



The Library Lookout

Newsletter of the Friends of the Library

January 1999 Tel: 474-9072

Wish List

Software (especially for children) and computer peripherals; audio books and videos.



Popular Selections

Fiction:

A Man in Full... Wolfe

Murder in the Watergate... Truman

Non-Fiction:

Breast Cancer Prevention... Arnot

Greenwood & Chloroform... Betts

Children:

A Soldier's Heart... Paulsen

Diary of a Young Girl... Frank

Young Adults:

When the Teddy Bears Came ... Waddell

Stars for Sarah... Turner

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 Anzelc

Friends Officers Are:

Jim Hastings, Pres.; Mary Davies, V.P., Marcia Granville, Sec. and Hilma Millett, Treas.

LATEST NEWS

A Gift of Computers

We got the best Christmas present for all the good children and adults in Skowhegan when Friend Thelma Butler announced that we would receive four computers and two printers via her daughter Ann. One system will be used as a tot station, to help our youngest users have fun learning counting, math, getting ready to read, and playing skill teaching games, others will be for school children and for research on the main floor. All will be internet ready. Thelma and daughters Anne and Jean do more than their part to help our library offer educational opportunities. They're always helping out with paper, printing, books, decorations and now THIS. We hope other nice people will provide software, perhaps that your children have outgrown.

Film Program

Thanks to Jeff Evans for "THEY WENT THATAWAY". A perfect evening at the library on Dec 8. Eighteen of us braved the first snow and got a good look at John Wayne et al. Jeff explained that the Western is the truly American film and gave us lots of insight into film making and this particular genre. We were amazed at the film quality and beautiful vistas in early film. Marvelous refreshments were provided by Thelma Butler and Corrilla Hastings. We are grateful to the Dove Society for the beautiful TV and VCR that makes these programs possible.

Programs are now held on the first floor. The new bookstacks roll out of the way and the reading room becomes a beautiful meeting room. Jeff uses a high viewing stand and there's not a bad seat in the house. If we can persuade him to do another one, make sure you come. All programs are free, you won't have to climb the stairs, and you'll be royally entertained. Everything but popcorn.

A Word from the Bloomfield Trustees. Carol Jarvais notes that asbestos removal will be done on Jan.4. The front step railing project is underway. We will soon have an easier trek into the building.

Please remember your library when planning memorials and bequests. THINK SPRING; A gift to the library renovation program is tax-deductible.



Enjoying the resources of your library

Action adventures from an earlier time: The novels of Neville Shute by Lee Granville

Are you one of those readers who can't wait for the latest Dick Francis novel, who buys the newest Sue Grafton adventure in hard cover because you just can't hold out for the paperback? If you are an eager reader, as I am, you probably wish your favorite authors could write five new books a year! Sometimes we forget that for every generation, there are new best selling authors who will replace the old. However, that doesn't mean the older deserve to be forgotten. Your Skowhegan Free Public Library has a wealth of wonderful stories from earlier times.

One such author was Neville Shute, who wrote nearly thirty novels and many other works during the middle decades of the 1900's. His stories are set around the world, but focus mainly on England and Australia. As with many great authors, his characters seem to grow as the story develops, finding within themselves unsuspected talents and strengths. Perhaps his greatest accomplishment was in creating believable scenarios. When he took his audience sailing, for example, his undoubted technical expertise probably made the reader feel seasick! His characters' adversaries were nearly always natural forces, rather than evil humans. Here are some of his titles which are available at our library. Some of these volumes are a bit worn and tattered, which is certainly not surprising considering nearly fifty years on the shelves.

The Far Country, published in 1952. In this post-World War II story, the setting is split between England and Australia, and they couldn't have been more radically different societies at that particular point in time. Although it has been six years since the war ended, England is in the depths of depression, both fiscal and emotional. Food is severely rationed; indeed, all necessities of life are still rationed to absolute sustenance levels. The Socialists have taken over the government, Industry is at a standstill, and the British people are emigrating to all parts of the world. The British Empire is crumbling after centuries of world dominance.

Australia, on the other hand, is rolling in money. This period represents the pinnacle of success for the economies of those countries which produced food and other basic necessities. The wealthy farmers and ranchers could hardly find ways to spend the money they were making.

Into this strange situation are thrust our two protagonists; a young English woman and a Czech Doctor who is a displaced person. By different means, these two find their way to Australia, where they meet and fall in love. Nothing is ever simple, however, and the young couple find themselves separated by their perceived senses of duty, to their families and to their professions. The struggle to return to their beloved foster country and to each other makes for a compelling story.

The Rainbow and the Rose This novel, published in 1958, breaths life into two of Shute's areas of technical expertise; medicine and aviation. Also, here we come across one of his often used story telling ploys; a sense of the slightly supernatural. The setting is Tasmania, an Island off the coast of Australia. A pilot receives word that an old friend, also a pilot, has crashed his air-ambulance in a remote location while attempting a mercy mission. He flies to Tasmania but is forced by bad weather to stay in his friend's home while awaiting the chance to attempt a rescue. While sleeping in the man's bed, he has strange dreams which allow him to relive his friend's life, seeing through his eyes and feeling what he has felt. In this way, he gains insights which allow him to carry out an exciting rescue, and bring the story to an unexpected climax.

Trustee From the Toolroom is an adventure novel set in postwar England, published in 1960. The unlikely hero is Keith Stewart, a mild mannered, middle aged man who seems to have only one talent; he's a meticulous craftsman who creates tiny scale models as a hobby. He makes a precarious living by writing about his work for a hobby magazine. The pace of his quiet life suddenly accelerates when he is named as trustee in his sister's will, and he and wife Katie become the foster parents of a ten year old niece. To fulfill his duties he finds it necessary to travel halfway around the world on a journey which will change their lives forever.

Trustee was perhaps Shute's best known adventure story. It was selected as a Reader's Digest Condensed book in 1961 and, I believe, adapted for a movie.

These represent only three of Neville Shute's many titles available at the library. His novels are now out of date, of course. Each, however, is a wonderful time capsule. After reading one, I felt I had experienced air travel exactly as it was in 1960. In another, the way medicine was being practiced in England in 1952. Sometimes, they make a refreshing change from the guts and gore of more recent novels. I highly recommend this author for a change of pace.

Some Interesting and Useful Websites:

LOCAL SITES:

FRIENDS OF THE SKOWHEGAN FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Town of Skowhegan's Official Website

Maine Communities Online (websites of many ME organizations, including a large number under the listing for Skowhegan)

<http://mainetoday.koz.com/maine/ignore?Mlval=cge&SF=GT&SHGID=00001000010888601890038747>

The State of Maine's Website

<http://www.state.me.us/>

Kennebec Valley Computer Society (Central Maine's PC User Group)

<http://www.kvcs.augusta.me.us/>

Skowhegan, Maine USA (an unofficial Skowhegan website)

<http://skowhegan.maineusa.com/index.html>

LIBRARY AND RESEARCH SITES:

The Maine State Library Website (A great place to start for research)

<http://www.state.me.us/msl/start.htm>

Maine Libraries on Internet (List of sites on MSL)

<http://www.state.me.us/msl/melibson.htm>

The URSUS Catalogue (UMaine Libraries and some other Maine Libraries)

<http://digilib.ursus.maine.edu/URSUS/>

The Maine Libraries Union Catalogue

<http://maine.library.net>

Waterville Library Website

<http://www.wtvl.net/library/>

Waterboro Library — Maine Authors

<http://www.waterboro.lib.me.us/#maine>

The Library of Congress Website

<http://lcweb.loc.gov/homepage/lchp.html>

The Miriam-Webster Dictionary Website

<http://www.m-w.com/dictionary.htm>

The American Library Association

<http://www.ala.org/index.html>



OTHER RESOURCES FOR FINDING BOOKS:

List of Library Booksales Nationwide (I love this!)

<http://www.book-sales-in-america.com/>

(Coming in Next Month's issue: Free Books and other free stuff you can download from the net. If you have discovered any sites you find especially useful, please share them with us. If you have any special interests you would like to have sites listed for, give us your requests. This is your newsletter!)

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.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Tel. # _____ E-Mail Address _____

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

COMING EVENTS

Book Discussion Group: The next book will be *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom in discussion on **January 4** at the library at 7 pm There's room for one more. We meet first Mondays. Feb. 1 we'll discuss *A Mind On Fire*, an Emerson Biography .

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

The **January 6** meeting of the **Friends of the Library** will close with a program called "The History of Handbells" by Roberta Knowles and includes a 12th Night concert by the Riverside Ringers Ensemble. This meeting will be held on the first floor.



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