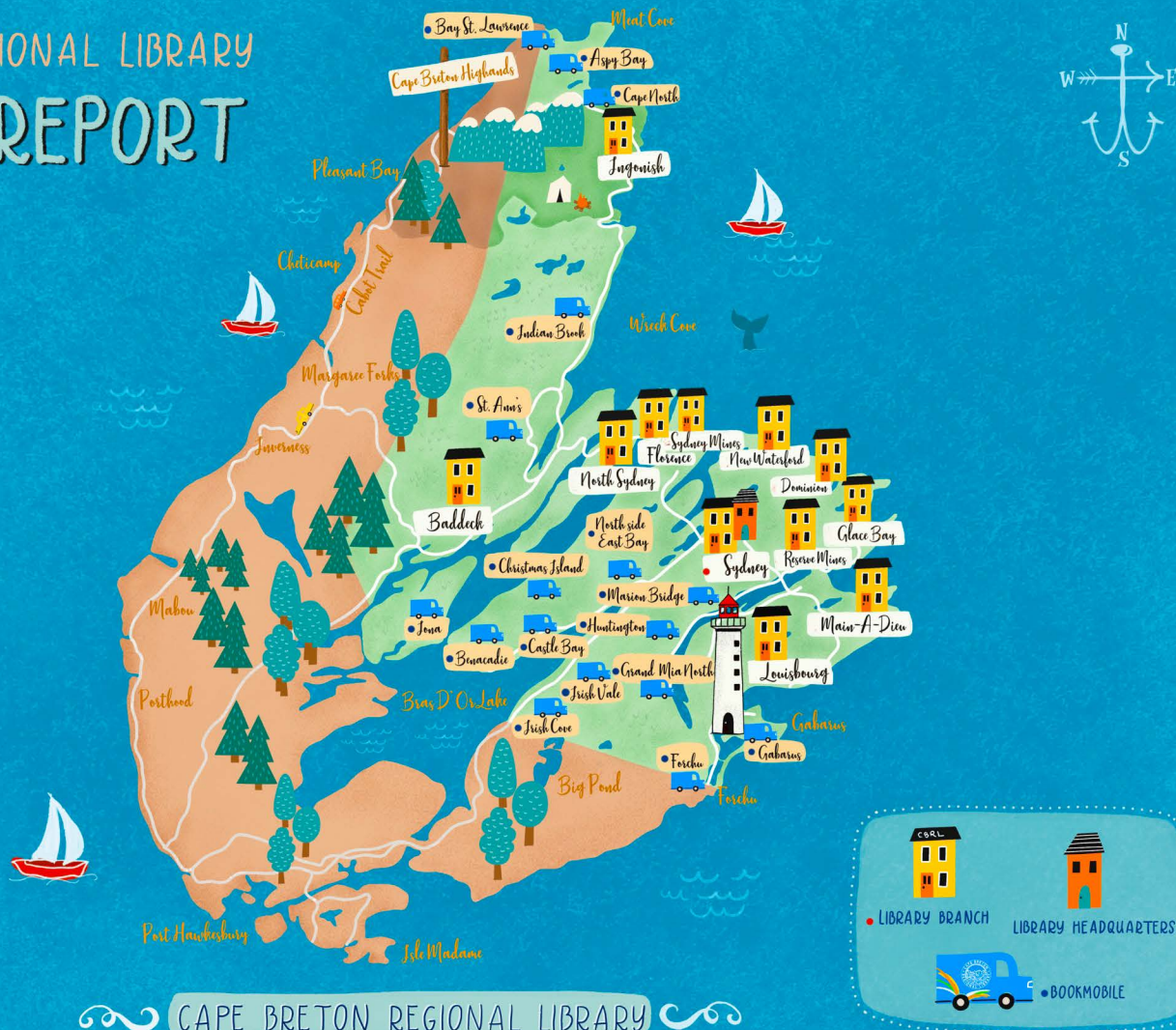


# CAPE BRETON REGIONAL LIBRARY

## ANNUAL REPORT

### 2019-2020



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## Mission

To strengthen and inspire our community by providing quality collections, cultural resources, programs, and services in a welcoming environment where all can enjoy reading and learning.

## Cape Breton Regional Library Board 2019-2020

### Province of Nova Scotia

Kenneth MacDonald  
Murdoch Moore  
(Appointment ended Nov. 2019)

### Cape Breton Regional Municipality

Amanda McDougall (Chair)  
Ron MacDonald (Vice-Chair)  
Steve Gillespie  
(Treasurer—as of January 2020)  
Kendra Coombes  
(Resigned Oct 2019)  
Douglas MacLennan

### County of Victoria

Regina Reid  
(Treasurer—Resigned December 2019)  
Terry Murray (as of March 2020)  
Bruce Morrison, Warden

## Message from Chair, Cape Regional Library Board



I would like to begin by expressing to you all what an absolute pleasure and honour it has been serving as the Chair for the Cape Breton Regional Library Board. Working with the Board and Staff to offer the incredible and consistent services and programming to our patrons, residents, and visitors to our community is truly some of the most meaningful work I have ever been a part of. I am particularly proud of the Board on the

stance and solidarity we took when it came to expressing our displeasure with the new Provincial Funding formula. There were many points throughout this process we felt alone in our battle for fair funding, but we stuck together, put in a lot of hard work and I am fully confident that our Board will not rest until a more equitable funding formula is reached.

Our measured and operations-based support for a new Central Library is a close second for moments of pride I have been fortunate to witness while serving as your Chair. We are nearing the completion of the Operation Review that will inform our Board, government, and the wider public on what is required, both financially and structurally, when it comes to a much needed new Central Library. It was not easy to dig our heels in and ensure that this process included a much needed look at current operations and how they may be impacted by a new build, but it was the right thing to do and we are now in a better position than ever to move forward with a library our community and staff deserve.

While I am truly sad to no longer be an official part of the Board, please know that in serving you all as Mayor of the CBRM you have my full

support for the incredibly important and essential work you do for our community.

In kindness,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Amanda McDougall'.

Amanda McDougall  
Chair, CBRL



# Regional Librarian's Report



As the Cape Breton Regional Library approaches its 70th year of library service we celebrate our successes. No two words are more synonymous than “library” and “community”. With 11 neighborhood branches, a Central Library, a Bookmobile and Victoria County Outreach service the Library can be found in every community of the CBRM and Victoria County. Our communities look to libraries for many things: quiet refuge, educational programs and social engagement to name a few. Community is at the very core

of the Cape Breton Regional Library. Whether you're a family looking for a fun story time, a newcomer to the area in need of language resources, an unemployed individual searching for job help, or a senior who needs help on their taxes, you can all go to one place: the library.

Over the past year our communities came together on numerous occasions. In fact, 22,791 adults and 9,669 children participated in programs at their local CBRL branch. Although this number is important, it doesn't capture the people who come through our doors and make informal connections with a staff member or fellow patron every day. These connections are immeasurable.

In an effort to limit the spread of COVID-19, we physically closed our libraries on March 16th. However, we did not sever our connection with the community. Library staff hit the ground running with a host of virtual programs. WiFi remained active, still giving patrons access to the Internet. Hundreds of library memberships were processed and delivered during the closure allowing patrons a seamless transition to e-resources. New programs and services were added. Perhaps most important of all, library staff maintained a connection by phoning patrons to say hello and to check

in. It was truly inspiring to be part of these efforts.

Thank you to all those who have supported the Library over the past year—individuals, organizations, and businesses. To the staff at Provincial Library, the Cape Breton Regional Library Board, and our two municipal units, Cape Breton Regional Municipality and Victoria County, thank you for your assistance, work and support.

Lisa Mulak  
Regional Librarian, CBRL

# Building a Community



The Library is a welcoming place for all community members to come together. This simple act of togetherness is essential for the health and well-being of our communities. Library programs provide an opportunity for real connection. People to people connection happens every day at the Library.

This year we came together on numerous occasions to share and explore. The Louisbourg Library hosted their third community colouring project. New Waterford Library has been hosting their popular Girl Power program since 2011

## FIBRE LUNCH KNITTING GROUPS



Heritage Month; Maud Lewis Painting with Kathrine Moir (not pictured)

## GIRL POWER

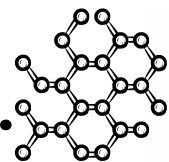
An after-school program at the New Waterford Library for girls 8-12 years old. This year the program saw over 70 participants.

Programming was focused on mindfulness, social inclusion and self-esteem.



• **LET'S TALK SCIENCE! CLUB**

This Library Program is a partnership with Cape Breton University. The hands-on activities and the student facilitators have been very engaging, creating both excitement and enthusiasm for young learners. The university students delivered science themed programs for children 8-12 years old. Some of the programs offered this year were: microorganisms in a petri dish, trees of Cape Breton, space exploration and ancient machines.



• **ADULT COLORING CLUB**

• **TEEN GAMES NIGHTS**





# Building a Community

## • NEW HORIZONS FOR SENIORS PROGRAM • • • • •

A New Horizons for Seniors grant helped boost activities for seniors in both the Glace Bay and New Waterford Library branches.

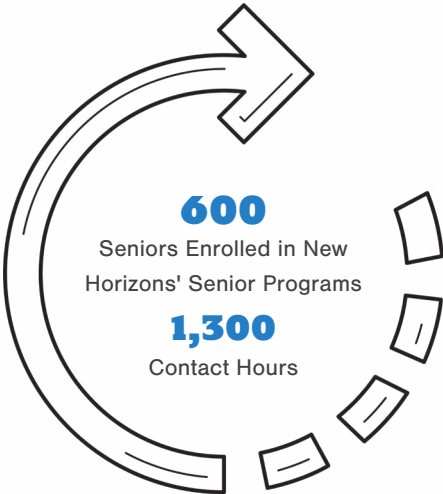
The generous grant funded a program coordinator, fees for presenters, equipment & supplies, as well as refreshments.

The programs included: Christmas crafts, Christmas sing-a-long, emergency preparedness, spa day, armchair yoga, cookie decorating, beginner painting, valentine social, and healthy eating.

## • ENGLISH CONVERSATION CIRCLES



Spa Day for seniors at New Waterford Library





# Outreach

In 2019, Cape Breton Regional Library developed a new outreach service providing community-led library programs to senior's homes, schools, childcare centers, and community groups throughout Victoria County. Library staff work with each organization to develop programs that meet their needs, whether it is lending a box of books to a classroom, teaching middle school students to access eBooks, or giving a presentation to a local service club about programs happening in library branches. Library outreach and community engagement ensures equitable delivery of library services to all people.

In 2019, CBRL employees took part in many events across the region.

## • WHERE WE WENT

- Seniors Expo
- Under One Umbrella
- Isle of Story Festival Events
- Hackmatack tour to four elementary schools: Etoile de l'Acadie, Membertou, Wagmatcook & Ferrisview
- Visits to Schools and Daycares
- Summer Reading Programs delivered at the Millville and Florence fire halls
- CBRL's Storyteller-in-residence participated in numerous events around the island
- Picnic for the Planet at Wentworth Park
- CaperCon
- Seniors living facilities throughout CBRM and Victoria County



*CBRM Taste of Winter event at the Fortress of Louisbourg*

*Nicky, Community Outreach Assistant for Victoria County*



# Literacy

The Library values the importance of literacy and its impact on the health of our community. This year we offered a variety of programs and services to support literacy in all of its forms. Through the careful selection of print materials to programs such as Babies and Books, the Library is truly where literacy begins.

- **BOOK CLUBS**



**301,643**

Total Number of Items Circulated  
(2019-2020)



Book Club Kits

Over 200 titles with 10 books  
available for each title



## • NATURE BACKPACKS • • • • •

CBRL's Nature Backpacks aim to inspire families and individuals to experience nature through hands-on exploration. Each kit contains various books, field guides and gadgets to help develop new skills, such as using binoculars for birdwatching, learning to draw from nature and learning how to identify wild plants and animals. The backpacks can be borrowed for free with a library card and many activities can be done in the backyard, local park or walking trail making them accessible to everyone in our community.

Nature Backpacks can be borrowed from any library branch. There are 15 packs in total with six different themes to choose from.

Funding and support for Nature Backpacks was generously provided by Nova Scotia Communities, Culture & Heritage.

## • CHECK OUT THIS ART PROGRAM



For a limited time patrons were able to borrow original artworks by Onni Nordman

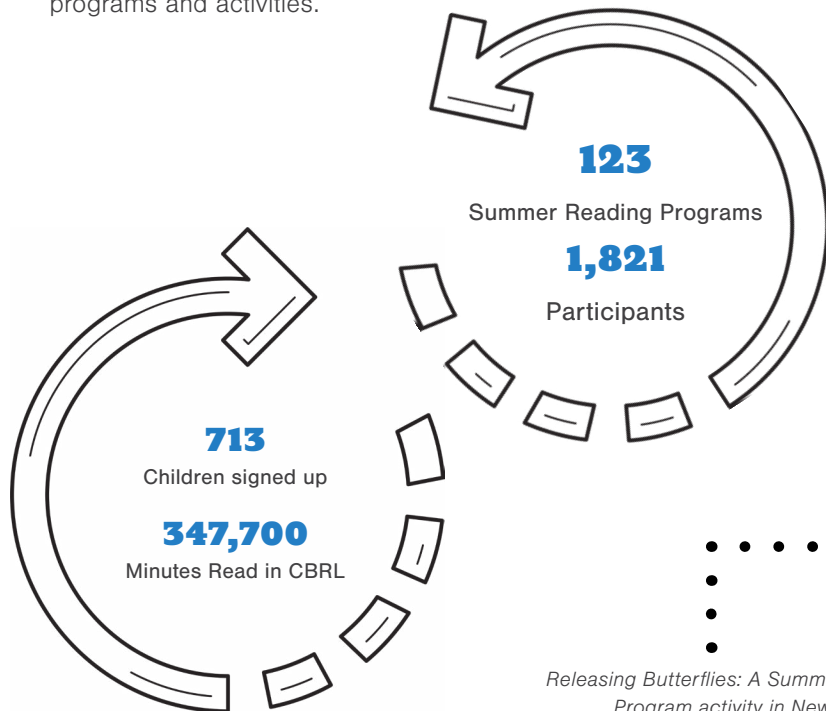




• SUMMER READING PROGRAM 2019

The Cape Breton Regional Library offers Summer Reading Programs to encourage reading over the summer months. This helps children maintain and grow their reading skills.

For the last number of years, CBRL has partnered with the nationally organized TD Summer Reading Club. Public Libraries in Nova Scotia collaborate and share ideas around summer reading programs and activities.



Workshop on Graphic Novels  
by Author and Illustrator, Mark Oakley



Releasing Butterflies: A Summer Reading  
Program activity in New Waterford





## • BABIES AND BOOKS



## • MUSIC FOR TOTS

- WINTER GEAR LENDING PROGRAM
- TECHNOLOGY TRAINING FOR SENIORS
- TODDLER TIME
- LET'S MOVE IN THE LIBRARY

Learn to waltz, chair yoga, tai chi & qi gong, line-dancing and walking for health.



## • SUPER SATURDAYS

Funded by the Sydney Credit Union, Super Saturdays offered multiple activities for children of all ages, including sensory play bins, crafts, story times music, and performers.



# Reducing Poverty

Your Library is playing an essential role in providing equal opportunities for all community members. The Library's 13 locations provide technology, collections, programs, and community spaces that can really make a difference for those struggling to make ends meet.

Library resources and services are essential to learning and attaining goals, the keys to enriching lives and providing opportunities for success regardless of financial circumstances.

- **PUBLIC ACCESS COMPUTERS**
- **WIFI AT ALL LOCATIONS**
- **INCOME TAX CLINICS**



## • **COMMUNITY GARDEN PROJECT AT SYDNEY LIBRARY**

Sydney Library's edible garden was built by staff and community, and was stocked with bedding plants and seeds.

At a community planting program, in partnership with ACAP, library patrons took part in developing the garden.







Nadine Bernard of Slow Cooked Dreams

## WHAT CAN YOU CHECK OUT?

- Radon Detectors
- Snowshoes
- Light Therapy Lamps
- Tennis Rackets
- Daisy Reader
- Portable Magnifier Kit

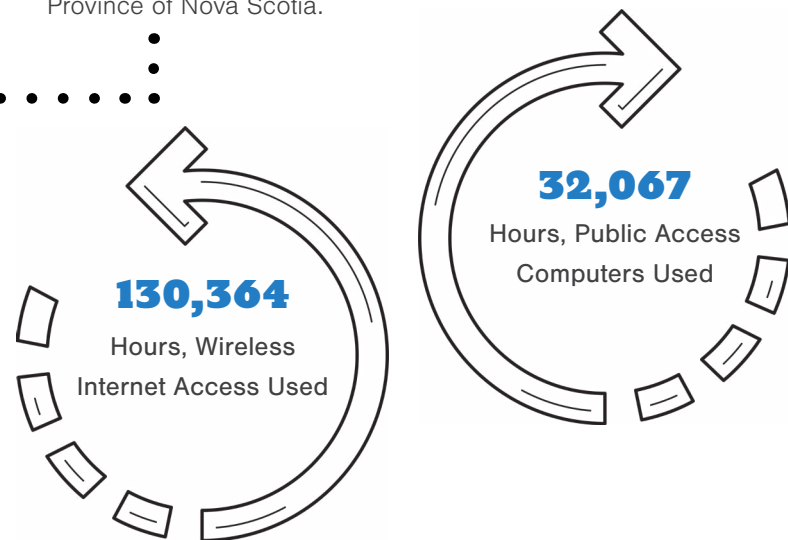


## • BRAIN FOOD LITERACY PROJECT

The Cape Breton Regional Library, in partnership with Slow Cooked Dreams (a food-based education and empowerment project) and dietitians from Sobeys, hosted a series of food literacy programs.

Held in libraries in Glace Bay, New Waterford, North Sydney, and Sydney, the purpose of the Brain Food Project was to support families and seniors living in poverty.

The program idea originated through Slow Cooked Dreams and aimed to cover the basics of food preparation, including easy to follow recipes and budget-friendly meal planning for families. Discussions included budgeting and saving on food costs; increasing awareness of local food resources, and cooking in-season. The project was funded through the Province of Nova Scotia.



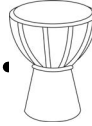
# Strengthening Relationships

The Library celebrates the cultural diversity of our people and we strive to find ways to encourage deep meaningful conversations. It is through this dialog we recognize our past and inspire our community to continue to embrace our cultural mosaic.

## • AFRICAN HERITAGE MONTH • • • • •

In honour of African Heritage Month, Libraries in Baddeck, Glace Bay and Sydney hosted African dance and drum workshops by the Maritime Centre for African Dance.

## • CB PRIDE WEEK AT THE LIBRARY



*Drag Queen Story Time in Glace Bay*



## • GAELIC HISTORY

May is Gaelic Nova Scotia Month and with the support from the Office of Gaelic Affairs, Libraries in Baddeck, Sydney and New Waterford offered a number of Gaelic cultural programs.

## • MI'KMAQ HERITAGE

This year Mi'kmaq poet Rita Joe was the subject of a wonderful evening event. Francis Sylliboy, Rita Joe's daughter, shared some of her mother's poems and memories of her mother as a poet, activist, elder and an inspiration to all.

*Francis Sylliboy*



## • WOMEN OF IMPACT

This event was hosted by Louisbourg Library. Special guests Joella Foulds (CBC Radio host, songwriter, musician, and Celtic Colours Co-founder) and Joyce Rankin (Executive Director of the Old Sydney Society and poet) shared some triumphs earned and challenges overcome during their life's journey.



*Mi'kmaq singer and drummer at a summer reading event*





# Revitalizing Community Spaces



*Glace Bay Library opening ceremony*

## **Glace Bay Library**

CBRL's 12 locations are thriving spaces where residents spend many hours of their busy lives learning and being involved in their community.

In 2019 the Glace Bay Library was relocated to a new location in the heart of downtown. The new space is welcoming and accessible for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. There are wide open spaces with tables for quiet study and a laptop bar with a view to Commercial Street. There is an ample size program room where the community can gather and share in a variety of programming. We are very proud of this new location and all it offers the residents of Glace Bay. The community made it clear that they appreciate the investment



*Glace Bay Library*

in this community hub ensuring that the Glace Bay Library is a destination where all can continue to gather to learn, work and play.

CBRL is grateful to the employees of CBRM, Mayor and Council and the Glace Bay library staff for all the hard work and time that went into this worthwhile project.

The grand opening took place on Saturday, October 5th. The event kicked off with a speech from Mayor Clarke and ribbon cutting ceremony. There were refreshments, face painting and a puppet show for the children. The afternoon wrapped up with a sing-along and stories with beloved children's characters. This new space will continue to attract Glace Bay residents adding to the vitality of the downtown core.

# Storyteller-in-Residence



In July 2019, Bill Conall accepted a two-year term as the CBRL's Storyteller-in-Residence.

In Bill Conall's words, "He was exposed to the storytelling bug as a very young child, contracted the affliction and, has never fully recovered". He grew up in central Ontario, lived for several years on the prairies, the west coast, and now in Cape Breton. Bill has travelled all over North America, first as a road musician and later as a long-haul trucker.

Some stories are of his own experiences, with many others gathered along the way. He enjoys and presents true stories, made-up stories, short stories, long stories, spoken word, rhyming poetry, songs that became stories, and vice-versa.

He is the author of three books of fiction, a contributor to five anthologies, along with several newspaper and magazine stories and articles.

## • AUTHOR VISITS TO CBRL

CBRL values the work of local authors. They inspire our community to write, create and enjoy the amazing world of books. In 2019, CBRL welcomed many authors to share their love of the written word.

### Author Visits

- Basma Kavanagh
- Karen Bass
- Steven Fortune
- Melanie Florence
- Elizabeth Buchanan

## Retirees

This year we held a retirement celebration acknowledging the successful careers of four, beloved, long time staff. Each has left an indelible mark on the Library. Thanks to their years of dedication and hard work, the Cape Breton Regional fulfills its mission of providing quality collections, cultural resources, programs and services in a welcoming environment where all can enjoy reading and learning.



Each will be greatly missed by all of the staff at the Cape Breton Regional Library and by the patrons whom they've served with respect and dedication over these many years. Judging by the smiles on their faces, they are very much looking forward to launching new chapters in their lives. We thank them for their service, and wish them only success and happiness in any future endeavors.

We bid a fond farewell to (from left to right):

**Ian MacIntosh**

Deputy Regional/Collections Librarian,  
with CBRL since 1982

**Faye MacDougall**

Regional Librarian,  
began her career with CBRL in 1981

**Rita Marman**

Executive Assistant to the Regional  
Librarian, with CBRL since 1989

**Rosalie Gillis**

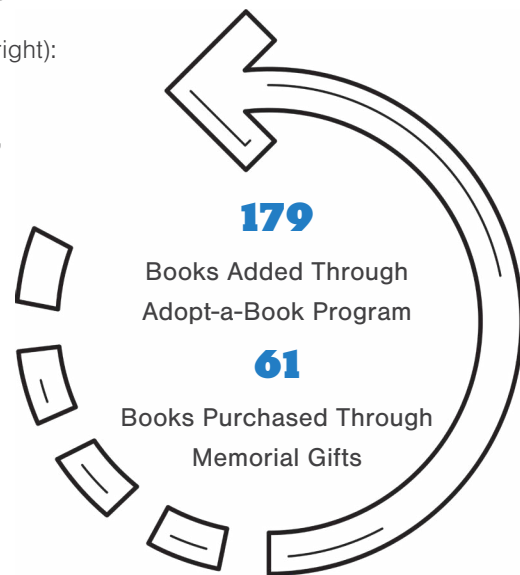
Coordinator of Community Support,  
joined CBRL in 1995

## In Memoriam

**Susan Plath (Board Member, 2010 - 2017)**

The Cape Breton Regional Library would like to recognize

the contributions of Susan Plath, a valued member of the CBRL Board for 7 years. Her support and contributions to the Library will be fondly remembered.





# Friends of McConnell Library

Inga Milburn

Mary Osyany

Jan MacCabe

Phyllis Baron

Janet Manktelow

Cape Breton Regional Library would like to thank "Friends of McConnell" for their ongoing efforts to support the branch with the 2019 Holiday Book & Bake Sale.

This group of dedicated ladies brings great fundraising ideas and energy to our organization, as well as delicious treats. They also help with library awareness, as they are always willing to lend their voices in support of the Library in the community at large.

Thank you, Friends!

## Library Locations

- |                  |                      |
|------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Sydney</b>    | <b>Louisbourg</b>    |
| <b>Ingonish</b>  | <b>Main-a- Dieu</b>  |
| <b>Baddeck</b>   | <b>North Sydney</b>  |
| <b>Dominion</b>  | <b>New Waterford</b> |
| <b>Florence</b>  | <b>Reserve Mines</b> |
| <b>Glace Bay</b> | <b>Sydney Mines</b>  |

### The Cape Breton Regional Library Bookmobile

The Bookmobile serves many rural areas, offering convenient access to those who cannot visit one of the library's 12 branches. It visits over 50 locations across Cape Breton and Victoria Counties.

