



***150 Books by Indigenous Authors* list funded by the Friends of the Antigonish Library (FoAL) celebrates contribution made by Indigenous authors, adding to the library's collection**

(Wed. January 31, 2018): Pictou and Antigonish counties: Public libraries are a reflection of the communities they serve, from the books on the shelves to the art that is displayed. Often times, we lose sight of the fact that public libraries don't solely house reading material. They are about the people, the stories they share and the communities we all live in. When a former board member approached the Friends of the Antigonish Library (FoAL) to suggest the creation of a list of 150 Books by Indigenous Authors this past spring, the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library (PARL) was excited to have an opportunity

to expand the current collection. But beyond simply adding books to library shelves, this initiative was a chance to celebrate the contribution made by Indigenous authors and add to the diverse reading materials available to our community.

The creation of the list was a collaborative process; the result of research, connecting with members of the community, and identifying gaps in the collection where Indigenous authors and works were under-represented. Titles that were purchased cover a variety of genres and age groups, and range from books for children to a collection of Indigenous erotica. This collection includes graphic novels for adults and youth, poetry, plays, and more.

"To be honest, creating this booklist was a humbling experience for me. My first thought was that we probably already had a decent collection and that it would be difficult to find 150 authors and titles that we did not already have. But I was mistaken. At this time and on a national level, Canadian libraries are working towards reconciliation by supporting Truth and Reconciliation initiatives. Purchasing 150 new books by Indigenous authors and allies is a small step in the grand scheme of things but one that I am very happy we undertook. I am grateful that the financial support from FoAL, as well as the initial idea, was able to provide a much needed boost for our collection and to help ensure that our collection is diverse and representative of our community," says Kristel Fleuren-Hunter, Children's Librarian and Manager of the Antigonish Town and County library (commonly known as the People's Place).

For FoAL Board Chair Sarah Armstrong, supporting this collection was an opportunity that will leave a legacy library users can access for years to come. They share important stories inclusive of all, and for her that's very important.

"The fact that our library is in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People behooves us to act on our responsibility to ensure that the library's collection both reflects and serves its community. The development of

the Indigenous Authors collection is an ongoing part of our commitment to acknowledging and upholding our treaty obligations," says Sarah Armstrong, Chair of the Friends of the Antigonish Library (FoAL).

Library users may be familiar with the spine label on our FoAL-sponsored Books. These books have a new spine label featuring the Mi'kmaq Eight Pointed Star, artwork and interpretation by Gerald Gloade. This new label indicates materials part of the library's Indigenous collection, meaning materials produced in an Indigenous language, works by Indigenous authors/creators, or works featuring Indigenous topics. FoAL has received further recognition for its support via a bookplate inside the sponsored titles. To learn more about the collection, visit your local public library.

-30-

Media Contact:

Kristel Fleuren-Hunter, Children's Services Librarian/Antigonish Librarian

Office: (902) 863-2486

Cell: (902) 971-0979

Email: kfhunter@nsngp.library.ns.ca