



# The Library Lookout

April 2012

<http://www.skowhegan.lib.me.us>  
[skowlib@skowhegan.lib.me.us](mailto:skowlib@skowhegan.lib.me.us)  
207 474 9072

Library Hours: Mon.–Fri., 10–6; Sat. 10-2

## DIRECTOR'S CORNER

By your Director, Dale Jandreau

April has always been one of my favorite months. After those long months of being cooped up, you can finally get outside, although the March heat wave sort of spoiled us this year.

I've been reading Clive Cussler's new book *The Thief*, an Isaac Bell adventure. Cussler has been writing for years, and I've been a big fan of his for all that time. At first with his Dirk Pit character, and now with this new character, Isaac Bell, Cussler takes you back to those early years before the great depression. Bell's part spy, part Dudley Do-Right, and part tough guy all rolled into one package. Bell's use of gadgets from that era, help solve the case and give the reader a better picture of what life was like during that time frame. If you like adventure stories, you can't beat a good Cussler read.

This month we'll be having handmade quilts on display at the library. These beautiful quilts are just the ticket to brighten up those rainy April days. Stop by and take a look, I'm sure you'll recognize the names of a few of the local quilters.

Amy Schram, from the Boston area Better Business Bureau, will be here April 5<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm to speak on identity theft and scams and fraud. This will be a very informative program.

The folks from the History House will be here on Wednesday, April 25<sup>th</sup> at 7pm for a Community Discussion over "The Good Ole Days, How Horrible." It stands to be a very interesting discussion.

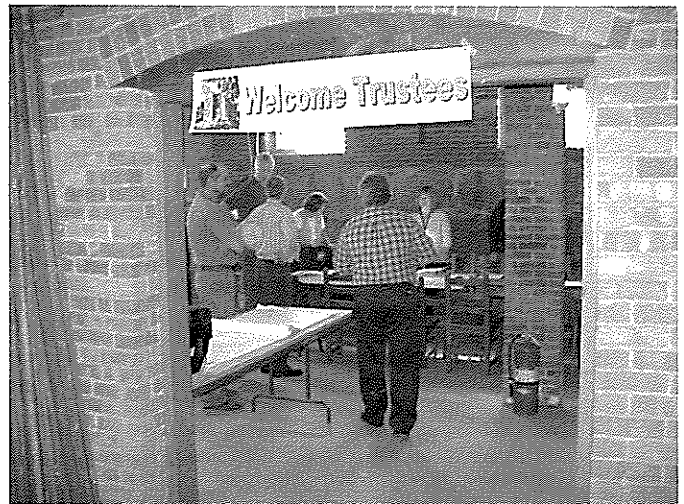
Also this month, Ruth Blood will be teaching "Beginning Genealogy" classes. These free classes will be held on April 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, respectively. They start at 1 pm. If you've ever had a desire to search your family tree, then mark your calendars.

The "Transition Skowhegan" group will meet at 7pm on Wednesday, April 11<sup>th</sup>. This month's topic is "Demotorization, Life Without Cars."

And last but not least, it's Jazz Night again in the Memorial Room. If you're looking for a great night out with great music, stop by the library on April 19<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm. You'll be glad you did.

Until next month,

**Dale**



*Bloomfield Trustees meets in the New Genealogy Room*

**Friends' Annual Meeting** The Friends of the Library Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 10 at 6 PM. All members and guests are invited to attend.

**FOL Membership Dues** Please remember that all annual membership dues are due in April. Checks may be mailed to or left at the library. THANK YOU

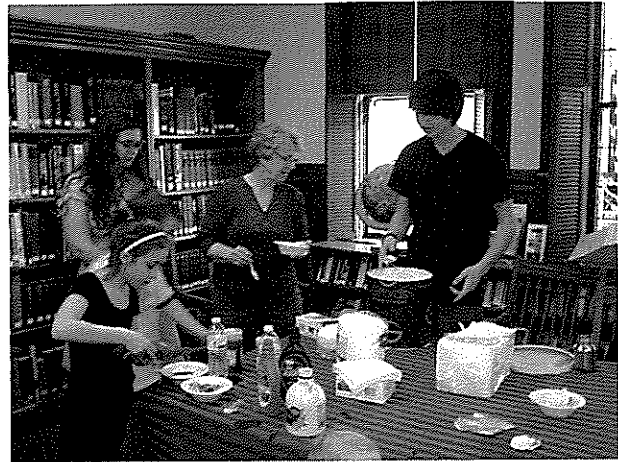
## CHILDREN'S ROOM

By Angie Herrick

Although the warm weather may have slowed the sap from flowing, it certainly didn't slow us down here at the library with our Maple Celebrations. We watched videos, made a neat maple leaf craft with Yvonne from Skowhegan Pottery, listened to Iver Lofving do a very animated reading of the book Maple Syrup Season by Ann Purmell and we got to end the night with some ooey-goey ice cream topped with what else, but maple syrup!

I was lucky enough to get a tour of the basement's renovations this month and I was just blown away! I hadn't been down there since last fall and the progress was definitely visible. The floor has been poured, the windows have been replaced and the walls are being studded up. Seeing parts of the foundation that haven't been exposed since 1889 made me curious about what life may have been like back then when the library was first being constructed. Then, I thought how awesome would it be to be able to add a time capsule into the wall for future generations to be able to take a glimpse back to the year 2012? So, after speaking with Steve Dionne and Dale, we are going to do just that! On Tuesday, April 17<sup>th</sup> at 4:30, we are going to hold a Family Story Hour: Construction Zone! This program will be held in the Memorial Room downstairs, where we will read our story about construction and renovations, then sign and fill the time capsule! When our capsule is ready, we will venture down to the basement for a quick tour ending with adding the time capsule into our library's wall. Afterwards, snacks will be served back upstairs in the Memorial Room. The library is looking for ideas of what to add to our time capsule and would love the public's suggestions. If you have anything you would like to add or ideas on what should be included, please e-mail or call the library. All are welcome to join in on this exciting opportunity to leave our mark in history!

Also this month in celebration of Earth Day, we are going to hold our second annual Art & Earth Week. April 17<sup>th</sup> – April 20<sup>th</sup> (which is also school vacation week) the children's room will be celebrating Earth Day by creating unique projects from materials that might otherwise be thrown in the trash. Anytime between 12:00 – 2:00 families are encouraged to come in and get messy doing the day's art project. For more information, please call the library or see our Facebook page.



*Thanks to ice cream donated by Gifford's, the maple sundaes were delicious!*

**Library Lawn Sale** Planning to clean out those closets, cupboards, attics, or basements? Please remember the Library Lawn Sale at 538 Malbons Mills Road.

The sale will be on May 19, but you may bring your donations any time to the Library, or to Hastings' barn, (please call 474-3949 before you come)

We're looking for any items in saleable condition such as furniture, toys, games, tools, dishes, glassware, clothing, books, hobby materials, decorations, etc.

### BECOME A FRIEND OF YOUR LIBRARY

The Friends of the Skowhegan Free Public Library, a not for profit group dedicated to supporting and improving the library for all members of the community, invite you to join us. Dues are \$10 for Individuals, \$8 for Seniors and Students, and \$15 for Families.

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Please complete this form and mail to:  
Skowhegan Free Public Library, 9 Elm Street,  
Skowhegan, Maine 04976

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Tel. # \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check the activities you are willing to help with.**

- Refreshments for library activities.
- Making phone calls.
- Helping with fundraising activities

## Meet a Volunteer

By Marcia B. Granville

My first visit to the Skowhegan Free Public Library occurred many years ago, perhaps sixty-five or more when I was less than nine years old. I remember climbing those circular stairs with great delight, entering a room full of warm light, and best of all, books. As many books as a small child could ever hope to see and read. Books have always been my friends and the Skowhegan Free Public Library has always remained a place of warmth and happiness, even if those circular stairs have become a mild torture rather than the delight they used to be.

Always a patron of the library, I became one of the original Friends of the Library and now serve on the Library Renovation Committee as well. Last fall, I became a volunteer. The Friends of the Library publish the Library Lookout ten times a year and raise money through membership fees and fundraisers. The money they raise has bought books, mended an antique clock, furnished bookshelves for the Children's Room and helped in many other ways. The Renovation Committee also raises money, but its funds are being used to bring the library up to safety codes and will eventually make the library accessible to everyone. Volunteers help with the day-to-day tasks of operating the library.

I spend four hours at the library one day a week. On three Fridays a month, I sit at a computer in a back room. My job is to enter the barcode of each picture book into the computer and check to see that all the information is correct. The call number of each book starts with J PIC followed by the first three letters of the author's last name. This a change from the former system in which all children's books were listed under E. So I change the call numbers. I check to see that the book is shown to be in the children's collection and I make sure that the book's price is also listed-for insurance purposes. This job has taken months! I expect to spend another six to eight hours on it before finishing. The reason for the length of time is that many of the picture books are as thin as a slice of cheese, only a few being what I would call book-sized.

One Saturday a month, I sit behind the desk downstairs in the adult section of the library. I never before realized how many things Françoise has to keep track of. It seems that I learn two or three new things every time I sit behind her desk.

When my children were grown and I retired from the workplace, I needed a way to feel useful. I found that at the Skowhegan Free Public Library.

## BOOK REVIEW

by Betty Austin

A good book in the midst of our busy lives is always a wonderful diversion and that's how I felt about *The Rose Labyrinth*. It was written by Titania Hardie, a new author to me. The book includes history, medicine, romance, mystery, religious zealots and more. The beginning of the book seemed to be like an ending but then goes in a totally different direction than I expected. Perhaps that's why I found it so interesting and stayed up too late to finish it. Lucy and Alex, the heroine and hero of the book, were fun to follow through their adventurous travels and riddle solving. I really enjoyed Titania's writing and will definitely look for another book written by her.

## NEW BOOKS

### FICTION

Bell, Ted/ Phantom: an Alex Hawke novel  
Box, C.J./Force of Nature  
Brett, Simon/ Guns in the Gallery  
Childs, Laura / Agony of the Leaves  
Coben, Harlan/ Stay Close  
Cussler, Clive/ Thief  
Delinsky, Barbara/ First, Best and Only  
Gutcheon, Beth/ Gossip  
Ivey, Eowyn/ Snow Child  
Kleypas, Lisa / Rainbow Road  
Oates, Joyce Carol/ Mudwoman  
Patterson, James/ Guilty Wives  
Patterson, Richard North/ Fall from Grace  
Perry, Thomas/ Poison Flower  
Peterson, Tracie/ Chasing the Sun  
Steel, Danielle/ Betrayal  
White, Randy Wayne/ Chasing Midnight

### NON-FICTION

Kerouack, Jack/ Sea is my Brother  
Kyle, Chris/ American Sniper  
Riley, Kathleen/ Astaires: Fred & Adele  
Shadid, Anthony/ House of Stone  
Steinhauser, Olen/ American Spy  
Weiner, Tim/ A History of the FBI

**The Library Lookout**  
**9 Elm Street**  
**Skowhegan, ME 04976**

**Your librarians:**

Library Director Dale Jandreau  
Children's Librarian Angie Herrick  
Assistant Librarian Francoise LaBonte

**Your Library Trustees:**

Toni Jo Blaisdell,  
Lee Granville, Corrilla Hastings  
Carol Jarvais, Sara McCabe  
Lynn Perry, Warren Shay  
Ex Officio, Darla Pickett

**Friends officers:**

Darla Pickett, pres.  
Peggy Lovejoy, vice pres.,  
Margo Reid, sec. Kathleen Littlefield, treas.

## Calendar of Events

### APRIL

April 3 Library Trustees Meeting, 6 PM  
April 5 Better Business Bureau speaker, Amy Schram, "Identity Theft", 6 PM  
April 9 & 23 Toddler Time, 10:30 AM  
April 11 Library Renovation Meeting, 6 PM (upstairs)  
April 11 Transition Group, Discussion: "DeMotorization", 7 PM  
April 13 FOL Library Lunch Sale  
April 14 Socrates Café Discussion Group, 11 - 1  
April 17 to 20 Art & Earth Week (more details to come)  
April 17 Family Story Hour & Library Time Capsule, 4:30-5:30  
April 17 & 24 Beginning Genealogy, 1 PM  
April 19 Jazz Night, 7 PM  
April 25 History House Community Discussion, "The Good Ole Days – How Horrible", 7 PM  
April 26 Monthly Genealogy Group Meeting, 1-3 PM  
April 28 Super Science Saturday, "Earth Awareness: presented by LC Bates Museum, 11 AM

### MAY

May 1 Library Trustees Meeting, 6 PM  
May 7 to 10 Children's Book Week Celebrations (details to follow)  
May 9 Library Renovation Meeting, 6 PM  
May 10 FOL Annual Meeting, 6 PM  
May 14 & 28 Toddler Time, 10:30 AM  
May 20 Transition Group, "Reskilling" at Tessiers' Farm, 2 – 5 PM  
May 21 Pen Pal Club, 3 PM  
May 26 Super Science Saturday, 11 AM

## Visiting With an Old Friend

By Lee Granville



Recently, Marcia brought a book home from the library that I had known and loved in my youth. The title is *Yankee Boyhood*, written by R.E. Gould and published in 1950, the year I was a freshman in High School. Ralph Gould is an uncle to perhaps a better known Maine author, John Gould. Both wrote humorously and wisely about growing up on a Maine farm; the *same* farm actually, but Ralph was about thirty years older than John so their stories reflect the different generations in which they lived.

Ralph writes of his boyhood, some seventy years earlier in the 1880's. My mother borrowed this book from the library when it first came out and I'll be willing to bet it was this exact same copy! This is a first edition and it sure looks as if it had been in circulation for sixty years, although it's still perfectly readable.

Mom was a huge fan of the books of both Gould's and other contemporary Maine writers. She grew up in the city and had lived in Maine for only a few years. She was still starry eyed over the tales and antics of "Real Maine characters" as she called them. My Dad had grown up on a hardscrabble New Hampshire farm and had a less romantic view of rural life but an appreciation for the solid integrity of his Maine friends and neighbors.

The three of us each read the book and the one story that caught our mutual interest was the tale of the Skunk king. I'll paraphrase it a bit for brevity but here is the heart of the story.

It seems there was a notoriously thrifty farmer nearby that Gould refers to as "The Deacon". This fellow realized that his cows would give lots of milk in the early summer when the grass was green and the price of butter was low. In the fall, the price of butter was much higher but the cows didn't give as much milk. The Deacon solved this problem by devising a method of storing his summer butter in large crocks that would keep for months in his cool cellar. He would repackage it in the fall and sell at a higher price. This particular year, he had an unusually large amount on hand as the weather grew cold.

Just before he closed his cellar windows for winter, an inquisitive skunk happened along and managed to fall through a window and land on the dirt floor where he took up a happy residence. Now the skunk wasn't doing any harm and he kept the mouse population in control but the Deacon was worried that something would disturb him and he would skunk up the cellar. Knowing how butter absorbs odors he figured an episode like that would likely ruin a year's butter business.

The Deacon asked around the neighborhood if anyone could recommend a man who would solve the problem without causing him to lose his butter. Someone mentioned that over in the next town there was a man named John Nichols who had gained fame as the "Skunk King" because of his ability to deal with them without embarrassing results. He tracked John down and asked what he would charge to deal with the skunk. John wasn't much interested in the Deacon's problem but finally allowed as how he would do the job for five dollars. Now this was a good deal of money in those days and the Deacon was outraged over this proposition. Finally with no other option in sight, he agreed to the price provided no odiferous incidents occurred.

Soon, John appeared on the scene. "Where is your skunk?" John asked and was told that he seemed to make his home behind the soap barrel. John went down to the cellar, reached behind the soap barrel and seized the skunk by the tail, lifting his feet off the floor before he could adjust himself. John came up the stairs with the helpless creature struggling in his grasp. Skunks control their scent glands with the same muscles that operate their tail and when suspended by the tail they cannot turn on the artillery. The Deacon was frantic to see five dollars of his money being extracted so easily and he screamed, "I won't give it, 'tain't worth but a quarter!" "All right," said John tossing the skunk back down cellar, whereupon there was no doubt that it WAS worth five dollars!

Now, of course my Mom was thrilled by the hilarious activities of the quaint Maine characters but Dad took a broader view. "There are some good old Maine principles here that you ought to realize," he said to me. "For one thing, among honest people, a verbal contract is to be honored just as if it were written and notarized. The Deacon clearly broke up the deal and got what he deserved. Next, there is the value of professional services. John probably didn't go to college but learning to be the skunk king is a hit or miss business, so to speak, and he no doubt put in some long lonesome days learning his trade."

This book and many others of the genre may be found in the Maine Authors section in the War Memorial reading room. There are many younger folks writing in Maine today included in this section. We've watched Gerry Boyle transform himself from a newspaper columnist to a mature writer of Maine based action stories and Paul Doiron, Editor of *Down East Magazine*, has recently finished his second novel along similar lines. His latest, *Trespass*, is in the new books section also in the reading room.

If you are a veteran reader as I am, you may find some pleasant memories out in the stacks where many of the older books reside. Who knows, you may find your own version of an old friend lurking just around the corner of the next stack!