



Annual Visits  
**13,380**

Total Uses  
of Collection  
**92,090**



**46** Books-on-Sticks  
**2,300** Estimated Attendance



*2021*  
**Impact  
Report**

**29,087**  
Website  
Visits



**1,317**  
Reference  
Questions  
Answered



**33,558**  
Audiobooks  
& Ebooks  
Downloaded

**Take-and-Make**  
**165** Programs  
**4,516** Participants



**24%**  
INCREASE

Total Uses of  
**Digital Materials**

**Virtual Programs**  
**124** Events  
**1,427** Attendees





2021 was a transformative year for Ilsley Public Library. On July 1st, the library went fine free. Overdue fines can be a financial barrier to access and disproportionately impact low-income families. In order to ensure equitable access to library resources and services, existing fines were forgiven, and patrons who had been locked out of their accounts were welcomed back with a fresh slate.

The library's digital presence was refreshed with a redesigned website, digital newsletter, and new online catalog. The new catalog allows patrons to search all library resources in one place; for the first time, physical items, digital E-books and audiobooks, and even streaming films are all integrated. Recognizing that many people search our collection on the go, the new catalog includes an app for mobile devices. The library also invested in more powerful Wi-Fi service, which can be accessed outside of the building, providing our community free internet twenty-four hours a day.

2020 is the year that challenged the library to find new ways of delivering library materials and programs, and 2021 is the year we committed to continuing these new services in perpetuity. When we offered Outside Pickup Service, patrons told us that they appreciate being able to place orders for books online and have them ready and waiting at the library. In response, we have decided to continue to page on request going forward; in 2021, library staff paged 19,970 items by hand. Similarly, due to the overwhelming popularity of Take-and-Make Programs and Books-on-Sticks, the library will continue offering program bags to take home and providing engaging off-site activities, meeting community members where they are.

As regular library users know all too well, the library building faces significant challenges when it comes to safety, accessibility, and functionality. The library's activities have long outgrown our spaces, and our mechanical systems are in desperate need of repair. For all of these reasons and more, in 2022 a new committee, the Ilsley 100 Project Team, will be addressing the library's facility needs. The team's name references the upcoming 100 year anniversary of the library's historic 1924 original building, and also acknowledges the goal of designing a library with the flexibility to serve Middlebury for the next century. The library is at a crucial inflection point, and we have an opportunity to create a building that will benefit generations of community members to come.

When Middlebury residents look back on this year in the library's history, it would be convenient to say that the library was 'closed' for the first half of the year and 'open' for the rest. But, as American Library Association President Julius C. Jefferson Jr. put it, "Buildings may not have been open, but libraries were never closed." With no fines, faster internet, new modalities for delivering programs, and an ever-growing collection, the library is more open than it's ever been. We look forward to serving Middlebury in 2022.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dana Hart". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dana Hart  
Director