational programs that were attended by more than 900 people.

Librarian Donna Blackburn launched a new series of programs for children, Young@Art, which combined a brief lesson about a famous artist or style with a hands-on project. These classes, which met in May, September, October and November, were well-attended and warmly received. Donna also led adult programs in drawing and watercolor painting here at the library in 2009. And our resident crafts-person,

Kathleen Malmquist, led a four-week apron-making class that had the library humming with the sounds of sewing machines in February and March.

All the staff's creativity and hard work were recognized when, in May, the Edgartown Library received a number of top honors at the annual meeting of the Massachusetts Library Association. At the convention in Springfield, the library won honorable mention prizes for its monthly newsletter and its website. The library took first place in all of Massachusetts for its new logo, and for its series of educational programs, "Edgartown 101." At the end of the convention ceremonies, the Edgartown Library won one more prize, the "PR for Pennies Award," which recognizes the

Massachusetts library that does the most, with the least, to reach out into its community.

Announcing these awards, library director Felicia Cheney said: "I am proud of our library team and thrilled that the state has recognized their hard work. These awards demonstrate that we're not waiting for a new building before we reach for excellence in our programs and community outreach. We're doing our best right now, so that when the people of Edgartown build the new library facility, we'll be ready to fill it with top-notch services."

In June, the Edgartown Library

became the first on the Island to acquire a new microfilm scanner that produces digital files directly from the newspapers in our collection, which date back to 1846. Another successful initiative at the library this year has been a program offering portable audio players which can be used to download audiobooks from our regional CLAMS library network; by year's end, use of this new service by Edgartown patrons had more than tripled.

THE LONG ROAD TO A NEW LIBRARY

Two highlights of the library's summer, presented by the Edgartown Library Foundation, were the July 12 luncheon at the Boathouse Field Club and a community party entitled "Frankly, We Love Our



Young patrons were able to examine real pieces of the moon in programs at the Edgartown Library.

Library” on Labor Day at the Katama Airfield. The luncheon, attended by more than 200 guests, honored S. Bailey Norton Jr. with a Lifetime Achievement Award; the Labor Day celebration attracted more than 350 townspeople for a hot dog supper, face-painting, a climbing wall and pick-up ball games. These two events were heartening demonstrations of both the depth and the breadth of public support for the campaign to build the new Edgartown Public Library.

At Annual Town Meeting in April 2009, the voters of Edgartown supported the library again by overwhelmingly approving the provision of \$195,000 in Community Preservation Act funds for restoration of a historic treasure, the 1904 Carnegie Library building. This project, as laid out by the Trustees, will involve renovations to interior fixtures and trim, replacement of lighting fixtures added in the 1970s, restoration of original hardwood floors and energy-saving improvements to the original single-pane windows.

Meanwhile, despite the best efforts of the Edgartown Library Foundation, it was clear by summer’s end that the campaign to raise \$5 million in private funds for the new library would not meet its deadline. The Library Trustees in December went before the Board of Selectmen asking that an article be placed on the warrant for the April 2010 Annual Town Meeting, asking voters if they want to raise, by bond issue, the last \$4 million needed to begin the building project. Hanging in the balance is \$4.6 million in state funding for this project — money that was originally set to expire if the library project wasn’t begun by year’s end. Fortunately, the state Board of Library Commissioners voted on Dec. 3 to extend our deadline until June 15, 2010.

It’s almost impossible to overstate how urgently the Edgartown Library needs more space to meet the needs of its community. The library’s last major expansion in the 1970s gave us space for about 32,000 books — and this was back in the days before libraries were also expected to provide banks of public computers, printers and copying equipment, shelves full of DVD movies and racks of recorded books. Our book collection has actually shrunk during a time



The Cattle Drivers performed on the library lawn, part of a seven-program series presented over the summer.

which has seen the town population nearly triple. In the most recent 12 months, our staff removed more than 4,000 books from the library collection, just to make room for the new materials coming in.

The whole world in which public libraries operate has changed since the time of our last expansion 34 years ago. Perhaps nothing conveys the magnitude of the change more than a sentence from the library’s page in the 1976 Edgartown Annual Report. That year, Nancy Young, chairman of the Library Trustees, proudly announced that the staff had filled 38 interlibrary loan requests from Edgartown patrons. This year, the Edgartown Library handled more than 15,000 interlibrary requests. Patrons no longer visit the Edgartown Library merely to see what we have on the shelves. They come here expecting to get the materials they want — and we deliver them.

The closing of the video store at Post Office Square this November provided one more reminder of how essential our library’s services are. Suddenly the library was the town’s main provider of feature movies and video games — and in November, circulation of DVDs jumped by 24 percent over the year before.

Our whole range of free services continues to be important as the effects of a national recession are felt in this community. All year at the Library, our high-speed Internet access was a popular and heavily used service. We continue to offer the latest editions of more than 120 magazines as well as local and regional newspapers, and we have expanded our free online services to include language learning in addition to career training and assistance in resume preparation.

At the library, we still occasionally hear the question of whether plans for the new building have been prepared too hastily, whether perhaps a further round of review, or the formation of one more committee, might be appropriate. This fall we prepared a timeline of the library project that answers these questions. In fact, the need for a new library building was recognized by the Edgartown Capital Programs Committee and placed on a five-year schedule for construction — back in 1986. Since then, the town has completed its new town hall, its new police station, a new visitor center, a new elementary school, major expansions of its wastewater treatment plant, a bikepath to West Tisbury, and even the Island’s largest affordable housing subdivision — all without beginning construction of the library project. If we had kept to that 1986 timeline, an entire generation of Edgartown children could have been born and matured to voting age while enjoying all the benefits of a new library.

We are grateful to all the volunteers and supporters whose time, talent and money helped us serve the people of Edgartown in 2009. As we look ahead, it is clear that 2010 will be the year in which the people of Edgartown decide whether it is time to bring their public library up to the high standard that prevails in all our other municipal facilities. We believe that time has come. And we will remember the remark of our Selectman, Arthur Smadbeck, who summed things up so well when giving out essay awards at our celebration on Labor Day. “The library,” he said, “is the measure of a town.”

Respectfully submitted,
 Edgartown Free Public Library
 Board of Trustees
 Patricia Rose, Chairman
 Diane Bongiorno, Assistant Chairman
 Ann Tyra, Secretary
 Liz Cosgrove, Trustee
 David Blackburn, Trustee
 Herbert Foster, Trustee



**EDGARTOWN FREE
 PUBLIC LIBRARY**

58 NORTH WATER STREET
 PO BOX 5249
 EDGARTOWN, MA 02539
 (508) 627-4221

WWW.EDGARTOWNLIBRARY.ORG

LIBRARY HOURS

Tuesday & Wednesday 10:00 to 8:00
 Thursday/Friday/Saturday 10:00 to 5:00

CHILDREN’S ACTIVITIES

Toddler Time Wednesday 10:30
 Story Hour Thursday 10:30

LIBRARY STAFF

Felicia Cheney, Library Director
 director@edgartownlibrary.org
 Deborah MacInnis, Children’s Librarian/
 Asst. Director
 Lisa Sherman, Circulation Librarian
 Nis Kildegaard, Reference Librarian
 Janet Sigler, Technical Services Librarian
 Donna Blackburn, Library Assistant II
 Alison Leslie, Library Assistant II
 Kathleen Malmquist, Library Assistant II
 Virginia Munro, Library Assistant II
 Neuseth Cleary, Custodian

**FACTS AT A GLANCE,
 FISCAL YEAR ENDING 6/30/09**

Visitors 51,215
Visitors (July & August) 17,516
 Collection size 37,164
 Books 29,369
 Subscriptions..... 218
 Audio Tape/CD..... 1,609
 Video DVD/VHS 3,945
 Other (microfilm, databases, etc.) 268
 Downloadable Materials 1,714
 Circulation 70,984
Circulation (July & August)..... 13,241

Edgartown Residents with
 library cards 2,019*
 Edgartown library cards total 6,343*
 Volunteers 13
 Volunteer Hours 385.5
 Materials borrowed
 from other libraries 9,913
 Public Computers 14

OPERATIONAL INFORMATION

Hours open per week 41
 New items catalogued 5,013

**System was purged this year of cards not in use.*