Downton Abbey Fundraiser

On January 18, the Friends will sponsor our first “Downton Abbey” fundraiser. The event will feature a very entertaining presentation on Edwardian apparel by Kandie Carle. Over the course of her talk, she will dress herself in all the clothing considered necessary for an elegant English lady of the era.

After the lecture, the party will move to the Reading Room and Rotunda, where attendees will enjoy a traditional fancy tea with scones, finger sandwiches, and other treats.

The building will be decorated with antique millinery, vintage clothing, and other curiosities, and there will be a selection of gift baskets for sale. You can also test your memory in a Downton trivia contest, with special prizes for the winners. Doors open at 1:00; the lecture begins promptly at 1:30; and no-one will be allowed into the auditorium after the lecture begins.

Tickets will go on sale early in December. The price is $20 for members; $30 for non-members. Buy early—the space limits us to only 120 tickets. It’s a great Christmas gift idea for those hard-to-buy-for people on your list!

Volunteers needed: Planning this event is a lot of fun, and we could use a few more hands. Are you a Downton Abbey addict? You can help with advance preparation, or plan to be there on the day of the event to help with set-up and serving. If you’re interested, please drop a note to jbmlfriends@gmail.com

Basket contributions: You can donate all or part of the contents for a gift basket. If you have an idea for a Downton-themed basket, great! But don’t feel limited; almost any basket idea is welcome. A bottle of wine suggests “Lord Crawley’s Cellar;” dainty spa items fit “Lady Mary’s Boudoir;” food baskets suit “Mrs. Patmore’s Kitchen” and toys can be showcased in the Nursery. Donated items can be left at the Library any time up to Sunday, January 4.
Our Annual Book Sale under the big tent on the Green continues to be the foundation of our fundraising. This year’s sale netted approximately $58,000. That’s slightly less than last year, but some of the difference is attributable to higher operating expenses, such as replacing broken cartons.

This year’s sale included an afternoon mini-concert, which our customers enjoyed while they browsed.

As always, the sale was a collaborative event, impossible to achieve without the help of many hardworking volunteers. Thanks to all of you:


We also want to thank the many students who volunteered their time to help with set-up. We’re grateful to Meng Dan Wu, Meng Nan Wu, Syeki Lam, and Dulce Gaspar. They were the cheerful staff of the Blackstone Café, and kept the crowd supplied with coffee, hot dogs, and sweets throughout the entire weekend.
Program Highlights 2014-2015

CT Accordion Association: Holiday Music
Saturday, December 6 @ 2-4 PM
Join us for a concert of Christmas music and traditional songs by the CT Accordion Orchestra.

3D Printing: Creating Your Own 3D Files
Saturday, December 13 @ 10 AM—2 PM
Learn to create your own 3D files for printing with volunteer Jim Davis. Jim will walk you through the 3D modeling software 123Design, from the makers of AutoCAD. Space is limited — register today!

Music Makers Holiday Concert
Sunday, December 14 @ 2 PM
The Music Makers from Branford High School and conducted by Cathyann Roding returns to perform a selection of holiday classics. Concluding the concert will be an audience sing-along of some holiday favorites. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

The Magic of Christmas with Martha Link Walsh
Wednesday, December 17 @ 7 PM
“Santa Claus” has been part of the winter holidays since the beginning of time and the lure of the gift giver has always held a special spot in everyone’s heart. Whether you are French, Norwegian, English or German, your gift giver has his own charm and uniqueness. Martha will share some of these stories and show the images she created to represent them.

Intro to Microsoft Word
Tuesday, January 6 @ 10 AM—11:30 AM
Tuesday, January 13 @ 10 AM—11:30 AM
Learn the basics of Microsoft Word 2013. In this introductory class, you’ll learn how to compose a new document, edit text, change fonts, and insert pictures. Basic familiarity with using computers and a mouse is necessary. Class takes place over two sessions. Registration required.

Book to Art Club
Saturdays @ 2 PM
January 10, February 28
Join us for a hands-on, creative way to engage with literature – where the process of art-making is more important than the product! We’ll discuss John Grisham’s newest novel Gray Mountain, as we work on an art project related to the book. Books are available at the library, and art materials will be provided. If you prefer, bring your own project inspired by the book to the meeting. Registration required.

They Called Me Lizzy... Slavery to the White House
Sunday, February 1 @ 2 PM
Madame Keckly was born into slavery, but through her tenacity and skills as dressmaker, purchased her freedom and launched her own business. She came to the attention of Mary Todd Lincoln, became her dressmaker, confidante and friend. East Haddam Stage Company’s one-woman drama features Bristol CT actress Stephanie Jackson as Elizabeth Keckly. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

Dog Listener: Phil Klein
Wednesday, February 18 @ 6 PM—7 PM
Certified Dog Listener, Phil Klein will help you learn how dogs communicate with each other and how you can utilize techniques to have a more happy, relaxed dog.

The Fantasy World of Norman Rockwell
Tuesday, March 10 @ 7 PM
A chronic depressive, Rockwell painted rather than lived his happiness. Psychobiographer Fred Biamonte will analyze how Rockwell rationalized his inner world of depression with the external world of his pictures. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

The Music of the Beach Boys
Sunday, April 19 @ 2 PM
The Beach Meanies, are one of the most popular and versatile tribute bands on the East Coast. The New York/New Jersey-based band have been performing together since 1984. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

Music in the Movies
Saturday, May 2 @ 2 PM
Nicole Biamonte, Associate Professor of Music Theory at McGill University in Montreal will provide an introductory look at the different ways that music is used in movie soundtracks: it can set the scene, portray emotions, enhance the action, or sometimes contradict the images onscreen. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.
John Loeb 1919-2014

A beloved member of the friends passed away on October 28, 2014. John was born on August 11, 1919 in New Haven, son of Adeline Klein Loeb and Morton Loeb. He is survived by his loving wife of 65 years, Rhoda Leshine Loeb and his son Michael (Riva) of Toronto and sister Prudence of Walpole, MA.

John attended Hopkins Grammar School in New Haven and Williston Academy in Easthampton, MA. He graduated from Franklin and Marshall College. He served as a 1st Lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force during WWII, stationed in Guam.

John was an Editor of the Branford Review and President of The Branford Printing Company. He was a member of the Branford Rotary Club and the New Haven and Branford Historical Societies. He was one of the foremost collectors of antique candle snuffers and an avid collector of New Haven postcards. John served as a trustee of the library from 2003-2009. In his retirement years his primary focus was the development and administration of the Friends of the James Blackstone Memorial Library Annual Book Sale.

In celebration of John’s 90th birthday, the Library established a lecture series in his name with funds donated by his many friends. The series focuses on history with previous talks including Long Island Sound in History, Branford and WWII and The Old Leather Man. The Library is planning the next lecture in Spring of 2015 and further details will be published.

John lived a long, healthy life and shared his intelligence, wit, charm, and good humor with family and friends. He will be missed. John’s family has requested that donations may be made to the John Loeb Lecture Fund in care of the James Blackstone Memorial Library.

Obituary: nhregister.com
Photo: Branford Eagle at newhavenindependent.org