

## Shetland Library has a Sister

Shetland Library now has a 'sister library' in the USA. The American Library Association is encouraging U.S. libraries to form partnerships with libraries in other countries, "to promote the concept of a global community of libraries". Bambi Mansfield, the library director for Crawford County, Michigan, contacted Shetland Library a few months ago to say that her library had been awarded a grant to run a Shetland promotion and to form links with Shetland.

The Crawford County library has run displays and events with a Shetland theme, and offers a good selection of Shetland books. The local book group has been reading *Raven Black* by Ann Cleeves, there have been Shetland story hours, a 'Shetland in the Park' concert, and chances to meet Shetland ponies. Bambi herself keeps Shetland ponies, which may be where her fascination with Shetland began!

*"We really enjoyed bringing Shetland to Crawford County" says Bambi – "So many people found the Shetland culture endearing and some even began to search out their roots back to your fair islands. From tiny tots to the elderly, everyone enjoyed learning about your traditions, music and food. This sisterhood project has resulted in record patronage and program attendance. As for the ponies I keep, it is a labor of love. The ponies serve as companion therapy animals through Personal Ponies Ltd., a community service organization of volunteers."*

Staff at Shetland Library were delighted to receive a parcel of goodies from the Michigan library, which included a lovely print by a local artist. There are also dozens of children's books by Michigan authors - among them are 'American Chillers', a teen horror series by Jonathan Rand.

Another gift is a 'sock monkey' – a soft toy produced by volunteers in Crawford County. Sock monkeys are given to children who have parents serving abroad in the forces. Shetland Library is now running a competition to win the sock monkey. To enter, children should read one of the books from Michigan, and write a short review. The books and entry forms are now available at the Shetland Library.

The Library is sending some local publications and information to Michigan to add to their collection. Silvija Crook from Shetland Library is delighted about the link:

*" We are very excited about our new 'sister library' across the Atlantic. We are looking forward to establishing a range of links for both children and adults, giving us an insight into life in Michigan through the work of the two library services and their wider communities. There is a real interest in Crawford County about Shetland and we're please to be able to send some further information about the Isles"*

*Ends*

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