

Shelf life

Toronto Public Library News & Views

October 2007

Young

Voices

arrives!

pg. 3



Toronto Reference Library's unique collections showcased at new digital kiosk

Access to historical resources enhanced

THE CURATOR'S SHOWCASE, a collection of seven books that highlight very different aspects of Toronto Public Library's Special Collections of unique historical books and other material, will be available via a touch-screen kiosk in the Toronto Reference Library atrium starting during the library's 30th anniversary open house November 2.

The books, which include a children's morality tale from the mid-1800s and a transcript of the murder trial that inspired Margaret Atwood's novel *Alias Grace*, are presented in a new, custom 'page-turning' technology developed to showcase and enhance original historical items from the library's Special Collections. Annotations provide interpretations of the content, while additional linked pictures, maps and audio and video clips help to create a rich

and unique multi-media user experience.

"Using the mouse or a touch-screen, you can turn the pages of Curator's Showcase books the way you would in a real book," says library director of research and reference Linda Mackenzie. "As you read, you can click on sections of text to bring up annotations and images that broaden your understanding of the text. It's like having an expert librarian there to show you how to get the most out of your reading."

The launch of this new Virtual Book technology coincided with 30th anniversary celebrations kicked off at the Toronto Reference Library open house November 2 and continuing throughout the month. People attending the open

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www.torontopubliclibrary.ca

Torontonians support their libraries

Public consultation shows Torontonians want library service protected

"The library is a centre for all ages, cultures, disabilities and orientations. It is a place to find ourselves in other people's stories and experiences. It ignites art, culture and community. It is the definition of inclusion."

— survey respondent

AT ITS JULY 2007 meeting, the Toronto Public Library Board called for public consultations on its 2008 operating budget planning and potential service reductions. Public meetings held at four library branches at the end of September and the beginning of October, as well as an in-branch and online survey, resulted in input from over 1,100 people of all ages from areas across the city. Overwhelmingly, people reacted strongly to the potential threats to library services that a reduction in the 2008 budget would cause. They told us how much they value the library and stressed that service reductions would negatively impact the city, neighbourhoods and individuals, especially the city's most vulnerable citizens.

"The library is a very important service in our community... used by many... from the most vulnerable to the most wealthy. It is extremely important that the library continue to receive the funding it requires in order to continue its important work..." said one library budget consultation survey respondent.

Book Buzz brings books to life

Authors commune with readers on the library's virtual book club website

LIKE MANY WRITERS, Claire Cameron is a great fan of libraries, and her support is evident both online, by her presence on Book Buzz, the library's virtual book club, and in person, as a guest in the ongoing Uptown Author Series at North York Central Library.

Her online presence includes an interview she did for Book Buzz and a blog where she talks about her book, *The Line Painter*, and answers questions from other Book Buzzers.

Cameron's Uptown Author appearance, October 17, drew nearly 40 happy fans.

In addition to being featured on Book Buzz and as part of the Author Series, *The Line Painter* is being discussed by the North York Central Library Book Club, one of the more than 70 book clubs at the library.

Another author who will have a multi-pronged presence at the library is Gil Adamson, who will also to be interviewed and will contribute to the Book Buzz blog. In spring 2008, Adamson will read at the

library, have her book, *The Outlander*, discussed by both the Book Buzz book club and the North York Central Library book club and return to Book Buzz for a live online chat.

"Book Buzz marks the convergence of digital and print," according to Book Buzz librarian Dawn Connolly, "where people meet online and where people find out about great opportunities to meet in person, at readings and at other cultural events at the library and elsewhere."

Attracted to the site by a new book each month, author visits and contests, Book Buzz members range widely in age. Winners of the Summer Reads Contest recently run on the website included a teen, aged 14, and two winners in their mid-20s, including Bradley Smith (see "Books, bikes and the Buzz," pg. 4).

Book clubs, both real and virtual, are supported by the library, which provides space for clubs to meet and special Book Club Sets of books available at a number of branches.



Foundation hits right note in thanking donors

ALMOST 200 OF Toronto Public Library Foundation's supporters were treated to an exclusive performance by world-renown pianist Anton Kuerti on Friday, October 26. The evening was a celebration of the Toronto Reference Library's 30th anniversary and a special thank you to the Foundation's Literary Circle donors – individual donors who make an annual donation of \$1,000 or more.

Mr. Kuerti generously contributed his time and talent to the event in honour of the Toronto Reference Library's music collection which he deemed "one of the top three in the country" and as a tribute to his late wife Kristine, a regular user of the music collection.



Kids get Ready for Reading

Roza Ali was one happy camper at The Word on the Street festival in September. Not only did she and her family enjoy a sparkingly beautiful fall day at the literary festival on Queen's Park Circle, she also went home with her very own, brightly coloured library card. Special cards for children five years of age and younger are part of a larger library initiative called Ready for Reading that encourages reading readiness in young children, and teaches parents and caregivers how to help their children develop reading readiness through fun, everyday activities.

30th Anniversary Celebrations

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

house whose curiosity was piqued by the Curator's Showcase had the opportunity to tour the library's Special Collections throughout the day. Collected Works: A Public Legacy, an exhibit featuring still more of the Reference Library's treasures, will be on display in the TD Gallery until December 31. Curator's Showcase will also be available online, at <http://ve.torontopubliclibrary.ca/showcase/>



Young Voices guest editors (l-r) Emily Pohl-Wear, Hadley Dyer, Karen Krossing, Michael Brown, Jay MillAr and Dwayne Morgan, pictured here at the launch of *Young Voices* 2007, worked with teens from the library's editorial youth advisory group to select material for the magazine.

Curator's Showcase

1. *Samuel Smith Logbook, 1857*
2. *Trial of Grace Marks, 1843*
3. *Lady Conan Doyle Diary, 1914*
4. *The Sad Tale of Mrs. Mole and Mrs. Mouse, 1848*
5. *Sketches of Toronto, Complete and Accurate Descriptions... 1858*
6. *Leonard Youell war diary, 1914-8*
7. *Performing Arts materials*

Young voices heard at the library

Annual publication of teen writing and artwork bigger and better

THE 2007 ISSUE of *Young Voices*, the library's annual publication of teen writing and art, was launched on October 18 at a gathering of over 200 people that included 70 contributors, ages 12-19, and their friends and family. The magazine is now available in branches.

"The 2007 issue is bigger

and better than ever," says youth services librarian Sharon Moynes. "Bigger because... well, it's bigger! Instead of a little booklet, we've made it tabloid size. The artwork looks awesome. And better, not so much in terms of the quality of the work (it's always excellent) but because the work is now selected by an editorial

group that includes teens."

The Editorial Youth Advisory Group, 17 teens who had work published in the 2006 issue of *Young Voices*, worked with six Toronto writers and one Toronto artist to select 70 submissions from the nearly 400 received for the 2007 issue.

Indonesian library service enhanced with help of Toronto librarians

TWO TORONTO PUBLIC Library librarians are helping with a Federation of Canadian Municipalities libraries initiative in Indonesia. Katherine Palmer and Dawna Rowlson are participating in a project focused on the Aceh province of Sumatra, Indonesia and specifically the public library in Sigli, roughly on the northern tip of the island.

They're helping to build up the capacity of the Sigli Public Library to meet the needs of the public through improved core library services and enhanced learning opportunities. "Essentially we are helping to turn the library from a book room into a public library offering a suite of services," according to Rowlson.

Palmer and Rowlson have done everything from teaching Sigli library staff the basics of using a computer (they hope to have three public Internet computers in the library) to helping develop business cases for purchasing equipment including bookmobiles (essential in order to provide library service to the 21 districts the

library is responsible for).

Palmer and Rowlson have been to Indonesia twice since June, staying for a few weeks at a time. They hope to return a few more times before their part in the project is concluded. They expect to complete their work on this project by the end of 2008.

Library Board Highlights

October 2007

Library board reopens branches on Sundays

At the October 15 meeting of the Toronto Public Library Board, it was decided to reopen 16 library branches that were closed Sundays due to city cost-containment measures. The branches reopened October 28.

2008 requested budget submission approved

The board approved a motion to submit to the city the 2008 requested operating budget of \$156.374 million net. This represents an increase of \$6.695 million or 4.5 percent over the 2007 approved budget and would allow the library to maintain its current service levels.

Policy to strengthen library's existing commitment to safety

The library has a long history of addressing health and safety issues, but there is an increased concern about the need to address issues related to potential violence in the library. The Workplace Violence Prevention and Response Policy, developed with input from the library's Central Joint Health and Safety Committee, strengthens the library's existing commitment to protecting the safety of staff and the public and is consistent with the city's corresponding policy. The policy is part of a crisis prevention and response program that will be further developed by the library in an effort to increase the library's capacity to prevent and respond to violent incidents.

Books, bikes and the Buzz!

ORIGINALLY FROM NORTH YORK, Bradley Smith remembers participating in the Summer Reading Club, as a child, at Pleasant View Branch, as well as going to Fairview for school needs. Since then, he's received a B.Math from the University of Waterloo, returning to Toronto to work in publishing.

Says Smith: "I'm a big user of the library's holds system (I reached my maximum for requests yet again yesterday). Lots of movies, textbooks for post-degree school courses (I'm working on a BA in literature), and I coordinate my wife's research books – she's an illustrator and frequently needs every book on a subject for a picture book she's working on."

Now living in Toronto's Oakwood Village neighbourhood, Bradley



commutes a half hour to work and back every day on his bicycle, listening to audiobooks borrowed from the library. "It started with popular fiction like *The DaVinci Code* and *The Book of Four*, but quickly became a way for me to catch up on missed classics like *Jane Eyre*, *Emma*, *20,000 Leagues*, *The Time Machine*, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, and

I gave *Great Expectations* a second chance and enjoyed it much more than when I had to read it in school. Reading for school was seldom fun for me because of the deadlines, but Book Buzz (the library's virtual book club, see pg. 2) has an open-ended deadline, and you're never too late for the discussions!"

Calendar of Events October/November 2007

Fifty miles of ideas

TD Gallery Exhibit: Collected Works: A Public Legacy

October 20 to December 31

In celebration of Toronto Reference Library's 30th anniversary, this exhibit showcases the library's Special Collections.

TD Gallery, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge St.

Wednesday Literary Cafés

Wednesdays, November 7, 14, 21 & 28, 12:30 p.m.

Nov 7: Time for Trivia with John Robert Colombo and Katherine Barber

Nov 14: Mystery Lunch with Linwood Barclay

Nov 21: CBC's *Talking Books* with Ian Brown

Nov 28: Lunch with Jan & Christie with Jan Wong and Christie Blatchford

Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge St.

Canada Council Heritage Series: A Geography of Canadian Writing

Thursday, November 15, 7 p.m.

Meet Shyam Selvadurai, author of *Funny Boy*, and *Swimming in the Monsoon Sea*.

McGregor Park Branch, 2219 Lawrence Ave. E.

Uptown Author Series

Wednesday, November 21, 7 p.m.

Meet Janice Kulyk Keefer, author of *The Ladies Lending Library*.

North York Central Library, 5120 Yonge St.

Check out the virtual exhibit and the complete list of special Toronto Reference Library 30th anniversary programming at www.fiftymilesofideas.ca.

For a complete listing of programs at the library's 99 branches, visit www.torontopubliclibrary.ca.