

President's Annual Letter—Linda Weiss, President

As you know, at the end of June we lost our long-time Library Director, Ken Linge, who left us to attend a full time Master's program at UVM. We are extremely fortunate to have found a wonderful replacement in new Director Emily Heidenreich. Emily has maintained the high standard that was set by Ken. She has increased the team of library volunteers, engaging more community members in our mission to have the best little library in Vermont. She has furthered the goal set out in our strategic plan to have our library act as a community center by welcoming home schoolers, knitters, Mah Jong players, and other groups needing a place to meet. Our tradition of hosting excellent book discussions, speakers, and events of all kinds continues apace. Our library is a busy little place!

Our new website is up and running thanks to the labors of Emily and our neighbor Anne McKinsey. We urge you to check it out.

Our plans to utilize money from the sale of the building donated to us by the Holland family have been put on hold while our new Library Director acclimates herself and determines her thoughts on the best way to spend the fund. The ad hoc development committee will begin meeting again in late spring.

And, a note of personal privilege – as per our bylaws, I am rotating off the board. I want to thank everyone who volunteers their time, energy, skills, talents and knowledge to make Blake the terrific resource that it is. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve with you.

Governance Committee Report—Margaret Loftus, Chair

The Governance Committee has focused its efforts in the past year on editing and revising the Library's Bylaws and drafting a new set of policies to guide members of the Board of Trustees in conducting meetings. This work grew out of the central goals of our current five-year plan which calls on the library to serve as a central resource for our community and to play a role in helping to strengthen our community. The Board felt that, even though the library was not a municipal institution and is thus not required to do so, we should conduct our work in a way that reflects the spirit of The Vermont Open Meeting Law. The resulting revision of the bylaws and the new policy will help the Board conduct business in the most transparent and publicly accessible way possible. At our March meeting, the Board approved a final draft of the revisions and Committee hopes to bring the new policy and revised Bylaws to the Board for a vote at our next regular meeting.

Building and Grounds Committee Report—Shirley Montagne, Chair

Maintenance projects have been limited to the most essential due to budget constraints and anticipated future major renovations by the development committee using proceeds from the sale of the Clifford Building. Those items that needed attention this year included furnace and chimney cleaning, toilet seal replacement, general landscaping, and painting.

This committee appreciates all volunteers and assistance. Heartfelt appreciation to Hank Buermeyer for the painting of the hand rails, trimming of bushes, removal of dead trees and other projects of which he donated supplies and labor. Also a big thank you to Sam Heidenreich for donating his labor to complete small building maintenance projects around the library and whose expertise has been invaluable for evaluating the Library building health.

Fundraising Committee – Linda Weiss, Chair

We are delighted to report that both **Corinth and Topsham voted to add \$1 per capita** to their future contribution to the Library, bringing the total town support to **\$5,086**. Thank you, Town voters!

Income from this past year's events:

Aebi Art Sale at Towle Hill Studio: \$343

Book and Plant Sales: \$6,600

Secret Garden Tour: \$1,588

Bruce Peck Etching Raffle: \$429

Corinth Coffeehouse: \$612

Library Fund Annual Appeal Letter: \$10,535 (to date)

Amazon Smile: \$47.78

Upcoming:

As noted above, we now have an account with Amazon Smile. If you purchase goods from Amazon Smile instead of the regular Amazon site, we get a small percentage of the sale amount awarded to us. When you use the site, just note that your purchase is meant to support the Blake Memorial Library.

Garden Party: Late July tentatively scheduled for Saturday, July 22

We are not having a garden tour this year. Instead, we are tentatively planning an in-depth exploration of Xiao Hong Liu and John Paden's beautiful garden, including tea and a walking tour with noted plantsman Don Avery of Cady Falls Nursery. Stay tuned for more details.

Spring Book and Plant Sale: Saturday, May 27th from 8-2; Sunday, May 28th from 9-1

This fundraiser will kick off our 2017 season! Book sorting takes place Wednesdays from 1-3 pm starting April 19. Needed: Sturdy boxes to pack books. Those interested in helping please meet at Carole Freeman's barn, next door to the Library.

Plant donations are always welcome and may be dropped off on Friday, May 26th. Plant pots and sticks for labeling will be provided at the back door.

Fall Book and Plant Sale: Saturday, August 26th from 8-2 (one day only)

We will again offer free coffee and baked goods for purchase. Donations of plants and baked goods are much appreciated. Sorting will begin in July and setup will be Friday, August 28. Please contact the fundraising committee for more information on how to be involved in this event!

Raffle drawing for Bruce Peck hand-colored etching will take place at the Town Fourth of July celebration at the fairgrounds. Tickets are \$5 each, or 3 for \$10, available at the Library and at fundraising events.

Many thanks to the stalwart members of the Fundraising Committee for their extraordinary efforts and for being the hardest working members of the Blake team:

Susie Strainchamps

Lisa Locke

Laura Waterman

Penny Andrew

Pearl Keene

Anne Jenisch

Miranda Moody Miller

Hannah Narowski

Susan Morris

Sukie Hausmann

Joi Winchell

Sally Gundy

The fundraising committee is always looking for new members and volunteers. If you are interested in becoming a member of the fundraising committee, or are interested in volunteering for any event, please contact Emily.

Treasurer's Report for 2016/early 2017

CURRENT ASSETS

The Funds

	12/31/09	12/31/10	12/31/11	12/31/12	12/31/13	12/31/14	12/31/15	12/31/16
Blake	172,119	183,236	163,526	171,998	184,794	180,181	166,744	163,933
Gendrot	386,016	409,705	374,553	415,835	447,733	433,945	402,155	404,875
Holland	<u>274,217</u>	<u>307,680</u>	<u>282,794</u>	<u>304,957</u>	<u>347,254</u>	<u>358,519</u>	<u>346,946</u>	<u>354,999</u>
	832,352	900,621	820,873	892,790	979,781	972,645	915,845	923,807

Other - Values as of 3/31/2017

Savings Bonds – Series EE bonds @ \$40,880

Smith-Denison Savings Account - \$11,143 for capital/maintenance projects

Stock - 72 shares Honeywell @ \$125 = \$9,000

Checking account - \$10,000

Sale of Clifford Bldg, plus savings - \$289,122

OVERVIEW OF 2016 and 2017

The Library's main source of income, the Blake and Gendrot Trusts and the Mary Holland Fund, are slowly creeping back to pre-2008 levels. Their income made up 64% of the Library's income last year. We received 30.5% of our income from donations and other fundraising initiatives.

What has remained steadfast through the past few years has been the generosity of our patrons. We are grateful to the residents of Corinth and Topsham for voting the Library an additional \$1 per capita, for a total of \$5,086 in 2017.

For 2017 we have budgeted \$17,680 to be raised in fundraising initiatives.