

Grey Highlands Public Library

Annual Report

2024



**GREY HIGHLANDS
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

The place to inspire, explore, discover, and create.

Introduction

Welcome to the Grey Highlands Public Library! Discover our latest achievements, innovative programs, and the dedicated team committed to empowering and enriching our vibrant community through knowledge, innovation, and accessibility.

This year at the Grey Highlands Public Library has been marked by significant progress and innovation. We've expanded our services to better serve our patrons. Our dedicated staff continues to excel in providing exceptional service, fostering connections, and engaging with the community.

We invite you to explore our new Makerspace, loanable technology, and a variety of exciting programs. Join us as we continue to inspire, connect, and create welcoming spaces for all residents of Grey Highlands.

Our strategic plan guides us in anticipating and exceeding the evolving needs of our patrons.

Our library has experienced key developments, including leadership promotions and strong community support exemplified by contributions from our FRIENDS groups and the Municipal Council.

Looking forward, we aim to further expand our digital and community services, integrate innovative technologies, and develop inclusive programs to meet the diverse needs of our patrons. Through our strategic plan, we endeavor to build upon our rich legacy while embracing the boundless opportunities that the future holds.

Together, we will continue to achieve great things and foster a thriving library system.

Message from the Mayor



As we reflect on the past year, I am thrilled to recognize our dedicated library staff's unwavering commitment and enthusiasm. Their passion for literacy, technology, and community engagement has been a driving force behind the successes we've seen. 2024 has been a transformative year for our library system, marked by exciting advancements and new initiatives.

One of the highlights of the year has been the completion of the Markdale ReFresh project, creating an even more inviting space. ReFresh included a new layout for the entire library: new flooring, repainting, revitalized board room and staff area. We also proudly unveiled the new Makerspace in Markdale, offering unique opportunities for creativity with tools like a 3D printer, Cricut Vinyl Cutter, and Shirt and Mug Press.

Our commitment to modernizing services continues with the introduction of loanable laptops, iPads, and video conferencing at both the Flesherton and Markdale branches - which make it easier for our community to access resources and connect.

The growth of our library system would not be possible without the generosity and support of our community. Our three FRIENDS groups have been instrumental in fundraising efforts, and we are grateful for the ongoing support from the Province and our Municipal Council.

We also welcomed Jeff Rosenberg as Acting CEO, who joined us in 2022 as Manager of the Markdale Branch and Manager of Information Technology. I also congratulate Becky Hill on her promotion to full-time Manager of the Flesherton Library.

Looking ahead, the Grey Highlands Library system remains focused on growth and innovation. In 2024, we saw significant increases in circulation, with over 12,000 checkouts at Flesherton, nearly 15,000 at Markdale, and more than 500 at Kimberley. We also welcomed hundreds of new patrons across all branches. Together with our staff, volunteers, and community, we are ready for the opportunities the future holds.

Message from the Chair



As Chair of the Grey Highlands Public Library Board, I'm proud to reflect on a year of growth, fresh ideas, and continued focus on serving Grey Highlands and nearby areas – from Chatsworth and West Grey to the eastern edge near Singhampton. This year, we arranged for 135 families near our eastern border to access services through Collingwood Public Library, helping ensure everyone in our region can use a local library.

Our staff continue to be the heart of everything we do. Their commitment to literacy, technology, and community connections is clear in every interaction – whether they're running events, helping someone with tech, or recommending a good book. Their work ensures our services stay relevant and responsive in a changing world.

We also had some big changes on the leadership side. Jeff Rosenberg came on board in late 2022 as Manager of the Markdale Branch and Manager of IT. His move into the Acting CEO role reflects both his leadership and his passion for library service. He's currently working on the final courses needed to take on the permanent CEO role in 2026. We also promoted Becky Hill to full-time Manager of the Flesherton Library – a well-deserved step that strengthens our team across all branches.

There were some challenges too. The Kimberley Branch was closed for most of the year while repairs were made to the front of Kimberley Hall. While the disruption was significant, the work was necessary to keep the space safe and welcoming for years to come. We're grateful for everyone's patience.

Our three FRIENDS groups continue to be incredible supporters. Their fundraising helps us go beyond the basics, making programs and purchases possible that wouldn't fit into the regular budget. We're also thankful for the ongoing support from the Province and the Municipal Council. Looking ahead, we're excited to keep expanding what we offer – from digital tools to inclusive programs – as we build a library that reflects and serves the whole community.

Thanks to our staff, Board, partners, and community members. Here's to another great year together.

Strategic Priorities

The Grey Highlands Library’s updated 2023–2026 Strategic Plan is all about strengthening community connections, expanding digital offerings, and making sure everyone has access to the resources they need. It focuses on creating a more inclusive space, while embracing new ideas and building on the library’s role as a hub for culture, learning, and innovation. Looking ahead, the plan sets the stage for a future where the library continues to inspire and empower the community in meaningful ways.



Cultural Leadership

Lead in cultural planning, build partnerships, and support the Cultural Channel to strengthen community identity and enrich local arts, heritage, and expression.



Social Responsibility

Champion equity, inclusion, and social justice. Support outreach to marginalized, racialized, and homebound individuals, promoting access and community well-being.



Community First

Enhance engagement, extend hours, train staff, and align with municipal goals to ensure services reflect community needs and priorities.



Digital Inclusion

Expand online services, launch a makerspace, increase digital literacy programs, and develop a tech plan to bridge digital access gaps.



Service Growth

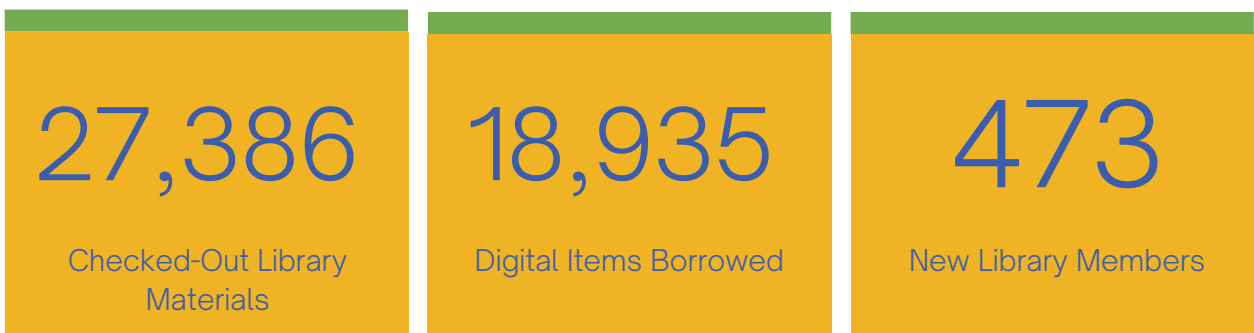
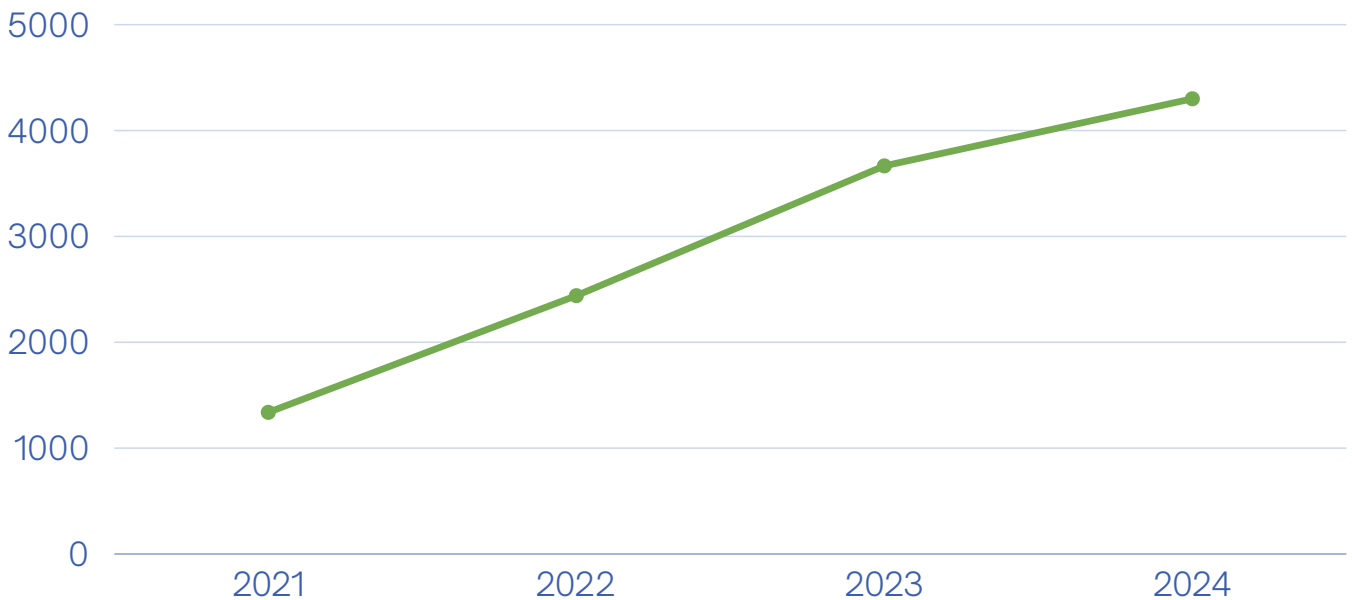
Review facilities, grow collections, explore new delivery models, and refine structure to meet changing community demands and ensure long-term sustainability.

By the Numbers

This year, our library has seen a wonderful increase in community engagement, reflecting the growing demand for our services. The data highlights the expanded reach of our offerings and demonstrates the positive impact we're making in the lives of our community members. These numbers represent connections, learning, and the library's continued importance as a hub for growth and support.

Community Program Participation Trends

This graph shows the growth of community programming, highlighting the increasing number of individuals served over time.



Our programming continues to inspire, educate, and bring people together. From engaging children's events to hands-on workshops and community-wide celebrations, this year's offerings were a true reflection of our library's spirit. In total, we delivered 311 programs to a community of 6,231 active library users, reinforcing our role as a vibrant hub for connection and learning.

Facility Highlights & Updates

We continue to improve our library spaces to better serve the community—enhancing accessibility, comfort, and functionality. From updated interiors to long-term facility planning, our spaces are evolving to meet current and future needs.



Kimberley’s Exterior Upgrade

- Kimberley Library reopened with a newly restored exterior.
- The community celebrated the grand reopening with great enthusiasm.

Markdale Gets a Makeover

- Markdale Library received a vibrant new paint job.
- The fresh look brightens up the space, creating a welcoming atmosphere.



Makerspace Comes to Life

- The Makerspace opened, sparking creativity and innovation.
- A collaborative space for hands-on learning and projects.

Expanding Our Offerings

We're broadening what the library provides—introducing new collections, resources, and services to reflect the diverse needs and interests of our community. From non-traditional items to enriched digital access, we're growing in meaningful ways.



Welcome to the Seed Library

- A New seed library offers a variety of seeds for community planting.
- Encourages sustainability and local gardening projects.

Tech Takeout: iPads Available

- Grab an iPad and go!
- Easy access to tech for everyone.



Laptop Lending Now Available

- Laptops available for checkout.
- Convenient tech for work, study, or play.

This Year's Top Programs

Our standout programs brought people together, sparked curiosity, and supported learning across all ages. From hands-on workshops to community events, these favourites showcase the impact and creativity of our programming team.



Reptilia Zoo Experience

- Reptilia Zoo visited, bringing exotic animals to the community.
- A fun and educational experience for all ages.

Harry Potter Trivia Night

- A magical evening of Harry Potter trivia.
- Fans gathered to test their wizarding knowledge.



BYOB Book Club

- Bring Your Own Book and share what you're reading.
- A relaxed, social space for book lovers to connect.

CEO Reflections & Directions



In October 2024, I had the privilege of stepping into the role of Acting CEO for Grey Highlands Public Library. Over the past two years, I've come to appreciate the library's vital role in our community, supported by our dedicated staff and patrons.

This year has been one of growth and innovation. We've expanded services and improved facilities to better meet the needs of our patrons. Our staff's commitment to literacy, technology, and community engagement is evident in their work, helping us adapt to a changing world.

Key developments this year included Becky Hill's promotion to full-time Manager of the Flesherton Library, strengthening leadership across all branches. I want to thank Eleni Hughes for her invaluable contributions as CEO. Her leadership played a key role in shaping the library's direction, and we're grateful for the strong foundation she left. Despite the Kimberley Branch being temporarily closed for renovations, the community's support remained unwavering. Our three FRIENDS groups continued to make meaningful contributions, reflecting the volunteer spirit of our region. We also appreciate the continued support from the Municipal Council, enabling us to expand our services.

This year, we launched a new Makerspace in Markdale, featuring a 3D printer, Cricut Vinyl Cutter, Shirt Press, and Mug Press. We also completed the Markdale ReFresh, which included renovating staff areas and repainting the building. In addition, we introduced loanable laptops and iPads and saw a significant increase in community programming, with exciting new initiatives underway. Our outreach programs to Grey Gables, our local nursing home, further ensure that all community members have access to our services.

Looking ahead to 2025, our goals include expanding digital and community services, integrating innovative technologies, and developing more inclusive programs. We welcome all community members to continue engaging with us as we strive to inspire, connect, and provide welcoming spaces for everyone in Grey Highlands.

I am deeply grateful to our dedicated staff, Library Board, and Municipality for their unwavering support. Together, we will continue to achieve great things and foster a thriving library system.

Acknowledgements

Board of Directors

Stewart Halliday (Board Chair)
Nicole Martin (Vice-Chair)
Deputy Mayor Dane Nielsen
Councillor Paul Allen
Janet Carson
Andrea Schiller
David Clarke
Steve Maloney
Bo Penny

Thank you to our amazing staff, volunteers, and board members for your dedication, hard work, and ongoing contributions to the library's success.

Staff

Eleni Hughes, Chief Executive Officer (until fall 2024)
Jeff Rosenburg, Acting CEO / Branch Manager & IT (from fall 2024)
Becky Hill, Branch Manager/Coordinator Public Services
Michelle Campbell, Coordinator Children & Youth Services
Chelsea Bullock, Coordinator Programming & Outreach
Linda Weatherall, Coordinator Acquisitions & Cataloguing
Maggie Murakami, Assistant Programming & Outreach
Sherry Brown, Public Service Assistant
Angela Roberge, Public Service Assistant
Kathy Lavoie, Public Service Assistant

Contact

101 Highland Drive, Flesherton, ON
N0C 1E0
Phone: 519-924-2241
www.ghpl.ca
contact@ghpl.ca

