



Chair's Report – Friends of the Guelph Public Library June 2025

It is my pleasure to present this Chair's Report for the Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Guelph Public Library. As we reflect on the past year, we can take great pride in the contributions we have made to our community and in our ongoing support of the Guelph Public Library system.

Highlights of the Year

1. Giant Book Sale

Our signature fundraising event, the Giant Book Sale, returned in full force this past September. With the help of a dedicated team of volunteers and strong community support, we were able to raise over \$90,000 to support library programs and initiatives. We are grateful to Bamco for their generous support, our community partners and all those who donated, sorted, and purchased books to make the event a resounding success.

2. Programming

We were proud to support and co-host a dynamic slate of programming that brought local and national voices to our community. Highlights included *Open Minds* events featuring Tom Wilson, Kevin Callan, and Sharon Hampson, as well as literary programming like *Guelph Writes* in collaboration with Vocamus Press and other partners. These events reflect our ongoing commitment to fostering a vibrant literary and cultural life in Guelph.

3. Strategic Planning

This year, the Board undertook a focused process to develop the FGPL's first Strategic Plan to guide our work over the next three years. This plan clarifies our mission while identifying key goals around community engagement, volunteer support, and long-term sustainability. More details will be provided in the Governance Report later in the meeting.

4. Volunteer Contributions

The heartbeat of FGPL remains our volunteers. Whether sorting thousands of donated books, staffing our events or working hard behind the scenes, with enthusiasm and professionalism, their commitment is nothing short of remarkable. On behalf of the board, I extend heartfelt thanks to each volunteer who gives their time and energy so generously.

Looking Ahead

As we look to the coming year, we are committed to:

- Continuing to advocate for and support the Guelph Public Library.
- Working on the action items outlined in our new Strategic Plan.
- Creating a policy manual to support our updated bylaws
- Expanding our volunteer base and outreach efforts.
- The grand opening of the new Central Library!

We remain guided by our mission: to foster public support for a strong and vibrant public library system in Guelph. With your ongoing involvement and passion, I am confident we can meet the challenges ahead and continue to make a difference in our community.

Thanks, and Acknowledgements

A special thank you to our outgoing board member James Gordon — your service has left a lasting impact. I also wish to acknowledge the Chief Librarian Dan Atkins, Lisa Cunningham and other library staff, Danny Williamson and the Library Board for their unwavering dedication to literacy, learning, and community well-being.

I wish to thank the members of our Board of Directors for their stewardship, wisdom, and camaraderie over the past year. Thank you, Linda, Tara, Joanne, Lynn, Kathy, Lorna, Nancy and our wee darling, May.

On behalf of the Friends of the Guelph Public Library, thank you for your continued support. Together, we are building a stronger future for our public library and for the City of Guelph.

Sincerely,

Ian Findlay

Board Chair, Friends of the Guelph Public Library



Back Row: Danny Williamson, Dan Atkins, Nancy Ryan, Lorna Rourke, Joanne Grodzinski, Kathy MacLean, Ian Findlay
Front Row: Tara Signorelli, May Goodwin, Lynn Allen, James Gordon, Linda Kearns