Supporting the Library with funding, programming, and technology

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Friends News of Brooks Memorial Library

224 Main Street, Brattleboro, Vermont

Brooks Memorial Library Community Archives Project

THE GOAL of the community archives project, says Jeanne Walsh, beloved reference librarian at BML, is to identify, properly care for, and provide access to the archival material in the Brooks Memorial Library special collections. "We wanted someone who understands archives to come in and look at our collection, at our special collections rooms, our local history and genealogy collections, and some materials in our fine arts collection: handwritten manuscripts, financial logs of old businesses in Brattleboro, scrap books that people pulled together, treaties at the time of Fort Dummer with indigenous peoples — unique materials that can't be reproduced."

Working with the Vermont Community Foundation, Jeanne helped to secure grants from the Crosby-Gannett Fund and the Dunham-Mason Fund. "They have a soft spot for historical projects," says Jeanne, "especially things that get local communities excited about their own history."

Additional funding for the project was made possible through BML trustee funds, and financial assistance provided by the Friends of Brooks Memorial Library.

"This is a great beginning," says Jeanne, "with potential for different groups to find ways to collaborate and expand on this. It's an opportunity to help this community understand its history, and expand the understanding of history through archives." ■

Holiday Raffle Baskets

THE FRIENDS will be offering Holiday Raffle baskets again this year during the Holiday Book Sale, and we are looking for donations of items, as well as help with assembling gift baskets.

If you are interested in helping out or would like to donate items for the holiday raffle baskets, please contact Betsy at friendsofbrookslibraryvt@gmail.com or leave a message with Courtney Carey, circulation manager, @ 802.254.5290 • courtney@brookslibraryvt.org

Children's Room Summer Events

THE SUMMER is a busy time of year for the Children's Room as we run our summer reading and summer lunch programs. This year, we are so grateful to the Friends of the Library for sponsoring two big special events in addition to our usual calendar of activities! Because of the Friends' generosity, we were able to bring in a show called "First Mime on the Moon" as well as an inflatable indoor planetarium from Montshire Museum called the StarLab.

First Mime on the Moon!

Robert Rivest is a comic mime who performed his show "First Mime on the Moon!" on Tuesday, July 16th from 1:30–2:30PM — not so coincidentally the 50th anniversary of the launch of the first rocket to land on the moon. We had a great turn out for a Tuesday afternoon — 19 children and 8 adults attended with much laughter and applause. His show introduced the kids to the basics of miming and then invited them to get up on stage and try out many of the tricks — they also created a story about going to the moon and tried many different mime-based ideas to get back to earth! Even one of our shyest small patrons was on stage for most of the show, trying every trick and having a great time. Afterwards we got feedback from some parents saying what a talented performer Robert was and how much unexpected fun they had.

StarLab

The StarLab took place on Saturday July 27th and it was special for numerous reasons. The Montshire didn't *just* send us their inflatable traveling planetarium for a whole day, they also sent us a science educator to run the planetarium and teach us about the stars in the night sky of Vermont on that particular day. It was also a special event because we were able to take over all of the open space on the Adult floor of the library and open our planetarium visits to the adults as well. Staff on both floors rarely get to team up to present a cool interactive activity to our community and we had a blast! We kept the planetarium going for most of the day, running 45-minute education sessions at 11AM, 12, 1PM, and 2PM. We reserved one for adults ONLY, but the truth is that we had many adults attend each of the other sessions as well, encouraging whole-community, inter-generational mingling. The science educator was funny, informative, and made the lessons interactive and accessible to everyone, regardless of prior familiarity with the stars. We had a final attendance of 33 children and 29 adults, all of whom reported not only having a great time but also learning a few things about our planet's place in the cosmos and our relationship to the stars. The science educator even left us with gifts of free passes to the Montshire (for kids) to give out to our attendees!

Thank you so much, Friends, for all of your help in bringing these fantastic events to the Brooks Memorial Library community.

Chloë Liotta-Jones
Assistant Youth Services Librarian
Brooks Memorial Library

First Wednesdays 2019–2020 Season

THE POPULAR FIRST WEDNESDAYS SERIES sponsored by the Vermont Humanities Council, returns to Brooks Memorial Library. All lectures in this series are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7PM in the Main Reading Room, and they are free and open to the public.

To learn more about the First Wednesdays series, and to see the full schedule of 2019–2020 lectures held throughout the state, please visit www.vermonthumanities.org/first-wednesdays.

The 2019–2020 First Wednesdays series is made possible through the generous support of local sponsors including Against the Grain, Brattleboro Autobody & Detailing, Brattleboro Retreat, Everyone's Books, GPI Construction, New Chapter, The Richards Group, The Vermont Country Store, and Windham World Affairs Council. ■

NOVEMBER 6 • Kate O'Neill
Sister, Daughter, Mom: A Love Story from the Opioid Epidemic

In October 2018, a young mom named Madelyn Linsenmeir died after a long struggle with addiction. Her obituary was read online by millions of people. Madelyn's sister, writer Kate O'Neill, shares her family's experience loving and losing Maddie, the stories of other Vermonters impacted by this disease, and potential solutions to the crisis.

DECEMBER 4 • Richard Wright
US Immigration Policy in Historical Perspective

One would think that current anxieties about immigration in the US have never been more intense, but history teaches us otherwise. Dartmouth professor Richard Wright examines the present-day contradictions of US immigration policy and places them in historical perspective.

JANUARY 8, 2020 • Kevin Gardner
The History and Structure of Stone Walls

New England has thousands of miles of stone walls. Author and builder Kevin Gardner discusses the history of stone walls and how they became a significant element of our landscape, all while building a miniature New England wall in the library.

Parking for evening Library events

The Municipal Parking Lot behind the Library is available with three dedicated library spots for the day as well as the night (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.

FEBRUARY 5, 2020 • Ellen W. Kaplan
Refugee Theater: Kurdish and Yazidi Women Speak Out

Rojava, a revolutionary experiment in Kurdish Syria, attempts to create an inclusive democracy safe from ISIS, Turkish incursion, and Syria's civil war. Smith College professor Ellen W. Kaplan discusses the process of interviewing women, activists, refugees, and fighters from the Rojava region, and transforming their experiences into theater.

MARCH 4 • Andy Kolovos and Mary Wesley
Come and Listen

In this interactive "listening party," archivist Andy Kolovos and producer Mary Wesley share audio clips from the Vermont Folklife Center's archives that showcase Vermont's past and present diversity.

APRIL 1 • William Edelglass
Mindfulness: Its History, Practice, and Meaning

Marlboro College professor William Edelglass traces the history of mindfulness from multiple traditions, starting with early Buddhist texts and ending with the secularization of mindfulness in contemporary American society.

MAY 6 • James Sanchez
The Salt of the Earth: The Rhetoric of White Supremacy

In 2014 in Grand Saline, Texas, a 79-year-old white Methodist minister named Charles Moore set himself on fire as a final protest against the community's racism. Drawing from his documentary film Man on Fire, Middlebury professor James Sanchez discusses the rhetoric of white supremacy and suggests ways communities might address bigotry.

Debating Our Rights: The Pressures on Citizenship in a Constitutional Democracy

"A CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY," says Meg Mott, professor emeritus of politics at Marlboro College, "is politics informed by the rule of law. It is playing by a set of rules that lean toward equality and liberty. That is what a constitutional democracy offers us."

A central goal of the *Debating Our Rights* discussion series is to gain a better understanding of the constitutional amendments by examining case law: What were people thinking at the time the amendments were written and how has our interpretation of the amendments evolved?

Meg isn't looking to preach to the choir; she seeks to encourage a robust discussion about the Constitution and to engage people of all ages and political stripes. And she has a knack for drawing people out and energizing voices. "I feel like I'm conducting, and I'm leaning into that audience to find out what they have to say. It's not just about me delivering, we're really going to debate it, so get those voices out there."

The *Debating Our Rights* series continues with a discussion of the sixth amendment on Wednesday, October 9, from 7–9PM in the Main Reading Room. ■

New chairs for the teen room

14th Annual Friends' Holiday book sale

LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT HOLIDAY GIFT? There is a good chance you'll find it at the 14th annual Friends' Holiday Book Sale. Please join us Friday, December 12th and 13th from 10AM– 4PM and December 14th from 10AM to 2PM in the Main Reading Room where you will find a wonderful selection of "like new" books, CDs, and DVDs for sale, generously donated by library patrons and supporters.

Prices for all items are very reasonable, and the proceeds from the annual holiday sale are used to support library events and the high-quality programming at Brooks Memorial Library.

If you wish to donate items for this event, please bring your books, CDs, and DVDs to the circulation desk. To see the donation guidelines, please visit friendsofbrookslibraryvt.org/donate. If you have additional questions, or you would like to volunteer to help out with the event, please contact Courtney Carey, Circulation Manager, @ 802.254.5290 • courtney@brookslibraryvt.org. We look forward to seeing you there! ■

Lindsay Bellville, Youth Services Librarian, shows off one of the new chairs

Audio Storytelling: Learning the Basics with the Vermont Folklife Center

Mary Wesley

Andy Kolovos

ON SATURDAY, October 26th from 1–5PM in the community room, Vermont Folklife Center's Mary Wesley and Andy Kolovos lead a workshop exploring the basics of audio storytelling.

This workshop begins with a brief introduction to the Vermont Folklife Center's work and approach to cultural research and media production. Students will then explore the tools, technologies, and methods of collecting audio field recordings and interviews — including some hands-on practice with audio gear and microphones. The workshop concludes with an overview of the audio editing process and the software tools available for the job. By the end of the day students will have an overview of the basics of interviewing, audio recording, and the editing process, as well as ideas for how to share and distribute audio. Introduction to Audio Storytelling: The Basics is offered by the Vermont Folklife Center (VFC) in partnership with the Brattleboro Words Project, which is partially funded through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The Friends of Brooks Memorial Library is proud to underwrite this VFC workshop and help to support the Brattleboro Words Project and its important work in our community.

Story Booth

The Brattleboro History of Words Project has partnered with Guilford Sound to distribute state-of-the-art recording equipment to area schools and the Brooks Memorial Library. This includes the library's new Story Booth — a sound-insulated booth for the use of our community researchers and the public at large who can check out equipment or use it on-site. ■

Become a Member!

As a member, you'll receive:

- Our quarterly newsletter mailed to you
- Discounts at many of our events
- Voting privileges at our annual meeting
- The good feeling of supporting your public library

Join!

Thank you to everyone who generously donated to the 2019 Annual Appeal and Membership Drive

THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND BUSINESSES

have contributed to the annual appeal as of the publication of this newsletter:

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Drew Adam
Against the Grain Gourmet Foods LLC
Jean Arrington
Rebecca Balint and Elizabeth Wohl
Nancy Barber
Orion and Carol Barber
Katherine Barratt
Alexandra Barstow
Sarah Bedichek
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Friends Appreciation Brunch

Please join us as we celebrate the
14th annual National Friends of the Library week
with a brunch for all the members of the
Friends of Brooks Memorial Library.

Saturday, October 26th ■ 10 to noon
Brooks Memorial Library