



The Library Lookout

Newsletter of the Friends of the Library

February 1999

Tel: 474-9072

Wish List

Books on Tape



Software for ages 7-14.



Thanks for your ongoing support



Popular Selections

Fiction:

The Garden Tour Affair... Ripley

Non-Fiction:

Square Foot Gardening.. Bartholomew

The Organic Gardener... Foster

Landscape Gardening.. Crockett

Essential Perennials... Fell

Gardening for Beginners.. Cook

The Book of Bulbs.. Rockwell

Children:

Big Anthony.. dePaola

The Book of Dragons.. Hague

Young Adults:

Marlfox... Jacques

Voyagers on the Great Titanic.... White

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE

The Town of Skowhegan and the Budget Committee have approved the requested increase in the Library budget. It is important for all friends and supporters of the Library to attend Town Meeting on March 8, 1999 at 7:pm, to support the Town and the Budget Committee in their recommendation to the voters. The Town of Skowhegan and the Budget Committee have taken a lot of time to analyze the various budget requests, and the Library is fortunate that both the Selectmen and the Budget Committee feel there is merit in the efforts of the Friends and the Library Trustees to improve the Library.

Warren C. Shay, Trustee

LATEST NEWS

Compiled by Mary Davies and Jim Foster

Asbestos has been removed from your library. Work on safety rails on the front steps is underway.

On Jan. 21, Corrilla Hastings attended another workshop on stimulating programs and resources for kids. (Sparks). This was held at the Belfast library. She finds the programs a wonderful opportunity to meet and learn from children's librarians from all over the state.

Friends have hooked up 2 PC's in the children's rooms. Wiring is being arranged and we'll soon be on the internet. Software for 3-7 year olds will be loaded very shortly. This station will be a valuable tool for our youngest patrons.

Two additional computers will be made internet ready on the first floor. Our thanks to the Butler family.

The renovation fund continues to grow. The Harold Boardman memorial has now realized nearly \$1400. We are grateful.

FRIENDS INDEED

Many thanks to: Jim Foster for a 1999 subscription of *PC World* and for setting up the children's computers; Samuel Rouse, Cert. Mac Tech, for helping out on our Mac; Friend Herky Foster for building a keyboard shelf for children; and especially, many thanks to Skowhegan Savings Bank for funding this newsletter for 1999. They are good neighbors, lending a helping hand.





Enjoying the resources of your library

History Learned Through Fiction

By Marcia B. Granville

For many people, history is an enthralling subject. They pore through books on the Civil War. They watch hours of programs on the History Channel. Fiction, to them, is light trivia — a waste of time. For me, history as it was taught in school is less than thrilling. It seemed to be nothing but dates, battles and the featureless names of great men and a very few great women. That doesn't mean we can't or won't learn the stuff. It just means that we need more than just the facts to make it interesting.

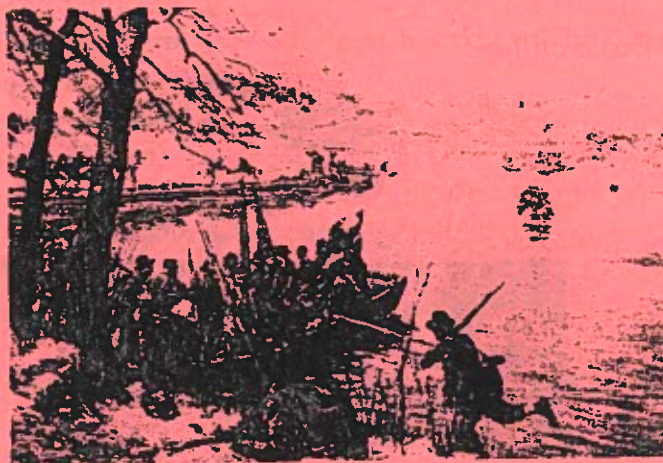
I believe that I have attained more knowledge through the historical novel than I ever did in formal classes. The novel does what many history books do not. It shows how the culture of the times formed the character of a Washington or a Marie Curie. The lesson becomes more than just the Battle of Bull Run or the introduction of the steam engine. The reader is immersed in the era and can see the effects of events and inventions for himself.

There are many works of fiction which come under the heading of historical novel, and like prescription drugs, they come in many different strengths. Depending on a person's tastes, history can be imbibed in dainty little sips through a Regency Romance or in a stronger dose via the works of Pearl Buck or Ernest Hemingway. There are many books which come between the two extremes.

Our library contains novels of **F. van Wyck Mason**, who published a quartet of books about the American Revolution as well as three concerning the Civil War. In the book *Blue Hurricane*, we follow Matt Hovey, who grew up in Dexter, Maine. He flees his home after an act of vengeance and becomes a blockade runner during the Civil War. The story features a number of colorful characters including Phoebe Whidden, who followed Matt, her intended husband, to Missouri. The reader becomes wrapped up in the trials and tribulations of Matt and Phoebe while experiencing the naval battles on the Mississippi.

Another author who wrote about the early days is

John Jennings. In his book *The Salem Frigate*, we sail out of Salem on the US Navy frigate *Essex*, with



Ben Price as assistant to the ship's carpenter and Tom Tisdall practicing medicine under the ship's doctor. This voyage takes us to Java and Sumatra in 1800, when French privateers were a menace to American ships. Tom's next voyage, on the frigate *Philadelphia*, was part of Jefferson's campaign against the "Outrageous demands of barbarous Turks and pirates of Tripoli and Tunis," in 1802. This journey resulted in the capture of the *Philadelphia*. Imprisonment followed by more hair-raising adventures finally bring our hero back to Salem. Throughout the book, which covers the years 1799 to 1816, we follow the adversarial relationship between Ben and Tom. We become acquainted with the women who wait for them, Patience and Selina. We also learn of the resilience of the human body in adapting to adverse conditions; the impossible working conditions for doctors in the darkness of the cockpit, the adjustment to alien cultures and climates. Almost without realizing it, we absorb some history.

A visit to the stacks in the Skowhegan Free Public Library will result in the discovery of many more exciting historical novels for both your entertainment and for your education.

Some Interesting and Useful Websites

By Jim Foster

Free Books! One of the problems with a small public library, which has to accommodate a wide range of public needs and interests within a limited space and budget, is that the collection never seems to have enough on your own special area of interest. But with Internet access, you can download books on almost any subject. Many e-texts are books which were written before the age of copyrights, or whose copyright has expired, and are hence in the public domain. Others are works which the copyright owners make available for non-commercial use, to get wider distribution. Many are on specialized subjects, or in foreign languages, which the library would not have, without the often time-consuming use of Interlibrary Loans. Here are some e-text sites which I have discovered recently:

- Access The Great Books** <http://www.anova.org/gb.html> The major classics. This is where I started.
Project Gutenberg <http://www.promo.net/pg> The oldest and one of the largest sites, has everything.
Electronic Text Center Holdings <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/uvaonline.html> A good selection

- Want to use that language you spent so much time learning in High School? For foreign language books, try:
Latin Texts <http://www1.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/6946/literature.html> (Latin)
Athena http://un2sg4.unige.ch/athena/html.fran_fr.html (A huge French site, in Switzerland)
Assoc. des Bibliophiles Universelles <http://cedric.cnam.fr/ABU/BIB/auteurs/> (French)
Das Projekt Gutenberg <http://gutenberg.aol.de/> (The most impressive of all, in German)



- Cornell Digital Library Math Collection** <http://moa.cit.cornell.edu/dienst-data/cdl-math-browse.html>
Philosophy Etexts at Public Sphere <http://www.alphalink.com.au/~pashton/etexts.htm>
Medieval Sourcebook: Full Text Sources <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook2.html> (There are similar Sourcebooks on other periods as well)

Please remember your library when planning memorials and bequests. Your gift is tax-deductible.

This newsletter is
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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. individuals, \$8. Seniors & Students, and \$15. for families. We normally meet at the Library the second Wednesday of every other month, unless scheduling conflicts require another date. For more information, call Corrilla Hastings (474-3949) or Mary Davies (474-7446).

Please complete this form and mail to Hilma Millett, P.O. Box 215, Skowhegan, Me 04976. Welcome.

LIBRARY HOURS

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
ADULTS	1-8:30	10-6	10-6	1-8:30	1-7:30	10-2
CHILDREN	3-5:30	10-5:30	10-5:30	3-5:30	3-5:30	10-2

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

COMING EVENTS



Book Discussion Group in February will discuss *Emerson—Mind on Fire*, a biography. *The Idiot* (Dostoyevsky) will be read for March. Meetings are held at 7 p.m. at the library on the first Mondays of each month. There's room for one more.



Story and Craft hour each Wed at 10am. Lots of fun with Corrilla Hastings.



The **March 10** meeting of the **Friends of the Library** will be at 7 p.m. Speaker will be Katie Quinn, presenting "My Trip to Russia".



The **Annual meeting** will be on **May 12**, 7 p.m. This will be the final meeting of our Charter year. It's been peppy. Plans for the next year will be discussed. Please come and tell us what you want and how you can help. A series of Book Reviews will follow the meeting.



The Friends will join in the **Cornville 7 Mile Long Yard Sale**. We'll be at Jim and Corrilla Hasting's red brick farm. Start saving your treasures for us. We need volunteers on **May 22 and 23**. If you need stuff picked up, call Jim Hastings. Money raised will benefit the Renovation Fund.



The Library Lookout

**Friends of the Skowhegan
Free Public Library**
c/o Skowhegan Free Public Library
Elm Street
Skowhegan, ME 04976

Your Librarians Are:
Helen Shaw, Francoise
Labonte, Lois Moody
and Thelma Butler
Your Library Trustees
Are:
Warren Shay, Carol
Jarvais, Betsey Hall,
Kathy Dorko, Toni
Blaisdell and Rick
Anzenc
Friends Officers Are:
Jim Hastings, Pres.;
Mary Davies, V.P.,
Marcia Granville, Sec.
and Hilma Millett,
Treas.