

Shelf life

TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS AND VIEWS

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Toronto Blue Jay Miguel Batista and Mayor David Miller

Toronto celebrities record for Library's Dial-a-Story

Ancient Greek story brought to life in eight languages

THE DIAL-A-STORY SERVICE offered by the Toronto Public Library continues to break records with respect to the number of calls, but have you ever wondered whose dulcet voices tell our tales in eight languages? Well, on Wednesday April 27, 2005, Mayor David Miller and Toronto Blue Jay, Miguel Batista and a host of other media personalities brought their voice talent to Toronto Public Library's Dial-a-Story!

Mayor David Miller and Toronto Blue Jay Miguel Batista read the ancient Greek story of *Castor and Pollux*. The

story was recorded in all the eight languages offered on Dial-a-Story and will be available for children and families by summer 2005.

Other celebrities recording *Castor and Pollux* included OMNI news personalities Fernando Sousa (reading in Portuguese), Wei Lee (reading in Mandarin), Stanley So (reading in Cantonese), Laura Albanese (reading in Italian) and Darek Barecki (reading in Polish).



A home away from home

Library staff member recounts mother's immigration experience by Magdalena Vander Kooy

WITHIN A YEAR of our family's immigration to Canada 50 years ago, my mother was admitted to hospital for the birth of her eleventh child. No one in the hospital spoke Dutch, and she spoke no English. In the Netherlands, she had given birth at home; in Canada, she was rendered unconscious (routine at that time). She believes there were complications, but was never able to learn more. Because she had forgotten a comb, her long hair, usually tidied into a neat bun, was soon a mess.

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She could only imagine what the medical staff thought. She saw herself through their eyes as a slovenly, ignorant immigrant who didn't know enough to stop having children.

My mother's story illuminates for me the many layers of the immigrant experience: the hardships of communication; confusion about one's circumstances; the pain of finding previous successes deemed meaningless by an adopted society; the sorrowful feeling of not measuring up. Life hurtled on, not waiting for my mother to learn the language and gain confidence before tossing her indelicately into the medical labyrinth.

My immigrant background serves me well as Chair of the Library's French and Multicultural Services Committee. Remembering my mother, I realize the value of the Library's collections and services for newcomers. I like to think that we help make the adjustment a little easier, that we demonstrate respect for other cultures.

The Library has made a priority of providing resources and services that help newcomers develop language skills, find employment and stay connected to cultures "back home" easing the alienation often experienced by new arrivals. Virtually all our services are free – very important to newcomers used to paying for such services. Some highlights include:

- Books, magazines, CDs, videos and DVDs in 40 languages.
- English as a Second Language materials in multiple formats for help with basic and advanced language skills.
- The Multicultural Connections section of our website (www.torontopubliclibrary.ca) has newcomer resources and links to settlement and related agencies. Our Newsconnect portal accesses international news sites in more than 70 languages; Career Bookmarks offers specialized employment information.
- Homework clubs and research materials for newcomer children; we encourage parents to read to their children in their home language as any reading builds reading skills in English. Our free Dial-a-Story telephone service in eight languages allows children to call in every day for a different story from 'home.'

Partnering with other agencies serving newcomers makes good sense. Newcomers

Northern Elms Branch reopens

New street presence designed to attract walk-by traffic



The official ribbon cutting ceremony featuring Branches Director Anne Bailey; District Manager Cheryl Skovronek; South/West Region Director Nancy Chavner; Branch Supervisor Mary Anne Kalt; community leader Marilyn Whibbs; City Councillor Suzan Hall; TPL Board Vice-Chair Bill Booth; City Councillor Rob Ford; and community leader David Dunn. Councillor Hall's granddaughter (in front) supervises the ceremony.

AFTER ALMOST TWO years, the Northern Elms Branch has now reopened to an appreciative community. Customers have remarked that they find the new branch welcoming, well lit and very pretty and that they appreciate the ample parking. The expanded collection is highly valued to be sure, but most gratifying for staff is that patrons are delighted to see all the same old staff back in "their" library.

"We are thrilled to be back and able to provide library service to the Northern Elms community," says City Librarian, Josephine Bryant. "We took advantage of the relocation to obtain

a larger unit, upgrade the study and lounge space, enhance the collection, add additional computers and ensure that the new branch had space for programming."

The new Northern Elms Branch located at 123 B Rexdale Blvd, Unit 5 (Kipling at Rexdale) features:

- Six high-speed Internet access terminals
- 4,000 brand new items (including books, magazines, CDs and DVDs)
- Study space
- Space for parents and children to read together
- An adult reading lounge.

with school-age children very quickly find their way to schools, many of which have settlement workers present, but when schools close during the summer, the project relocates to libraries. The result is a mutual referral program year-round. Partnerships also help us understand the needs of newcomers better, and to position our services accordingly.

We work to increase the availability of library information in translation and to better exploit the language capabilities of electronic products. New technologies such as automated checkout being piloted at two

branches already offer five language choices to customers; other technologies that enhance the usefulness of public Internet stations will follow.

Toronto Public Library's services to the multicultural community include a broad range of programs and collections. For new immigrants, they provide a valuable bridge to link them to cherished experiences from their countries of origin. In a very significant way, the Library helps to speed up the process of building healthy communities by creating a true sense of home in a new land.

'Word, Stress, Food & Wine' author series at Toronto Reference Library

Series profiles food and wine writers to enthusiastic audience



"A GOOD MATCH of the wine and food can make the difference between a good dinner and a great one," said food and wine writers Lucy Waverman and James Chatto at their recent speaking engagement at the Toronto Reference Library. The event, held March 31st, was part of the Library's winter author series entitled *Word, Stress, Food & Wine* and was well attended by a diverse group of 'foodies' and bookworms.

"Life's too short and this book is about pleasure, not duty," Chatto told the crowd. The two talked about their collaboration and answered many questions, which ranged from where to buy organic to whether teflon cooking utensils are safe. Tips for a great meal? Waverman stressed that it's important to use the best ingredients:

"if the chocolate's not the best, don't make a dessert with it." Chatto and Waverman's book, *A Matter of Taste*, has been nominated for a prestigious 2005 James Beard Foundation Awards in the Entertaining and Special Occasions category.

A Matter of Taste is only one of thousands of cookbooks available at the Library. From vegetarian to ethnic, diabetic to weight loss, almost all can be ordered online or from your local branch. At Toronto Reference's Main Reference Centre on the second floor, there is a huge collection of cookbooks from around the world and a good collection of books about wine and wine making. Visit the website at www.torontopubliclibrary.ca.

VE Day at the Library

MAY 8 WAS the 60th anniversary of VE Day (Victory in Europe) and the Library commemorated the day with something for everyone. In addition to our exhibit in the TD Gallery, the library website offers a virtual exhibit (www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/pro_trl_exhibits.jsp) and a booklist, videos, DVDs – even movies produced in 1945!

Ask for *Canada At War*, the Library's booklist commemorating VE Day, at your local branch.



New to Special Collections

Stunning photographic art book, Antarctica, documents the region's beauty



THE LIBRARY'S SPECIAL Collections play a unique and particular role in preserving Canada's gems for future generations. Reflecting a wide range of interests and information needs, our Collections build on the Library's tradition of acquiring materials that might be judged in the future as landmarks in the history of book production and publishing. One of our newest acquisitions, a beautiful photographic art book entitled *Antarctica*, complements Toronto Reference Library's collection documenting the Arctic and Antarctic and makes a splendid addition to Special Collection Centre's private press holdings.

Authors Pat and Rosemarie Keough are the first Canadians to win the Royal Geographical Society's Cherry Kearton Award for outstanding photography of the natural world. The images encompass exotic wildlife and striking landscapes, and offer examples of human involvement from the tragic whaling era to the present. The book's geographic coverage includes the polar plateau of the interior and the mountainous coast and islands and seas surrounding the Southern Ocean.

Antarctica is the first in a pending series of exceptional photographic art books from Nahanni Productions Inc. This small private press creates high quality books promoting environmental and social causes. All net proceeds from this work are pledged to Birdlife International's *Save the Albatross* campaign.

Celebrating Asian Heritage Month

Readings, music, dance and storytelling exemplify beauty of Asian heritage

May is Asian Heritage Month, and Toronto Public Library proudly presents a variety of literary and cultural programs that celebrate the wisdom and beauty of Asian fiction and poetry.

Asian Canadian Poets Read from their Work

Lien Chao, David Fujino, Dae-Tong Huh, Patria Rivera

Book sales and signings. Open MIC follows the readings. Bring your own poem and step up to the microphone. Everyone welcome. Saturday, May 28, 1 p.m. – 5 p.m. Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street

Dances of Asian Tales and Legends

Stories of ancient times come to life in this dynamic dance presentation. Young artists of Chinese, Korean and South Asian background gather to interpret famous heroines through traditional and contemporary dances. A celebration of Asian Heritage Month in Toronto, presented by the Little Pear Garden in collaboration with the City of Toronto Culture Division. The program is for young adults, but everyone is welcome:

May 30, 2 p.m., Albion, 1515 Albion Road
May 26, 2 p.m., Cedarbrae, 545 Markham Road
June 1, 2 p.m., Malvern, 30 Sewells Road
May 31, 2 p.m., York Woods, 1785 Finch Ave. West

Korean Music and Dance

Palmerston Branch, 560 Palmerston Ave., Thursday, May 19, 6:30 p.m.

Kamishibai Paper Storytelling Theatre

Experience this dramatic form of Japanese storytelling. For children 4 and up. For group bookings call the library at 416-393-7657. Deer Park, 40 St. Clair Ave. East
Wednesday, May 25, 1:30 p.m.

Storytimes in Different Languages

May 21 Tamil
May 28 Cantonese
Saturdays, May 14-28, 2 p.m.
Burrows Hall, 1081 Progress Avenue

Mandarin Stories

Saturdays, May 7-28, 11 a.m.
Kennedy/Eglinton, 2380 Eglinton Ave. East



Board Highlights

Audited 2004 Financial Statements of the Library and the Trust Funds

The Toronto Public Library Board approved audited 2004 financial statements for the Library and the Trust Funds of the Library.

Tsunami Disaster Relief for Libraries – Toronto Public Library Contribution

The Board approved a \$10,000 donation to the Tsunami Disaster Relief fund to assist in the rebuilding of school and public libraries in those countries affected by the December 2004 tsunami. The donation will be made through the Canadian Library Association as the organization collecting funds on behalf of the library community in Canada.

Calendar of Events

May/June 2005

Meet Russell Smith

Russell Smith reads from his latest critically acclaimed novel, *Muriella Pent*. Q&A follows the reading. Register at 416-395-5639. Wednesday May 18, 7 p.m., Room 2 North York Central Library, 5120 Yonge Street

Frozen Dreams: Search for the Northwest Passage Lecture

Ken McGoogan, the Library's Writer in Residence, will show showcase John Rae and Samuel Hearne, the greatest of northern explorers, and Jane Franklin, the Victorian woman who changed the course of Arctic history. Thursday, May 19, 7 p.m., Beeton Auditorium, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street

Dickens and his Times

An evening of talks on Charles Dickens. Speakers: Henrietta Johnson: *Charles Dickens, His Life and Works*, Cliff Goldfarb: *If Arthur Conan Doyle Met Charles Dickens*, Maureen Jennings: *Are there no Prisons? Are there no Workhouses?* Thursday, May 26, 6:30 p.m. refreshments, 7 p.m. talks Beeton Auditorium, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street Co-sponsored by the Toronto Dickens Fellowship.

Meet Shauna Singh Baldwin

Shauna Singh Baldwin reads from her latest novel, *The Tiger Claw*. Q&A follows. Register at 416-395-5639. Saturday, May 28, 2 p.m., Room 1, North York Central Library, 5120 Yonge Street

Feature Writing and Creative Non-fiction Workshop

Ken McGoogan, the Library's Writer in Residence will focus on moving beyond the

feature article into creative non-fiction. Wednesday, June 1, 12-2 p.m., Asquith Conference Room, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street

Runnymede Branch Reopening

Official Opening with guests Mayor David Miller, author Margaret Atwood and Councillor Bill Saunderson. Wednesday, June 8, 2005, 5 p.m., Runnymede Branch, 2178 Bloor Street West

Unusual Love Stories

Catherine Bush reads from *Claire's Head*, Maggie Helwig reads from *Between Mountains*. Q&A period follows. Tuesday, June 9, 7 p.m. Beeton Auditorium, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street

For a complete listing of activities, check *What's On*, available in all branches; visit www.torontopubliclibrary.ca; or call Answerline (416) 393-7131.

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Marketing & Communications Office: 416-393-7117.

Next Board Meeting: June 6, 2005

The Toronto Public Library Board meets monthly at 6 p.m., September through June, in the Elizabeth Beeton Auditorium, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street, Toronto. Meetings are open to the public. Board Contact: Nancy Marshall 416-393-7215.

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