

ANNUAL REPORT TO LIBRARY TRUSTEES

1986 was a year of measured recovery and progress for the M.G.Parker Memorial Library, as we met new challenges in the pursuit of public library service in this community. In the past year we faced: a destructive flooding of the lower Children's Room and the resultant need for the replacement and repair of materials and equipment; a vastly increased demand for high-quality audio-visual materials in a wider variety of formats, such as VHS Videocassettes; an increase in the usage rate among library cardholders coupled with an increase in the total numbers of Dracut residents and, proportionately, an increase in the total number of library users; a substantial, although unavoidable, turnover in staff; and a greater number of requests for usage of the library facility by municipal agencies. We met these challenges by increasing our productivity and quality of service in several ways: we increased the variety of media formats that we offer to patrons to include audio cassettes and videocassettes; we more than doubled the number of storytimes and regularly scheduled programs for children; we hosted a greater number of programs, both library-sponsored and externally-sponsored; we engaged in new and more effective promotional activities, such as the cable Channel 12 broadcasting; and overall we strove, with measurable success, to meet the demands of the Dracut community for high-quality, low-cost library service.

During the last year, the Library department was able to respond more effectively to an increased demand for services principally due to a budgetary environment which allows our services to grow as the Town grows. With this municipal appropriation, and with continued funding support from the Commonwealth, we were able to offer an increasing volume, quality, and efficiency in our basic services (circulation of materials, reference, inter-library-loan, and programs) based on increased operating hours and effective use of the resource-sharing MVLC computer. Specifically, we had more successful evening programs, such as the 'Evening with Peter Guralnick', and more highly successful summer programs, such as the 'Legend of Ireland' production, largely as a result of greater availability of resources and the greater utilization of these by the staff and public.

The Library received support from many quarters during the past year, among them the Friends of the Library, the Junior Friends of the Library, and various Town boards, agencies and officers. To them go our heartfelt thanks and appreciation. The Library, in its turn, hosted and supported many external activities for the Town and other groups during the year, among them the 4H, the Campfire Girls, Dracut Performing Arts, the School Department, and others. The Library was used extensively, and successfully, as a polling place during elections, for local office hours for congressional representatives, and as host for the local Fuel Assistance Program operated by Community Teamwork.

In the year to come, the Library plans to continue to work towards, and promote the use of, the best library service available given our finite resources. We plan to continue building and promoting our book, magazine, audio and video collections and services; we plan to study various means of extending all library services further into the community; and we plan to continue to strive to be a friendly, user-responsive, cooperative and effective unit in the local government structure.

Respectfully submitted,

David D. Davis, Jr.

as submitted