

# Friends News of Brooks Memorial Library

224 Main Street, Brattleboro, Vermont

## Brooks Memorial Library Celebrates Building's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with an All-Day Party on September 23<sup>rd</sup>

**FOR CENTURIES**, Brattleboro has enjoyed a love affair with books.

"Since 1842, Brattleboro readers have been privileged to borrow books," begins the 1965 prospectus for a new modern, \$560,000 library building on Main Street that would open on September 23, 1967. It's your 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, Brooks Memorial Library building!

In celebration, the Trustees of Brooks Memorial Library, the staff and the Friends of Brooks Memorial Library are throwing a big party for the public on September 23 — the very day the library opened fifty years earlier!

The library itself goes back even further. It is named after one of Brattleboro's most colorful

characters, George J. Brooks, who gave the town its first library building way back in 1887. The prospectus describes

Brooks and his gift this way: Given by a bachelor who spent his boyhood in Chesterfield, N.H., clerked in stores in Brattleboro, farmed in Illinois and made his fortune in a wholesale paper business on the West Coast in the "gold fever" years, the building Mr. Brooks constructed and presented to the town was described as 'beautiful and commodious.' At its opening it housed a collection of about 5,000 volumes. The impressive



dedication ceremonies took place on January 25, 1887, a month after the town's benefactor died unexpectedly of a heart attack, a draft of his dedication speech on his desk."

The old library building reached full capacity in 1965, just around the time the U.S. government decided it needed the property to expand the post office parking lot. The government bought and demolished the old building while a committee was formed

### 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration Donation

Amy Dickinson, advice columnist, humorist, author and panel member of NPR's popular news quiz, "Wait, Wait...Don't Tell Me!", will be the special guest speaker at the 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration of the new library building.

Dickinson's second memoir, *Strangers Tend to Tell Me Things: A Memoir of Love, Loss and Coming Home*, was just released. The Friends are donating 52 signed copies of the books to be given away, one to a family, first come first served, at the birthday celebration.

This is just another one of the many ways that the Friends support the library and its mission in the community.



*Continued on page 4*

# “Build a Better World” Summer Challenge

By Lindsay Bellville, Youth Services Librarian, and Paige Martin, Assistant Youth Services Librarian

## IF YOU HAPPENED TO

**STOP** by the top floor of the library this summer, you would have been welcomed by the sound of up to forty children and adults reading books, making crafts, eating snacks, playing super-sized Jenga and searching for the hidden castle picture.

Between the free lunch program and multiple library programs per week, the Children’s Room and Spicy Lime (Young Adult Room) have been busy places indeed.

We served 296 lunches during the seven-week Summer Food Service Program, with Mondays and Wednesdays being our busiest days, often serving 15 meals each day.

Our drop-in THRIVE Thursday events were well attended, the most successful being the collaboration with the local Love Brigade, when thirty-two people came to make cards to help spread the love. The mission of the Love Brigade “is to band together when there is an incident of hate and respond with giant helpings of love.”

We learned a number of interesting facts during our Nesting program with Jim from Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS). Jim brought three raptors with him for the evening: a rough-legged hawk, a barred owl, and a broad-winged hawk. He answered questions about what the birds ate, where they nested, and how each bird came to VINS.

Interesting facts: If you make a fist and hold it in front of your face, your fist is proportionally as large as a barred owl’s eye. Also, Great Horned owls have a horrible sense of smell and will eat skunks!

## Program Highlights

This year, when kids signed up for the Build a Better World Summer Challenge, we had them finish the statement, “I can build a better world by....” We displayed the responses on the door to



the Children’s Room so kids could see what each of their peers wrote and also see how many kids signed up for the summer program. Some examples of responses included: picking up trash, display the effects of climate change through photography, be nice to my sister, and going to the moon.

Some of our summer programming favorites included the Tinker Tuesday series. We embarked on a new electricity exploration activity each week. Starting with Circuits 101, we explored how a circuit works, what makes a complete circuit, and defined parallel and series circuits. Using this knowledge, kids made their own mini-flashlights to take home. We ended the Tinker Tuesday series with Toy Hacking, which involved taking apart battery-operated toys to see how they work on the inside. We learned the names and how to identify some of the components of a battery-based toy, such as the microprocessor chip and the printed circuit board (PCB). Another favorite week for Tinker Tuesday series was the “Take It Apart” week. This week involved a bunch of old appliances, from a VCR to a boombox. Kids used tools including screwdrivers, pliers, and sometimes even a hammer to take apart appliances and see how they work on the inside. One cool thing we learned from this exploration was that all speakers, from radios to



phones, have magnets in them in order to convert electrical waves into sound waves.

Another popular program was the Tuesday morning series we hosted, collaborating with both KidsPLAYce and Sobo Dance Studio. Every Tuesday morning throughout the summer we had a morning dance or movement time for families with children aged 0 to 5. These sessions had a great turnout with an average of 20 children and 15 parents attending each week. Thanks to the Friends for sponsoring this series and our great teachers, Laura Goldblatt (for “Song and Dance”) and Katie Tordonato (for our “Family Dance” class).

We would like to thank all our sponsors who helped to make these summer programs possible through funding of events and donations of prizes, including the Friends of Brooks Memorial Library, Bellville Realty, Bruegger’s Bagels, Burger King, Fast Eddie’s Bakery and Ice Cream, The Latchis Theatre, Sam’s Outdoor Outfitters, Subway, and Twinkle Town of Swanzey.

### **Fall Programming**

As fall descends on Brattleboro, we take a break from our weekly Wednesday morning Rhyme Times. Those looking for something fun to do can head over to KidsPLAYce, which will be open Wednesday mornings from 10AM to 12PM in September with free admission. Rhyme Time will begin again in October.

Our monthly LEGO-paloozas continue from 3PM to 5PM on the third Thursday of each month: September 21, October 19, and November 16.

Mark your calendar for the 36<sup>th</sup> annual Design-A-Plate event on Saturday, October 21st, from 10AM to 3PM! (See page 6 for more information.)

### **Spicy Lime Happenings**

It was a dark and stormy night...no, really it was! The torrential rain, booming thunder, and flashing lightning provided the perfect backdrop for our first-ever teen Zombie Tag event. Six teams joined us from 7 to 9PM at the “Brooks Mind Research Facility” (aka the Main Room downstairs). Utilizing black lights, mind power and knowledge of the Dewey decimal system, teens had to find the clues to find the key to



unlock the room and the three-digit code to unlock the antidote before time ran out. Unfortunately, the first two tries resulted in zombie apocalypse. After a quick break for pizza and soda, they were ready for round three. This time — success! They found the code, the key, and the antidote!

This year 61 teens participated in our Teen Summer Challenge. Teens earned scratch tickets when checking out books (one ticket per day) and for attending a Young Adult event. We handed out 196 tickets with 99 prize winners and 97 Try Again! Prizes included Bruegger’s Bagels, lanyards, aluminum water bottles, and gift certificates for Amy’s, Sam’s, The Latchis, The Works, and Brattleboro Food Coop. The most coveted prizes were the advance reader copies of books not yet published. Those scratch tickets featuring “Try Again” were entered into the grand prize drawing. Teens had their choice of trying for one of the two \$25 gift cards for GameStop, one of the two Latchis prize packs (which included two movie tickets and a small popcorn), or the Aveda shampoo and conditioner set (donated by Enright & Company) together with three advance reader copies.

The scratch-off tickets helped the Teen Room to another monthly statistics increase, hitting 575 items circulated in August. This is the highest circulation in over four years!

A huge thank you to all the businesses and individuals who donated prizes. ■

to oversee the funding and construction of a new one nearby.

The architect chosen was Hartford, Connecticut, resident Frederick J. Mahaffey, who died at the age of 85 in 2011. Mahaffey spent his early years working for famed architect Edward Durrell Stone before starting his own firm specializing in institutional buildings — schools, hospitals, libraries and corporate offices.

The building that Mahaffey designed for Brattleboro is notable for its large glass windows fronting on Main Street, its street-level entrance on Main Street and its easily-accessed stacks. The building has recently received a face-lift that included new meeting rooms, new rugs and new and updated bathrooms.

Thirty years after the library was built, Mahaffey revisited the building and spent time talking to head librarian Jerry Carbone. He later wrote: “I was pleased to see how well the original appearance inside and out, had held up... I see that the good quality standards that were used — the windows, the brickwork, the steel and concrete structure, all look very good. There is a long building life ahead.”

Carbone said that after the building opened, “circulation of materials increased by 20% in its first full year, and eventually after 50 years it was filled to capacity with not only books, but audio cassettes, video cassettes, books on tape, microfilm, CD-ROM. Of the many things listed here only the book continues as a viable format into the future. The other formats have been replaced by other technology.”

While the library might not have been the first “modern” flat-roofed building built on Main Street, Carbone said it was one of the very few to have a public elevator.

“The library elevator was used as an amusement ride by kids coming to the children’s room,” Carbone said. “In fact, when the library opened, a notice had to be painted on the elevator door — ‘adult use only’ — to discourage the riding of it from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> floors by the kids.”

Celebratory events will continue all day on September 23. In the morning, a children’s celebration begins at 10AM with a craft table where the kids can make birthday cards. It continues with a one-man show by Kevin O’Keefe, followed by cake and singing “Happy Birthday” from 11:30AM to noon.

In the afternoon, it’s time for the adults to have some fun. Events begin at 1:00PM, with music from the late sixties performed by Sharon Leslie and Dan Kasnitz. Current town manager Peter Elwell and Corwin “Corky” Elwell, long-time town manager who was in office when the new library building was being designed and built, will offer remarks. Carbone will then give a brief history of the library.

The special guest speaker is advice columnist, humorist, author and panel member of NPR’s popular news quiz, “Wait Wait... Don’t Tell Me!” Amy Dickinson, who will speak about the importance of stories and libraries in her own family.

After her talk there will be food with singing and dancing to music provided by the Wyld Nightz Trio with Jeff Brewer, and BCTV will be on hand to record library reminiscences. ■

## Annual Appeal/ Membership Drive

**THE FRIENDS OF BROOKS MEMORIAL LIBRARY** and the Board of Trustees will once again be combining the Annual Appeal and Membership drive. Anyone who contributes to the appeal will automatically become a member of the Friends (unless they request otherwise).

We were very fortunate last year with donations exceeding \$13,000. Thank you all for your support.

Please watch for the Annual Appeal letter, which will arrive later this fall. We hope you will generously support this Fund Drive.

# Friends 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Book, CD & DVD Sale December 1, 2 and 3

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR** for the Annual Friends of the Library “LIKE NEW” book sale, to be held in the library on:

**Thursday, November 30 from 10:00AM to 6:00PM,**  
**Friday, December 1 from 10:00AM to 6:00PM**  
**Saturday, December 2 from 10:00AM to 3:00PM.**  
**Remainders will be on sale until December 18.**

We will once again be offering the Book Lover’s Calendar and new this year, a Friends of the Library book bag. Gift wrapping will be available on Saturday from 11:00AM to 1:00PM.

We depend on the generous donations of books by library supporters. You may bring your books for the sale to the main circulation desk whenever the library is open.

Please note that this is the “like new” sale, so all donations should be gently used and in good condition. To insure quality, a staff member will check the donation before it is accepted.

We will accept both hardcover and paperback books, fiction and non-fiction, as well as books on CD’s, music CD’s and DVD’s. You can view



the guidelines on the Friends website ([friendsofbrookslibraryVT.org](http://friendsofbrookslibraryVT.org)) by clicking on the “Donations Welcome” link on the home page.

Please call Therese at 802-254-5290 x106 if you have any questions or you have a large quantity of boxes to donate.

The proceeds from these sales support the Library in many ways, including Children’s Room events and programs, special programs for adults, and equipment needs and services. ■



## Book Bag

Who doesn’t love a new Book Bag? The Friends will be offering one as our fall fundraiser, and we hope you could use a new one!

They will be for sale for \$10 at the Library’s 50<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration as well as at the Friends Holiday Book Sale. Check out the design.

## Raffle Drawing

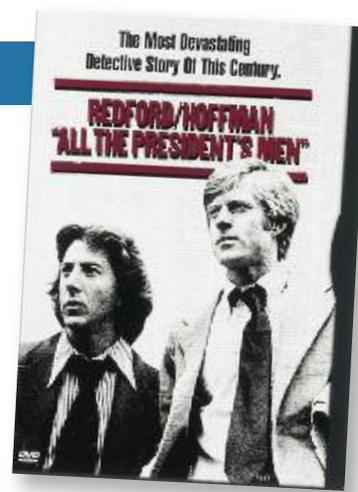
**WE HELD THE DRAWING** for our New York Public Library picture on Friday, July 21. Special thanks to Mary Ide for her generous donation. Congratulations to our winner. ■



# Journalism Film Festival

**WE WILL RESUME** our Journalism Film Series this fall with *All the President's Men*. The tentative date will be Sunday, October 22, at 4:PM. Please check our website for updates on dates and times, as these get finalized with the Latchis Theater.

The festival is being sponsored by a coalition whose members include the Latchis Theater, the Friends of Brooks Memorial Library, Brooks Memorial Library, *The Commons* and the *Brattleboro Reformer*. ■



# 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Design-A-Plate Workshop

## When is Design-A-Plate?

Our 36<sup>th</sup> annual Design-A-Plate workshop will be held on Saturday, October 21, from 10:00AM to 3:00PM in the Meeting Room.

## How does Design-A-Plate work?

Children and adults come to the library and draw on a special template using the provided markers. The templates are sent away to the Makit factory where they are made into a plate or bowl. The plate and bowls arrive back at the library and will be ready for pickup in early December.

## What age is Design-A-Plate for?

Design-a-Plate is great for children of all ages and a fun measure of your child's changes through the years. It's fun for adults too!

## What is the cost for Design-A-Plate?

This year, the cost is \$6.00 per item for both plates and bowls. The amount covers the processing cost of each item. The \$6.00 is a reduced rate since



we place such a large order. We accept cash and checks made out to Brooks Memorial Library.

## Do I need to register my child?

No. Just come to the library between 10:00AM and 3:00PM on Saturday, October 21.

## When will I get my plate or bowl?

Plates and bowls are expected to be available for pick up in the Children's Room by December. We will post a notice on our website when the plates and bowls are ready to be picked up. Since the plates and bowls are sent away to be processed, we cannot guarantee when they will arrive, but past experience shows processing and shipping time is approximately one month.

## Will you call me when my plate or bowl is ready?

No. You are welcome to call the Children's Room at 254-5290 ext 110 to check if the plates and bowls are ready for pick up. Due to the large number of participants, we do not call everyone when the plates and bowls arrive. ■

# First Wednesdays Schedule



**THE VERMONT HUMANITIES COUNCIL FIRST WEDNESDAYS LECTURE SERIES** begins in October and continues on the first Wednesday of each month. The talks are held on the main floor of the Library, beginning at 7PM.

Visit [vermonthumanities.org/first-Wednesdays](http://vermonthumanities.org/first-Wednesdays) to see the full 2017–2018 schedule of First Wednesdays events held across the state.

The Brooks Memorial Library First Wednesdays lectures are made possible by the generous support from: Brattleboro Savings & Loan, Dead River, Downs Rachlin Martin PLLC, Friends of Brooks Memorial Library, The Richards Group and Windham World Affairs Council. ■

**OCTOBER 4 • Mark Stoler**  
**Nothing to Fear, But Fear Itself:  
Roosevelt and the New Deal**

From 1929 to 1939, the US experienced the longest and worst economic depression in its history. Although not the country's first economic crisis, it was the first in which the federal government acted decisively to reverse it. UVM History Professor Emeritus Mark A. Stoler discusses how Roosevelt's New Deal changed the government's role in the economy and affected the lives of Americans in ways that are still with us today.

**NOVEMBER 1 • Randall Balmer**  
**Martin Luther and the Protestant  
Reformation: A 500-year Appraisal**

Martin Luther's posting of the Ninety-five Theses on the cathedral door at Wittenburg five hundred years ago launched a movement that utterly transformed Western society and our notions of authority, culture, art, and tradition. Dartmouth Religion professor Randall Balmer assesses the Protestant Reformation half a millennium later.

**DECEMBER 6 • Barbara Will**  
**World War I and American Writers**

Dartmouth professor Barbara Will discusses the effect of the war on American writers, particularly Gertrude Stein, John Dos Passos, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, and T. S. Eliot, and explores how the war changed American literature and made it "modern."

**JANUARY 3 • David Mills**  
**An Evening with Langston Hughes**

In this dramatic rendition of Langston Hughes' poems and short stories, actor and writer David Mills celebrates the life of the Harlem Renaissance writer.

Underwriter: Jack & Mary Ellen Bixby

**FEBRUARY 7 • Nancy Crumbine**  
**The Legacy of Rachael Carson**

Silent Spring not only launched the environmental movement but also laid out the fundamental problems with our relationship to nature. Dartmouth professor Nancy Jay Crumbine celebrates scientist and poet Rachael Carson's clarity, courage, and brilliance.

**MARCH 7 • Judith Frank**  
**The Known World and  
the Literary Character**

Amherst professor Judith Frank discusses Edward P. Jones' 2003 Pulitzer-winning novel *The Known World*, described as "a masterpiece that deserves a place in the American literary canon," and considers what its unusual approach to characterization can tell us about slavery, personhood, and novel-reading. Books available to read in advance (NOT required).

**APRIL 4 • Barry O'Connell**  
**An Emerson for Our Time**

Drawing on Ralph Waldo Emerson's essays "The American Scholar," "Self-Reliance," and "Experience," Amherst professor emeritus Barry O'Connell explores the many ways Emerson's writings continue to offer insights that can make our lives more open and fruitful.

**MAY 2 • Jim Maroney**  
**Georgia O'Keeffe: A Critical Look**

Georgia O'Keeffe lived 99 years and produced over 2,000 works in her 75-year career. James Maroney, the former Head of American Paintings at both Sotheby's and Christie's in New York who conducted her estate appraisal after her death, presents a critical evaluation of her best work.

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Supporting the  
Library with funding,  
programming, and  
technology

friendsofbrookslibraryvt.org  
www.facebook.com/FOBML  
friendsofbrookslibraryvt@gmail.com  
802-254-5290

## Brooks Memorial Library



If you have a chance, check out our website:

**[www.friendsofbrookslibraryvt.org](http://www.friendsofbrookslibraryvt.org)**

Thanks to Susan Rohde, a new Friends volunteer, the website is being kept up to date with news and events at the library.

## Parking for evening Library events



**IF YOU PLAN** to attend an evening event at the Library, the Municipal Parking Lot behind the Library is available for free parking after 6PM. It is a short walk to the rear entrance of the Library, and there is an elevator to the First Floor. There is one handicap parking spot nearest to the walkway to the Library.