



**bracebridge
library**

**2025
ANNUAL REPORT**

Message from the Board Chair

2025 marked our first full year in our brand-new 'house'. The Coulson Family Bracebridge Library is truly a dynamic, modern facility that reflects the evolving needs of our patrons and supports the aspirations of our Town and the wider community. It is incredible to observe the rapid growth of membership, program attendance and online engagement as the library team tracked progress across every measurable statistic.

This year also marks the third year of our 4-year board term. The Board focused its attention on a thorough internal review of board functionality across many metrics. This has helped to focus our attention on key areas to commit to in the last year of our mandate. The Board also put considerable effort into quantification of detailed deliverables for each of our strategic plan pillars. We ensured that policy and planning remained rooted in transparency, accountability, and community service. Certainly, the monthly CEO report to the board continues to highlight all aspects of the strategic plan.

There were many highlights in 2025, and we started the year off with attendance at the provincial Ontario Library Association conference in January. Sessions consistently emphasize the importance of thoughtful governance, and we continue to see the impact of that commitment reflected in our Library. We made significant progress towards accreditation as we work together with library staff through a set list of requirements. The partnership between the Board and staff is vital and continues to be a source of strength and joy for each of us.

As Chair of the Library Board, I want to express my sincere thanks to my fellow Board members. I also want to acknowledge the continued support of our municipal partners and members of Town Council. And of course, a big thank you to the incredible staff team. Your dedication to this community is on display each time you come through the door and inspires us all.

Together, we continue to shape a Library experience that is truly Anything but the Ordinary.

-Barbara Hutchinson, Library Board Chair



2025 Library Board Members

Chair
Barbara Hutchinson

Vice-Chair
Joanne Wolochatiuk

Councillor
Don Smith

Lorraine Boucher

Audrey King

Carol Anne Robinson

Brenda Glass

Russell MacKinnon

Message from the CEO & Chief Librarian

2025 marked the first full year of operations in the Coulson Family Bracebridge Library, and what a year it has been. After the excitement of our 2024 opening, this year allowed us to fully step into our new space and see its impact in action.



Record-breaking visitation, increased membership, and unprecedented program participation demonstrate what we already knew: our community was ready for a modern, vibrant public library. Beyond the numbers, however, it is the daily moments of connection: children discovering books, entrepreneurs creating in the Makerspace, neighbours gathering and learning together, that truly define our success.

Behind the scenes, we advanced toward provincial accreditation, modernized policies, strengthened our internal technology capacity, and continued building a culture rooted in innovation and service excellence. In 2025, the Library was honoured with the Ontario Library Association's New Library Build Award and the Chamber of Commerce Community Connector Award, recognizing both our facility and the meaningful connections happening within it.

None of this happens without partnership. I extend my sincere gratitude to our Library Board, Town Council, and Town staff for their continued support and collaboration.

Most importantly, I want to thank our remarkable staff team. Their passion, creativity, and heart drive everything we do. Together, we are not just operating a library, we are growing alongside our community and building something truly special for Bracebridge.

- Crystal Bergstrom, CEO & Chief Librarian

2025

Growth in Every Chapter



14,765 Library members



212,818 people visited the Library



956 programs offered



9,278 people attended programs

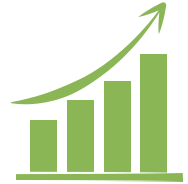


177,355 total items circulated

A 20% increase from 2024 and a 62% increase from 2021



A 379% increase from 2024 and a 2,598% increase from 2021



* 2021 in-person access was limited due to COVID restrictions

A 17% increase from 2024 and a 222% increase from 2021



A 33% increase from 2024 and a 193% increase from 2021



A 82% increase from 2024 and a 264% increase from 2021



A Five-Year Transformation

The growth shown spans five years of focused planning, investment, and innovation. Since 2021, the Bracebridge Library has expanded services, strengthened partnerships, and reimagined what modern public library service can look like in Bracebridge.

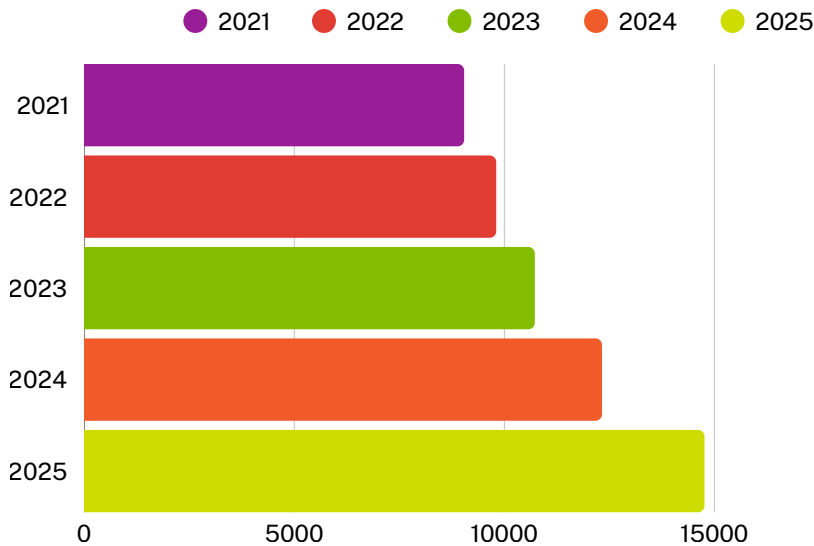
The statistics reflect more than a single strong year; they tell the story of sustained, measurable momentum.

What began as a period of rebuilding has evolved into record-setting engagement across membership, circulation, visitation, and program delivery. The result is a Library that continues to grow alongside its community.



2025 Growth in Every Chapter

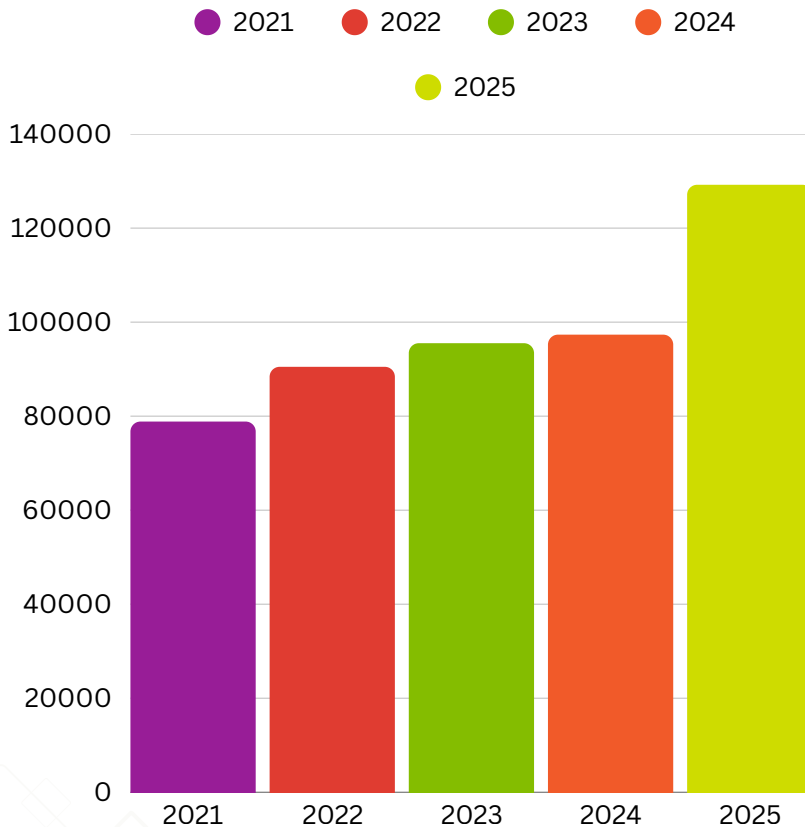
Library Members



An Award-Winning Year

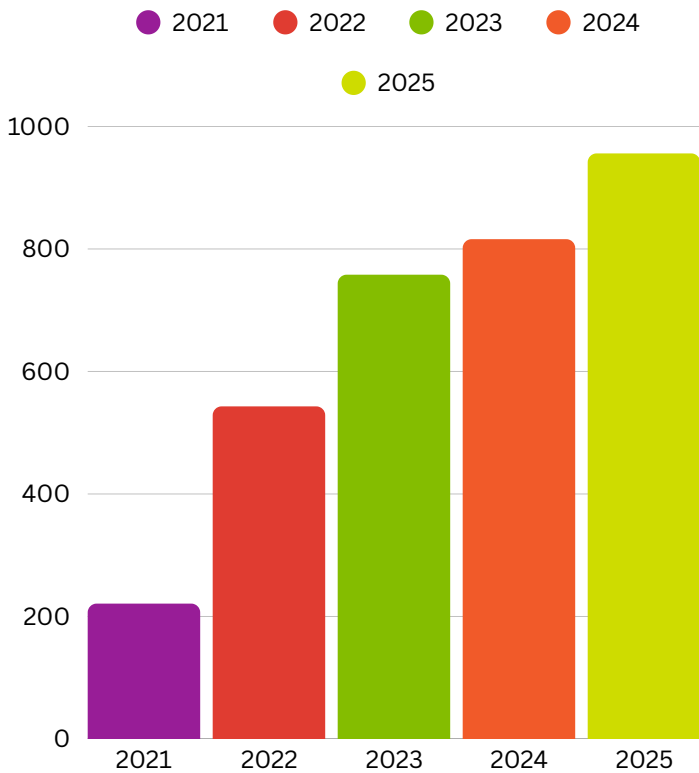
2025 Ontario Library Association - New Library Build Award
 2025 Bracebridge Chamber of Commerce - Community Connector Award
 Two prestigious honours recognizing innovation, leadership, and meaningful community impact.

Materials Circulation

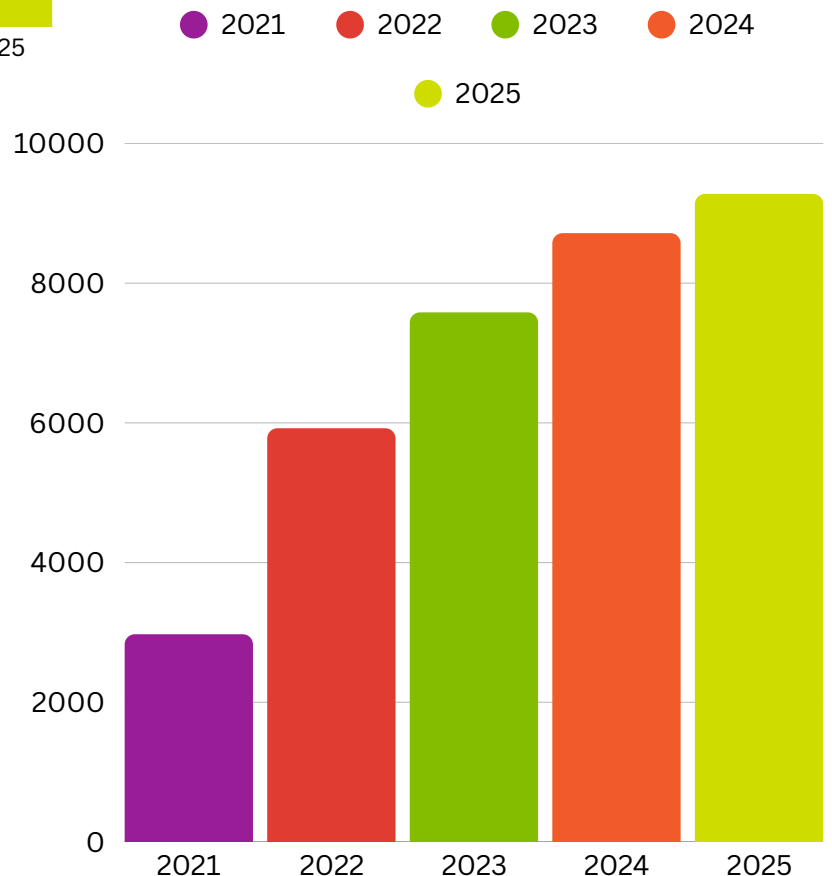


2025 Growth in Every Chapter

Number of Programs Offered



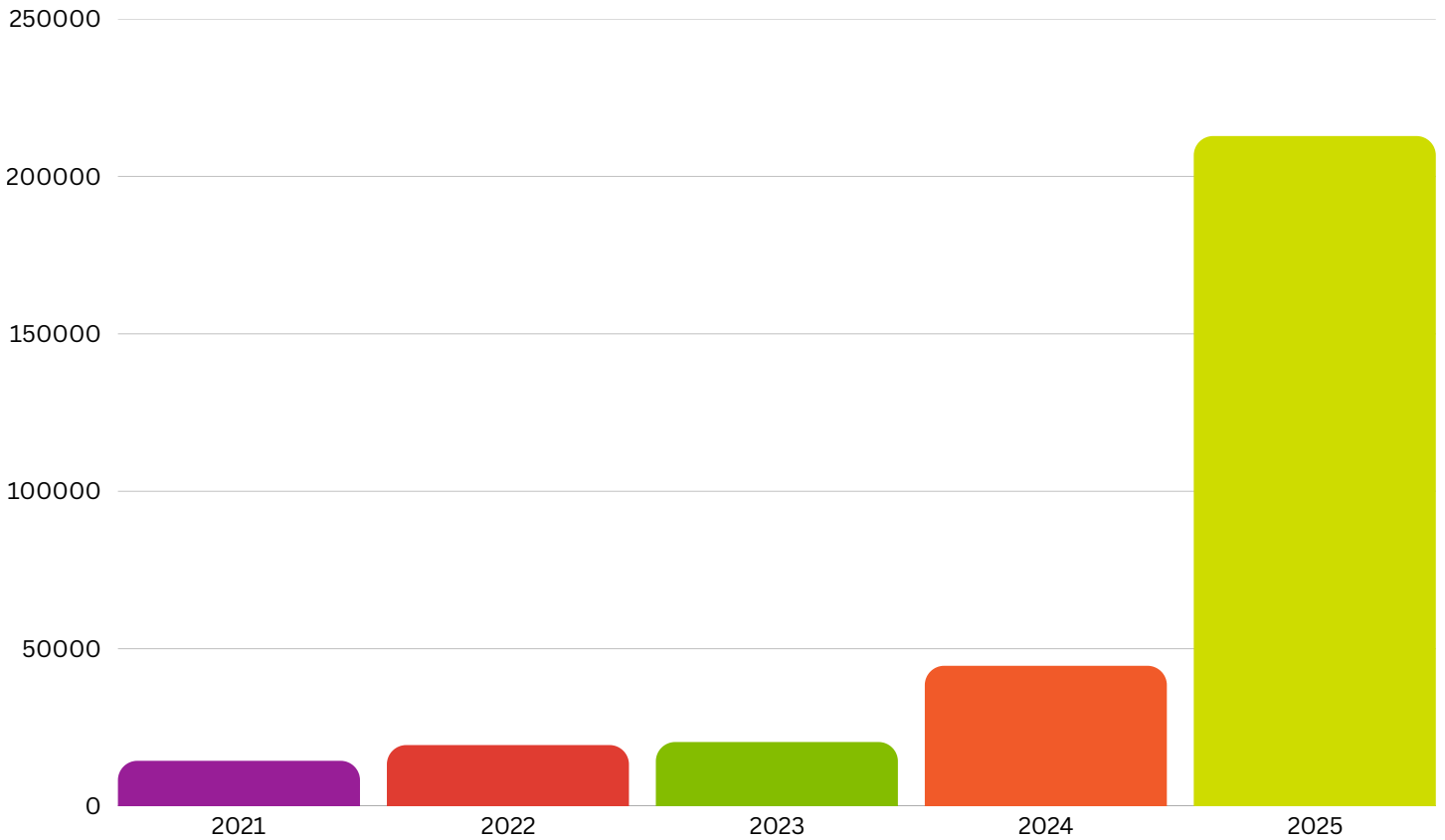
Program Attendance



2025 Growth in Every Chapter

Visits to the Library

● 2021 ● 2022 ● 2023 ● 2024 ● 2025



Connect with Us



Bracebridge Library Top Circulations of 2025

Children's Books



Adult Books



Young Adult Books



Cool Things to Borrow



Ontario Park permit
and backpack



PlayStation 4



PlayStation 5



Happy Light Lumi LED
Light Therapy Lamp



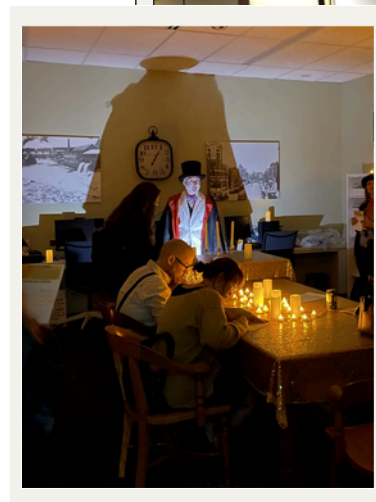
Starblast: 4.5" Altazimuth
Reflector Tabletop
Telescope

Bracebridge Library Anything but the Ordinary

Community on Stage

In 2025, the Bracebridge Library's annual Murder Mystery event took center stage as a vibrant showcase of community creativity and collaboration. Entirely written and produced in-house by Library staff, the evening brings together an extraordinary cast that includes staff, Board members, volunteers, and even a member of Council, all stepping into character for a sold-out night of intrigue and laughter. Featuring talented performers from our local arts community and supported by local food and beverage partners, the event transforms the Library into a stage that celebrates the best of Bracebridge.

More than entertainment, the Murder Mystery event reflects the spirit of partnership that defines our Library. It highlights the talent within our organization, strengthens connections between civic leaders and residents, and supports local businesses and artists. The event has quickly become a signature celebration, a powerful example of how the Library continues to grow alongside its community while showcasing everything Bracebridge has to offer.



Community Voices

In 2025, the Library's Recording Studio continued to amplify voices across Bracebridge in powerful and unexpected ways. What began as a new offering in our expanded facility has quickly become a creative hub for storytelling, music, and community dialogue. The Mayor's podcast is recorded in the studio, local creators have launched new shows, and one homegrown podcast has even made its way onto local radio. Musicians are recording original albums, families are preserving oral histories, and authors are producing audiobooks, all within the walls of their public library.

This space has become more than a room with equipment; it is a platform for expression and connection. By providing free access to professional-grade recording technology, the Library removes barriers and invites residents to share their stories, talents, and ideas with the broader community. The steady growth in studio use reflects the confidence and creativity of a community eager to create, collaborate, and be heard.





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