

Annual Report of the George F. Johnson Memorial Library – 2003

On 7:15 P.M. on January 15th, 1915 a telegram arrived from Seabreeze, Florida. It read simply: "We thoroughly approve free Library for Endicott. Will do all possible to assist. Mr. and Mrs. Geo. F. Johnson." With those words of encouragement library service in Endicott and the Town of Union began. 2003 marked the eighty-eighth anniversary of what has at various times been called The Endicott Free Library, The Ideal Home Library, and, finally, The George F. Johnson Memorial Library.

It would be nice to report that it was a good year for the local library community, but in truth it was not. The branch libraries in Binghamton have all been closed. The Your Home Public Library in Johnson City and the Vestal Public Library have each reduced their hours of service. Here in Endicott, we continue to offer inadequate hours and limited book purchases while living in the shadow of evaporating funds. You, the library user, are being denied access to a current, topical collection covering the full-range of critical issues facing our society. Our public libraries have been abandoned by some of our local governments. The financial situation of the GFJ Library has reached the critical stage. Broome County has just slashed its library contribution by 50 percent. I anticipate starting the June 2004 – May 2005 budget year with less than half the funds needed to survive twelve months, with no guarantee of anything from the County, Town, or Village. Our library will be fortunate to make it through December 2004.

On November 4th residents of the Town of Union will have an opportunity to solve this problem. A funding initiative will appear on the ballot asking Town residents to authorize direct funding of both the Endicott and Johnson City facilities. Passage of this vote would remove library funding from the political realm, where it has failed so miserably, and ensure quality library service well into the future. Many libraries have taken this route with good results. Should the measure fail, our library's future would be in grave doubt. The November 2004 funding initiative is your opportunity to decide whether the largest town in Broome County continues to enjoy public library service, or whether one more of George F.'s legacies may come to an end. A community library needs the participation of the community to help it survive. Please let us know if you'd like to help.

Ed Dunscombe
Library Director

Financial Report for 2003

Receipts

Broome County support	\$372,878
Village of Endicott support	60,000
Town of Union support	0
New York State support	10,092
Fine/fees	22,481
Interest on deposits	9,081
Grant from Assemblyman Warner	5,000
Rental of property	1,770
Gifts & donations	3,463
Total receipts	484,765.97

Expenditures

Salaries & benefits (current employees)	\$391,881
Health insurance (retired employees)	60,279
Print material	57,960
Automation contract	34,429
Building operations and maintenance	27,165
Office supplies	5,381
Computer purchases	5,227
Audio-visual material	3,843
Electronic materials	1,875
Postage	904
Travel	607
Furniture	524
Legal services	380
Professional memberships	195
Total expenditures	\$590,650.87

Service measurements:

Days open:	293
Circulation:	178,341
Reference questions:	9,016
Web site visits:	12,865
Programs:	153
Program attendance:	4,221
Internet usage:	11,269
CD-ROM usage	3,150