



Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library
FRIENDS
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JUNE 2020

BOOK FRIENDLY

COVID-19 AND THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

JO ANNE ROBBINS

For many of you, the “Stay at home with social distancing!” order in New York State, around the country and the world, has been a rude awakening from our normal life experiences of volunteering, visiting the library, meeting friends for supper, doctor appointments, going to church, trips to see a Broadway show, traveling to another state or country, going to a movie, going to work, attending a concert, shopping any time of the day or night, working out at the YMCA or local fitness center, buying the Sunday paper, or any of the hundreds of activities that we fill our calendars with every week. Our lives have been changed forever! We’ll certainly never again take all of these blessings and freedoms for granted after this frightening experience is history.

Since our Library is closed due to the pandemic, basic expectations regarding library services have changed. We can’t borrow a book or return a library book, but the library hasn’t stopped functioning. If you haven’t visited **the Library**

web pages, there is so much going on that you can participate in including book discussions, story times, virtual concerts, or downloading music, an e-book or audio book. You can also read a current magazine, join a technology class or take a foreign language. You can also read the **Library Reopening Plan** that has been approved by our Board of Trustees.

Since we are not traveling because of COVID-19, nor participating in Two Towns-One Book programming, I decided that it would be fun to journey back in time to review the great trips we have taken and the great books we have read and considered our book of the year. We are also congratulating our 2020 Community Scholarship winners.

The Friends of the Library Board wants you to know that we are considering our options, planning ahead and hoping to offer programming either in person or in group chats and on-line exploration in the months ahead.

If you are interested in volunteering to help us plan, please email Kathy **Adam-Browne**, our volunteer coordinator, and she’ll hook you up with the right person.

In the meantime, take a look at the great trips and great books that have played a large part in enriching the lives of our library community.

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While these masks would probably not help with the COVID-19 virus, they would definitely be more interesting.

We can't change the direction of the wind, but we can adjust our sails to always reach our destination.
-Jimmy Dean

TWO TOWNS-ONE BOOK REVISITED

LINDA CONKLIN

We will be celebrating the tenth season of Two Towns-One Book as we approach 2021. This time due to COVID-19, the community read book will be chosen by the TTOB Steering Committee. The book selected will be announced in September during the Library Budget Vote. Programs will be planned to start in January 2021.

Here is a little history with some highlights and favorite TTOB programs over the past years. We were very lucky to bring so many authors to the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Library and have them speak about their TTOB selection.

On April 8, 2011, Two Towns-One Book was launched with a celebration at the Library. Our goal was to involve residents in choosing a book that the community could read, share reactions and enjoy open discussion. Community partner dignitaries, community members and volunteers attended the opening event.

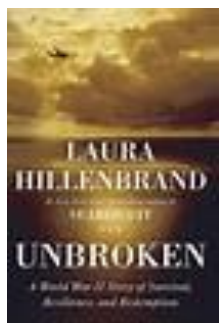


Nominations were cast for the first community read book, contenders were chosen and voted on. The winner was *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak. In January 2012, programming began. We were fortunate to host an interesting Skype session with Markus Zusak who resides in



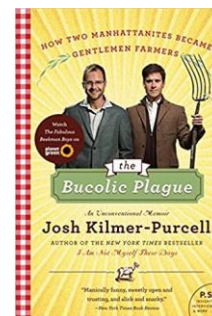
Australia. He was so generous, donating his time to our FOL programming. There was also a staged reading of *The Book Thief* by the Not So Common Players. They did a great job bringing the book to life.

The 2013 book was *Unbroken* by Laura Hillenbrand. The kickoff entitled "Survival, Resilience and Redemption: Veterans' Stories" featured six amazing community veterans who shared their stories of survival, resilience and redemption. Kids Read, Too (the children's component of TTOB) chose a project where children learned to fold and make origami paper cranes in a symbol of peace and forgiveness. This project



children and volunteers to the Children's Peace Monument in Hiroshima.

The Bucolic Plague: How Two Manhattanites Became Gentleman Farmers by Josh Kilmer-Purcell became our third community read in 2014. The kickoff featured a presentation by the Fabulous Beekman Boys, Josh Kilmer-Purcell and Brent Ridge. They



regaled a standing room only audience with humorous stories and shared experiences. Two busloads of residents took a trip to Sharon Springs for a tour of the Beekman 1802 Farm, lunch at The American Hotel, shopping in downtown Sharon Springs and a visit to the Arkell Museum on the way home.

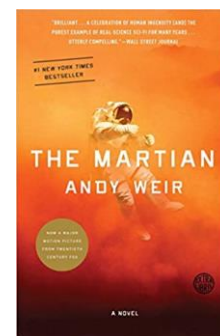
In our fourth year (2015), *The Art of Hearing*



Heartbeats by Jan-Philipp Sendker was selected by our community. The kickoff speaker was world traveler, Linda Fox. She presented a slide show of her October 2014 trip to Myanmar (formerly Burma), the setting

of the book. The author, Jan-Philipp Sendker, visited Clifton Park and shared his background, insights on how he came to write the book and his experiences in Myanmar.

Next, in year five (2016), *The Martian* by Andy Weir was the winning book. In the kickoff, Lester Gerhardt spoke about the history of the US space program and his involvement in it as well as RPI's involvement. At another program, the Shenendehowa High School's Aerospace Science Class demonstrated their skills by exhibiting a robot they constructed. The showing of



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TTOB Reviewed continued from page 2

the movie, *The Martian*, followed the demonstration. For year six (2017), the book was *Noon at Tiffany's* by Echo Heron. The author, Echo Heron, came to speak at



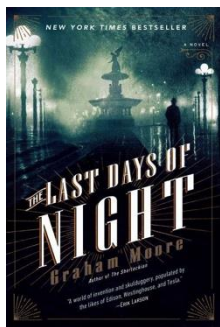
the Library. She talked about how a recently discovered cache of letters written between 1888 and 1944, led her to blend fact with fiction to acquaint the reader with Clara Wolcott Driscoll, the hidden genius behind the iconic Tiffany lamps. Surprisingly, we discovered that Echo Heron had her roots in Scotia,

New York. We offered a bus trip to the Queens Museum to view two exhibits – “A Passion for Tiffany Lamps” and “World’s Fair Visible Storage” plus a stop at the beautiful Queens Botanical Garden. It was fun sharing a beautiful informative trip.

In 2018, year seven, *The Last Days of Night* by Graham Moore was chosen as the community read.

A group of GE retirees offered a program of hands-on science explorations featuring electricity called “Science in the Library” to families and children. A bus trip to Thomas Edison’s Lab in West Orange, New Jersey and a visit to Branch Brook Park in Newark to view the cherry blossoms occurred. A local tour of the historic Mechanicville Dam (Hydroelectric Station) constructed in 1897 and now providing “green energy” to the area was a special treat. We were also fortunate to have a presentation by local conservationists, Joanne and Paul Coons, about the creation of their zero energy home, as well as a tour of their home.

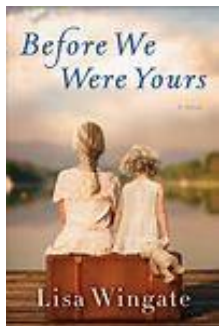
Also, our Library architect, Bill



Conner, presented an interesting program about our LEED certified green library.



For the eighth year (2019), *Before We Were Yours* by Lisa Wingate was the book of choice. “Using Basic DNA



Tools to Solve Adoption and Family Mysteries” was the title of the kickoff event delivered by Lisa Dougherty. She

guided attendees through the basics of utilizing DNA test results and gave suggestions for useful online resources. We were fortunate to bring Lisa Wingate, here to visit us. She talked about her background and the other books she has written. Lisa also spoke about writing this historical fiction book and how many people or family members have contacted her after the book’s publication to try to obtain help locating birth and adoption records. She also expressed her appreciation to all of her readers and the good fortune of having her book recognized as a New York Times best seller – every author’s dream.

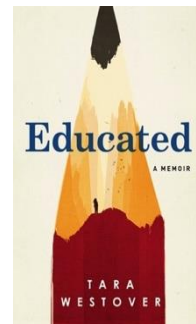
In year nine (2020), for the first time, there was a tie: *Becoming* by Michelle Obama and *Educated* by Tara Westover. The steering committee decided that since



both books were memoirs, we would create programming that focused on the memoir - an exciting expansion of our ability to know the world.

The kickoff entitled, “It’s a Memoir Renaissance,” featured Marion Roach Smith, who shared her experience as a

memoirist and writing coach to introduce the memoir genre, the different types of memoirs and the importance of memoirs. Local author, Janine Cammarata presented a journaling/memoir workshop where participants brought a partner with them and were asked to respond to the same event and then note the differences.



Unfortunately, most of the remaining programs were cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic. The trip to Seneca Falls was rescheduled to the fall. Our travel coordinator, Rhona, is hoping that we will be able to enjoy this trip.

All of the above books are good reads. If you have not read some of them and would like more information, go to the [TTOB website](#) to read a description of each book. Finally, look for our announcement of the tenth year – our TTOB 2021 book will be announced in our September Book Friendly.

TRAVELING WITH RHONA

RHONA KORETZKY FORMAN

In 2009 I assumed the reins of a robust travel program that had been started on behalf of the Friends of the Library by Jo Anne Robbins. This program has benefited our community by providing international group tour opportunities as well as a series of day trips. It has been a pleasure to further develop this program over the course of the past 11 years.

Since I assumed this position, our international travels have taken us to Germany, Austria, Hungary, Switzerland, Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Scotland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, England, Wales, the Netherlands, Belgium and Canada. This spring our travel group was preparing for our first domestic trip to US National Parks. We were due to depart on May 29 for Denver, and from there, to travel to five parks in Colorado and Utah.

We all know the disastrous consequences of the Covid19 virus. Curtailing our personal freedom, unemployment, financial concerns for businesses and other organizations, fear for our health and the health of our loved ones, and most tragically loss of life—these are the realities we now face. In addition to those life-altering concerns, there are also the activities in our lives that enrich us, educate us and give us enjoyment. To not be able to participate in those activities is also a loss, albeit a temporary one. I pledge that we will travel again when it is safe for us to do so.

Meanwhile, I'd like to share with you just a few highlights of our past travels. Check out the photos on page 6 and 7.

- A private concert for our group at the Budapest Opera House.
- A visit to the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam to view their complete collection of Rembrandt works.
- The world's most beautiful spring garden, Keukenhof, only open for 6 weeks each year (sadly not this year)
- A tour of Highclere Castle aka Downton Abbey.
- Visiting Toledo, Spain, a Magical City
- A delicious seafood luncheon in La Rochelle, a tiny seaside village in France
- Stratford Upon Avon on Shakespeare's birthday weekend.
- Windmills at Kinderdijk in the Netherlands
- A tour of "The Sound of Music" film sites around Salzburg, complete with a sing-along with our guide.
- A walk on a glacier in Alberta, Canada.
- Standing on the landing beaches in Normandy, France.
- Photographing Cascais, Portugal and their interesting castle

I hope that for those of you reading this who participated in some of these trips, you are reminded of a beautiful experience. And for those of you who want to be part of the next beautiful experience, we will go on with this program when we can. Meanwhile we can armchair travel and think about our dream destinations. Feel free to share them with me and others if you would like. I truly look forward to the time when a presentation of the next "big" trip will be announced.

I have also enjoyed planning day trips for a "closer to home" experience. Unfortunately the realities of social distancing have also curtailed these opportunities. Our scheduled May 16 trip to Seneca Falls, New York, to visit the sites dedicated to the women's suffrage movement coincided with the centenary of universal women's suffrage in the United States. This trip also dovetailed with our Two Towns-One Book reading selections. The bus filled in record time, but the trip had to be postponed due to COVID-19. I have rescheduled for Saturday, September 12, in the hopes that such travel will be possible by then. If it is safe to travel, we will proceed. If we cannot do the trip in 2020, we will try again in 2021.

Meanwhile let's take a look at some of our previous day trips. Again, enjoy special photos from each trip below on page 8.

- The Beekman Farm, combined with a visit to the Canajoharie Art Gallery.
- Concord, MA, highlighted by a tour of Orchard House, the family home of Louisa May Alcott.
- Flushing Meadows and Corona Park and a cherry blossom festival
- The Tiffany collection at the Queens Museum.
- Multiple visits to the New York Botanical Garden for seasonal exhibits, including the holiday train show.
- "Day on Your Own" trips to NYC and Boston.

As soon as bus travel is safe, expect to hear about the next day trip opportunities.

It has given me great pleasure to review these highlights of our travel program. I hope you have all enjoyed reading about them. Most of all I wish everyone good health. Stay well and stay safe. Don't miss some beautiful photos from these travel adventures on pages 6-8.



THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY OFFERS ALL NEW YORKERS GREAT RESOURCES ON-LINE JO ANNE ROBBINS

Did you know that any citizen of New York State can access a multitude of resources on-line from the New York Public Library? Get inspired while getting involved at the Library. It is simple to join the New York Public Library online community. You can follow librarians and curators, find out what's new in good books, and even be a part of New York City history.

To apply for a Library card, normal web applications cannot be processed while the Library is closed in response to the corona virus. However, New York residents can get a library card through the [SimplyE app](#) and gain access to an array of digital resources. Please check the instructions for Android [here](#) and for iOS [here](#).

Patrons 13 years and older can apply for their own library cards through SimplyE. Patrons 12 and under will need a parent or caregiver to create an account. These accounts cannot be restricted to only children's materials.

When the Library reopens, new applicants can visit the Library the next time you are in NYC or go to the Library website once the Library opens again to obtain your card.

By submitting an application, you understand and agree to our [Cardholder Terms and Conditions](#) and agree to Library [Rules and Regulations](#). To learn more about The Library's use of personal information, please read their [Privacy Policy](#).

There is so much to see and explore on-line.

Librarians, curators, and staff offer valuable insight from their blog posts. See what's on their minds.

You can stream or download free video and audio from Library programs and exhibitions, featuring notable writers, artists, and leaders.

You can also be a part of NYC history. Celebrate the rich history of New York City's neighborhoods through the stories written by longtime residents and collected by NYPL. Explore the archives or tell your own story. We are all New Yorkers.

Would you like to offer your expertise to the Library? Delve into the collections and help make Library collections more useable, discoverable, and shareable through a growing number of interactive public projects. Use Library materials in new and innovative ways, from digitizing old maps to making 3-D versions of 19th century images. Find something challenging or interesting to do while exploring the Library.

Finally, despite staying home and social distancing, you can help celebrate the NYP Library's 125th Anniversary. To honor the 125th anniversary of the founding, the Library asked 125 people to tell them about a book that inspired them to love reading. Join a wide array of booklovers—from acclaimed authors to actors, musicians, and the Library's own expert librarians—to celebrate the power of reading that brings us together, even when we're apart.

[Watch Reading Brings Us Together!](#)

Celebrate 125 years of culture and opportunity. 5

REFLECTING ON OUR FOL TRAVEL HISTORY IN PHOTOGRAPHS JO ANNE ROBBINS



Budapest Opera House



Highclere Castle Hampshire England



Toledo Spain - a Magical City



Amsterdam Rijksmuseum



Keukenhof Garden the Netherlands



Delicious Luncheon in La Rochelle, France

Reflecting on FOL Travel History continued from page 6



Stratford Upon Avon Celebration



Our Sound of Music Backdrop



Utah Beach Monument – Normandy



Kinderdijk the Netherlands



A walk on a glacier in Alberta, Canada



Cascais, Portugal Castle

Continued on page 8

“Traveling is a return to the essentials.” – a Tibetan proverb

Continued from page 7

REFLECTING ON OUR FOL BUS TRIP TRAVEL HISTORY JO ANNE ROBBINS

***"Adventure is worthwhile in itself." -
Amelia Earhart***



Beekman House Mansion - Sharon Springs, New York



Orchard House Concord New



Flushing Meadows Corona Park



Tiffany Exhibit at the Queens Museum



New York City for Broadway - Hello Dolly



New York Botanical Garden

FOL AWARDS COMMUNITY SCHOLARSHIPS

MARY DUCLOS

Jade Dennis and Lillian Johnson are the winners of the 2020 Friends of the Library Community Scholarships. Both young women excel in academics and extracurricular activities, and wrote eloquently on the essay prompt about imagining the perfect library and expanding on an idea that our library might use in the future.

Jade is a senior at Shenendehowa High School. She is a leader on the Shen cross country and track teams, a member of the Youth Court, and is involved with the community organizations Things of My Very Own and Southern Saratoga Animal Shelter. Jade is grateful for the resources that the library provides, and would like to see a “College Talk” day, where “accepted students gather in a room to inspire an audience of middle school to high school children with their pathways to academic and athletic success. This would appeal to children who may not have older siblings to guide them or children who don’t attend a public school.” Jade plans to attend the University at Buffalo in the fall to study chemistry.



Lillian is a senior at Tech Valley High School. She is a member of the TVHS Stage Crew and Film Club, has taken



many college credit courses including Chinese, and has strong video and photo editing skills. Lillian appreciates the research opportunities she found at the library to enhance her video skills. Lillian is very fond of cats and she suggests the library consider offering a room where people could enjoy some reading time with rescue cats. “What if there was a special room just for the cats and their library friends? There could be comfortable

chairs for the people (and cats) to sit in while they read and snuggle.” Lillian plans to attend Five Towns College (on Long Island) in the fall to study film and video.

A MESSAGE FROM LIBRARY DIRECTOR, ALEX GUTELIUS

May 29, 2020 - We learned last week, that certain libraries are permitted to operate with restrictions and are encouraged, but not required to use the state’s curbside guidance. Up to that point, there had been no specific guidance for libraries, and based on the information available, it was assumed libraries would be in Phase Four.

On May 15, the Library Board approved a carefully planned Staged Reopening Service Plan. When comparing the Library’s plan to the State guidance on Phase One reopening, we feel that we can begin to bring staff only back into the building to begin the process of receiving the nearly 30,000 items that are currently checked out and then begin contactless pickup.

Before we bring staff back into the building, there are extensive health and safety guidelines that must be followed for the protection of our staff and patrons. The plans must be tailored to meet the specific needs of our industry, and reviewed by the Library Board. Staff need to be trained on the new safety guidelines and new contactless check out procedures.

We are excited about the prospect of being able to provide curbside pickup, but must make sure we have all the safety protocols and new processes for lending materials in place before we can start that service – including having enough PPE in stock for several weeks.

At this time, we anticipate beginning to take returned materials the week of June 15 and starting contactless checkout by June 22, barring any new restrictions. As of the writing of this article, there is no guidance from the state as to when we may be able to allow patrons back in the building.

We recognize that it has been a long wait for everyone, but the health and safety of our patrons and staff is of utmost importance. Thank you for your patience and support. We look forward to providing service to you once again, as soon as it is safe.

THE ISLAND AT THE CENTER OF THE WORLD – A BOOK REPORT

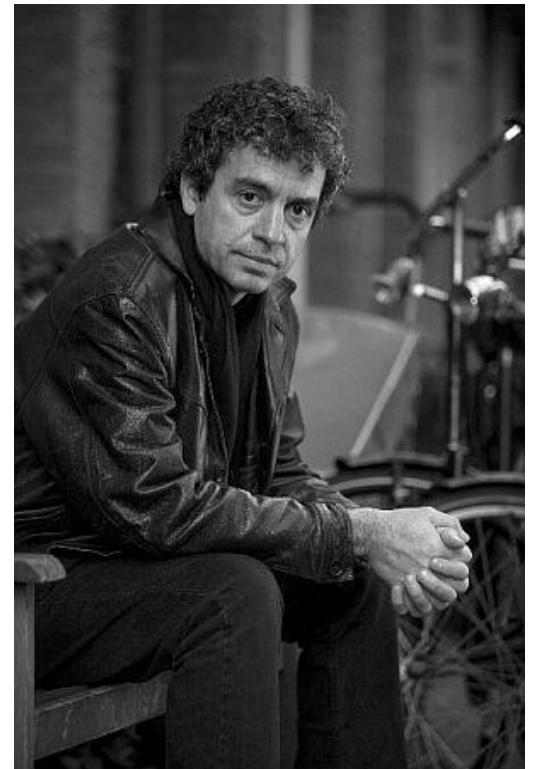
JO ANNE ROBBINS

I was recently having a conversation with Jane Schneider, an old friend who is a member and President of the Friends of the New York State Library. We were reminiscing about a time when the New York State Library was open, busy and so important to researchers. Of course, now all libraries are closed and we all miss visiting them. Hopefully, they will soon be open again and we can get closer to our books.

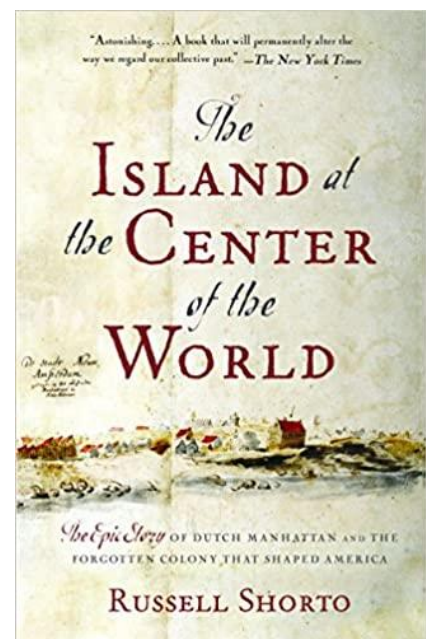
We were also talking about the books we were reading. Sometimes it takes a friend to bring a great book to your attention. Jane mentioned that *The Island at the Center of the World* by Russell Shorto is an excellent book that tells a wonderfully exciting and interesting story of our New York State history – important history that somehow didn't get recorded in our history books. Of course, this book wouldn't have happened if Dr. Charles Gehring had never been hired by the New York State Library to study and translate several thousand Dutch artifacts that had been moldering on shelves on the 8th floor of the library (the only floor that is not accessed by the main elevators). That in itself is an interesting story.

Author, Russell Shorto, is a senior scholar at the New Netherland Institute and a contributing writer at the New York Times Magazine. He used the information from these historical transcriptions and fabulous documentation to provide the details for his wonderful story about a wilderness island - an "original European colony on America's shores" that became an international power and then more or less disappeared - swallowed up by the other colonies.

But that Dutch Colony of New Netherland, while seemingly lost, was only missing and fortunately not destroyed. Over 12,000 pages of its records are still being translated and Russell Shorto drew from this unbelievable archive to tell the story of *The Island at the Center of the World*. The book, first published in 2004, was applauded by The New York Times as "a book that will permanently alter the way we regard our collective past." I was glad to hear about it and I'm happy to be enjoying this interesting history lesson and Shorto's excellent storytelling.



Author Russell Shorto



"Without words, without writing and without books there would be no history, there could be no concept of humanity." —Hermann Hesse, *My Belief*

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Book Friendly is online!

Writers - Book Friendly is always seeking original writing. We accept: book reviews, poetry, articles, memoirs, and short stories.

Email submissions to editor, Jo Anne Robbins:
cliftonparkjosie@gmail.com.

We prefer Microsoft Word format. Please include a statement granting Book Friendly permission to use your work. The deadline for submissions for the next issue is August 1 for a September 1 publication.

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