

## HISTORY OF LIBRARY



The Suttons Bay Library had its humble beginning in the early 1890's and was housed in the home of Ed Johnson which used to stand on the lot now occupied by the Bahle Annex. Johnson acted as the first librarian. When Mr. A.A. Sessions, attorney, opened his office in the office portion of Con Lather's old blacksmith building, the few books that comprised the Library were moved there. Its next home was Emma Otto's Millinery shop and Miss Otto was paid \$25/annually to act as librarian. Here the Library continued until the books were given to the Public School Library.

Sometime later, in 1913, several women of the village met in the home of Dr. E.A. Miller and organized what was called the Civic Club, and later the Suttons Bay Community Club. Demand for a public library had been revived and it was this group of women who started the present library. On the original Library Board were Mrs. L.P. Bolme (president), Clara Lund, Mrs. Robert Power, Mrs. Otto Laser, and Mrs. Wm. Payne (who acted as librarian). Mrs. Fred Donner and Mrs Wm. Payne devoted one day going house to house requesting books to start the library. They formed a library association to which each member paid dues of \$.50 a year and fines of two cents a day were levied on overdue books. Members could keep books for two weeks, all other patrons one week. Some of the fines totaled \$1.50—and one reached at least \$2.60.

In this way a small sum accumulated with which to buy new books and keep old ones in repair. Shelves and a reading room were provided on the second floor of the second Suttons Bay Fire Station. This reading room was shared with the "Modern Woodsmen" as a lodge room. Electric lights were free. This fire station is now 9Bean Rows Restaurant.

After a time, the dues were not enough to support the Library. In order to maintain the Library a business meeting was called in the Library and Mr. Henry H. Snohr, Sr., the Suttons Bay

Township Supervisor met with the Civic Club and it was decided the Township would take over its running.

In 1924, the Township took over the Library and the Civic Club continued as custodians. Mrs. Payne agreed to act as librarian at \$2.00/day. "At first, two club members would look after it, until all had taken turns, and when Mrs. Payne tried it, she concluded to accept the position." The Library was only open on Saturday. Mrs. Payne continued as such for three years. At this time, there were over 1,100 books available. Mr. Henry Ford sent the Library a subscription to the *Dearborn Independent*.

The club women decided to clean up the room so they washed the walls, and had them papered. The floor was scrubbed, scraped, washed with lye, scrubbed some more, then given two coats of varnish. The chairs were painted dark green and light gray to harmonize with the wall paper. A rocker, a desk, window frames, and book shelves were varnished. The stove was polished; a piano installed; and five tables added for social purposes. "The Club intends to use the room for socials once in awhile, and hold meetings there sometimes. A curtain with rings is used to cover the books, a screen was given to shut off the kitchen department, new brass electric light fixtures; new window shades; and new curtains. When people came in to stand and look as soon as the door is opened, they were entranced with the beauty of it all. A large rug was also given which helps to make the room more home-like. At one time, a couple gave 127 books, another 60. We began with 24 and now have 1180. Aside from the books, there is one set of shelves for magazines. Mr. Ford has been sending us the *Dearborn Independent*, and we appreciate it very much. We also have a supply of mending material on hand for misused books. Several sets of encyclopedias have been given and 10 volumes of (John Fennimore) Cooper's works were sent from Big Rapids, which cost only the freight charges. We have a collection of motor magazines, giving various auto hints. Come in some time and if you don't see what you want, ask the Librarian. If you don't want a book—come anyway, and look over all we have, perhaps you will enjoy reading. Get in the habit of spending idle time in reading some interesting information that will gain much valuable information for you, that will come in handy some day. If you have any books that are in your way, and you do not know what to do with them, send them to the Library. Someone will be glad to read them."

Mr. K. Gus Smarey, editor of the Suttons Bay Courier, added the following: "Give honor to whom honor is due. The Library has gone through a real transformation, It is one of the brightest places in town. The Women's Club headed by Mrs. Louis Bolme, president of the Library and Mrs. Robert Power with a bunch of men and women, papered, painted and varnished."

--Helen Wransky copied from the Suttons Bay Courier

In 1944, the Township Board turned the support responsibility of the Library to the Suttons Bay School Board. In 1953, the Library moved into the new high school building for a short period. It was now comprised of approximately 2,000 books. From there it moved to the area vacated by Art's Barbershop. From there it moved to the building now occupied by Enerdyne and Brainstorm. After that it moved back to the remodeled fire house, on the first floor, this time in

1980 after approximately \$2,500 of much needed repairs were made. When an offer was made on the property, the Village offered the newly purchased Lowrey four-unit motel for use.

A grant from the federal government for library construction became available. The decision was made to raise the necessary matching funds and build instead of using the small motel. A lease between the Village and the Library Board was drawn and signed for use of the property 120' x 60' at the top of the marina. The current library building is owned and held in trust for the residents of Suttons Bay and Bingham Townships by the Library Board.

The cost of the new building was \$148,433.07. The size of the Library was 1,956 square feet upstairs with an additional 1,140 square feet in the lower level. The final move was made to the present Library in October, 1984.

With Larry Graves as lead architect, it was expanded in the spring of 1996 to its present size of an additional 1,780 square feet on the main level to meet suggested state library guidelines.

Those who acted as librarians through the years: Ed Johnson, A.A. Sessions, Miss Emma Otto, Mrs. Wm Payne, Mrs. Cora Leo (became Chair of Library Board in 1944), Mrs. Edna Smith (librarian 1944-1952), Mrs. F. Hoag, Mrs. Julia Gustin, Mrs. Nancy Peitma, Mrs. Wm. O'Dell, Mrs. Ruth Christianson, Mrs. Howard Fuller, Mrs. Janice Parks, Mrs. Robert Green, Miss Cathy Beagle, Suzanne Latta Hoff (1987-98), Tina Ulrich (1998-2005), Virginia Roberts (2005-2012), Ryan Deery (2012-2016), Bradley Chaplin (2016 - ).

### DISTRICT LIBRARY – RECENT HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Feb. 1979 The Library in Suttons Bay was legally established through the Library of Michigan as **Suttons Bay Area District Library** pursuant to Public Act 164, 1955, (replaced by P.A. 24 of 1989) by agreement of Suttons Bay and Bingham Townships and Suttons Bay Village. Suttons Bay Township and Bingham Township each appropriated an amount from their general funds equal to three-tenths of one mill to the Library District for its support. This is the minimum amount required to be recognized by the state as a public library and to qualify for State Aid and eligibility for membership in, and to receive the services of, a library cooperative. (No public election was held to establish the Library or to determine funding.)

June 1979 Suttons Bay Village leased the Fire Station (at 303 N. St. Joseph, presently 9Bean Rows) to the Library rent free. A fundraising drive provided about \$30,000.00 for the renovation of the building.

1984 The Library Board won a (Federal) Library Services and Construction Act grant in the amount of \$70,840.00 to build a library at its present site. A grant from Rotary Charities of \$25,000.00 and a capital campaign provided the necessary matching funds to construct and furnish the building. Suttons Bay Village agreed to lease to the Library, for 50 years, the land on which the Library is built at no cost to the Library, and also to provide water and sewage at no cost to the Library.

- Nov. 1984 The new Library opened. The total of the upper and lower levels of the building was 3,096 sq. ft.
- 1987 Suzanne Latta Hoff was hired as Library Director.
- Before 1990 The Library name was informally changed to **Suttons Bay Area Library**.
- Spring 1996 The Library building was expanded, adding 1,780 sq. ft. for a total of 4,876 sq. ft. (including both upper and lower levels), funded by a (Federal) Library Services and Construction Act grant of \$83,925.00 and \$78,331.00 by Suttons Bay Township from Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa 2% funds. (At that time funds were given to the governmental units for distribution, not by the GTB as a result of grant requests.) The public was asked for donations for the remainder of the matching funds and for furnishing the larger space. The Village agreed to a revision of the lease, extending it to April 26, 2045.
- Spring 1997 The library circulation system and catalog (ILS) were automated by NuGen. The LibNet system began operation and the Library had internet access. Hardware and software were provided by a Library Services and Construction grant of \$39,000.
- Spring 1998 Tina Ulrich was hired as Library Director.
- Summer 2004 The Library's website began operation—[www.suttonsaylibrary.org](http://www.suttonsaylibrary.org)—designed, constructed and maintained by Cheryl Donakowski, volunteer.
- April 2005 Commissioned a Needs Assessment to be conducted by Traverse Management Resources of Traverse City to learn what the public wants from the Library. The study was paid for through private donations and grants solicited for that purpose.
- June 2005 Findings of the Needs Assessment were presented to the Library Board, resulting in the Board's later decision to ask the public for a library millage in 2006.
- June 2005 Virginia Roberts was hired as Library Director.
- July 2005 Charitable Remainder Trust program was launched with the preparation and distribution of an informational brochure.
- Jan. 2006 Library Board began process of asking voters for millage for library operations.
- June 2006 The Library name was officially changed to **Suttons Bay-Bingham District Library** by agreement of Suttons Bay and Bingham Townships, Suttons Bay Village and the Library Board, and recognized by the Library of Michigan.
- Aug. 2006 Millage request was refused by voters.

YES Total 570 B. Twp. 251 SB Twp. 319  
NO Total 864 B. Twp. 461 SB Twp. 403

Nov. 2006 Millage request was refused by voters.

YES Total 1090 B. Twp. 481 SB Twp. 609  
NO Total 1717 B. Twp. 922 SB Twp. 795

Jan. 2007 Library hours were reduced; fees on some Library services were established.

May 2007 The Library Board commissioned study of the Library's interior space by Library Design Associates of Holland, MI. In June, preliminary drawings for suggested rearrangement of space were presented. The study was paid for by the Friends of the Library and grants from Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians and Suttons Bay-Bingham Fund.

June 2007 The Library's computer catalog was made available online through the Library website, [www.suttonsbaylibrary.org](http://www.suttonsbaylibrary.org).

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June 2008 Lower level repainted by Suzanne Hoff and others.

Feb-Oct. 2009 Additional shelving added through Friends of the Library, Suttons Bay-Bingham Foundation and Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians Grants.

May-July 2009 Friends of the Library remodel and replace fixtures of all three bathrooms.

July 2009 Library hours increased to 34.5 weekly.

Nov 2009 State of Michigan Quality Service Auditor Checklist (QSAC) Essential and... Enhanced levels achieved simultaneously. Renewal in 2013.

Feb 2010 Mango Language and Ancestry for Libraries made available to patrons.

March 2011 Regular Homebound Delivery services added through Leelanau Commission on Aging grant funds request (annual renewal).

May 2011 Main floor of the Library renovated through Friends of the Library, Rotary of Grand Traverse and Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians grants and private donations.

Nov 2011 Updated website containing links to BOT meeting agendas and minutes.

Jan 2012 Additional shelving added through FOL funds and private donations.

May 2012 Library Director Virginia Roberts receives the Loleta Fyan Small/Rural Librarian Award. Opts not to renew contract with SBDL.

- Aug 2012 Ryan Deery named Library Director..
- April 2013 Friends of Library vote to create downstairs community room (formerly the meeting room). Work completed June, 2013.
- June 2013 \$25,000 grant from Robert C. Reinhardt Foundation permits building to be restrained and reroofed. Professional smoke detection system linked to Suttons Bay-Bingham firehouse installed as part of grant.
- June 2013 Library formalizes publication of Annual Report to be published each August online. Some hard copies distributed to township officials. Others available at checkout desk.
- Dec 2013 Holiday Gala fundraiser "Lites, Bites, and Books" becomes one of Sutton Bay's premier social events. Profit of approximately \$4,000 achieved annually.

**GALA FINANCIAL HISTORY**

Year	Income	-	Expenses	=	Net
2013	\$ 5,826	-	\$ 4,317	=	\$ 1,509
2014	14,173	-	5,766	=	8,407
2015	13,360	-	4,186	=	9,174
2016	9,597	-	5,456	=	4,141
	<u>\$42,956</u>		<u>\$19,725</u>	=	<u>\$23,231</u>
Average	\$10,739		\$ 4,931.25	=	\$ 5,807.75

- Aug. 2014 Library foyer retiled and renovated. Front, side and back doors replaced. All windows removed, resealed and reinstalled.
- Aug . 2016 Ryan Deery accepts Director's post at Allegan District Library (Mich).
- Nov. 2016 Bradley Chaplin, former Director of Kalkaska District Library, becomes new Director of SBBDL.
- Nov. 2016 Library's request of 0.5 mills for 5 years wins voter approval. Former 0.3 mills allocated from SB Township general fund in support of library operations remains in fund. Bingham opts not to collect the 0.3 mills. Trustees approve adding Monday to open hours as promised during the millage campaign. For the first time in over 30 years library achieves sound financial footing.