

# NOTES



The Newsletter of the Friends of the Winnipeg Public Library

Summer 2015

Help make our libraries the best they can be

## Dear Friends:

Since the last edition of NOTES I've visited Salt Lake City and San Francisco. As I am wont to do when I'm somewhere new, I visited the public library - just because I like libraries but also to check to see if they have a Friends of the library group. In the case of SLC and San Fran they do indeed - big, busy, active groups! I was particularly impressed with the *permanent* space the SLC Friends have for their used book sales in the lower level of their beautiful main branch. Four times a year they throw open the doors and invite the

public in to browse and buy. Seeing this system has given me more appreciation for the work done by Billie and her band of volunteers for our fall book sale. Throughout the year they box up the thousands of donated books for delivery to Grant Park High School for the sale. Great work, Billie & Co!

*Thank you for being a friend of the Winnipeg Public Library.*

We call her...  
**SUPER SYLVIA!**



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## From the President Billie Stewart

I hope you made it to **Books & Brunch** in May. B&B is always best when it's a sunny day, made brighter by speakers **Charlene Diehl** and **Ron Robinson**, and MC **Ben McPhee-Sigurdson**. They were clearly having a good time, which infected the rest of us and everyone left smiling. Please read more on page 3 and most importantly, make a note for your 2016 calendar: Books & Brunch, our 11th, will be held on Sunday May 1st. A **big thank you** to the volunteers and board members who made it all happen.

I have a few changes on the board to report: in June longtime friend of the Friends, **Arthur Cohen** stepped down. Previously the WPL's Liaison to the Friends, on his retirement from WPL Arthur joined our board as Treasurer.

Arthur's library experience was always valuable to us in selecting the WPL special projects for support through our fundraising.

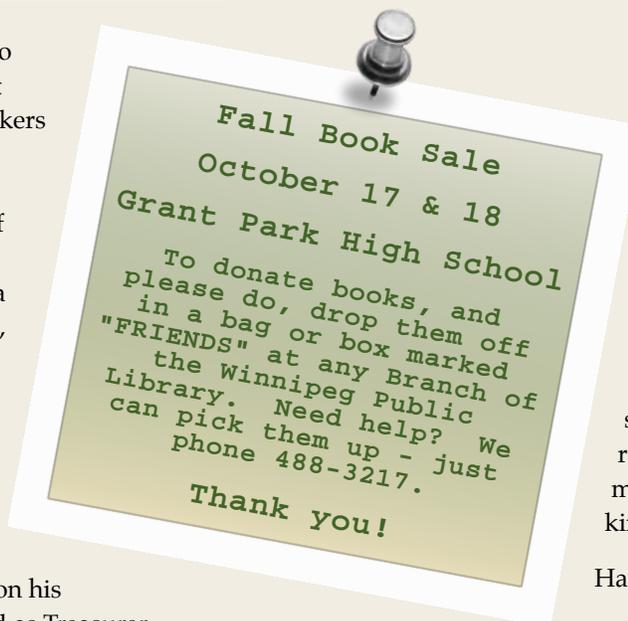
Then we welcomed two new Board members in June.

**Brenda Greenberg** is our new Treasurer.

Her background in both administration and retailing will be of great value. As a publishers sales rep and former book store manager, **Rorie Bruce** will have observations and advice constructive to both the Best of Friends Shop operations and the Fall Book Sale.

Which brings me to the book sale: donations have been first rate this year - especially fiction, mystery and cookbooks of every kind. Come and browse.

Have a great summer.



# Our Sylvia - an outstanding volunteer

## Congratulations to a Super Friend - Sylvia Flam!

Sylvia volunteers regularly at the *Best of Friends Gift Shop* and is a mainstay at our fall book sale. Sylvia was recently honoured with the Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries IMPACT award for her commitment to volunteerism within the Winnipeg arts community. She was nominated by Shakespeare in the Ruins and Prairie Theatre Exchange: **“Adding up all of the years that Sylvia Flam has volunteered for arts, culture, health care, and animal protection, it comes to over 240 years. Sylvia is an outstanding example of her commitment to volunteering.”**

## Shirt off her back

I asked recently retired chair of Best of Friends Gift Shop, Susan Fraser, if she had any stories from the many years that Sylvia has volunteered at the shop. She did. Here’s one:

There was an out-of-town businessman who stopped in to buy a few gifts. He was on his way to the airport and wanted to buy one of the cat t-shirts. We did not have the size in stock, but Sylvia was wearing that size so she took it off and sold him that one. Shirt off her back...

## Where’s Sylvia?

Susan goes on: She also has a bit of a "Fan Club": people who stop in to see her on Thursday because she’s almost always there that day. The few times I covered for her I had people come in and look at me as if I was some kind of an *imposter*. "Where’s Sylvia?" they'd ask.

## Super Sylvia

Sylvia is exceptionally dedicated and reliable. The award could not have gone to a more deserving person. So next time you’re in the shop on a Thursday give her a pat on the back.

And why “Super Sylvia”? That’s Susan’s nickname for her as it seems that she never lets a customer out of the door without selling them something!

Thank you, Sylvia.

—editor.

## Scoring a new friend during the FIFA Women’s World Cup in Winnipeg, by Pam Goundry



On the first Monday of FIFA week, a lovely man named Michael Wright from New South Wales, Australia came into the Best of Friends Gift Shop. He was here to support his Australian team. He told me that he stopped in Vancouver for a few days to acclimatize to Canada!!! I explained the purpose of the shop to him, told him about The Friends, directed him about some of the sites to see in Winnipeg, and had a lovely chat about we colonies sticking together against our arch rivals, the USA!!! On Wednesday of that week, Michael came back in to the shop and made a monetary donation to The Friends, telling me how much he was impressed by our shop, our work, and our cause.

# Best of Friends

Good Friends and Good Shopping

The Best of Friends Gift Shop conveniently located in the lobby of the Millennium Library featuring unique creations from local artisans, eclectic gifts, quality used books, DVDs, CDs, and more.

WE all know what a great little shop the Friends operate in our downtown library - but what about other folks - what about visitors to Winnipeg?

TripAdvisor - the go-to online resource for travellers around the world - has recently added *Best of Friends* to the list of shopping opportunities in Winnipeg. If you use TripAdvisor please find *Best of Friends* and



write a review so that more people will seek us out and find out for themselves that we are the best little gift shop in downtown Winnipeg!

And speaking of out-of-town visitors; Winnipeg had lots during the recent FIFA World Cup event and some of them made it into Best of Friends.

## 10th Anniversary

Watch for our special anniversary announcement and plan to celebrate our tenth anniversary with us this November. Yes, after ten years, *Best of Friends* is still going strong due to the commitment, time and skills of many dedicated volunteers who love their libraries. Fabulous!

# BOOKS & BRUNCH – TEN YEARS OF GREAT FOOD AND BOOKS



Ron and books as host of **Pages** on CKUW FM 95.9 Saturday mornings.



MC **Ben MacPhee-Sigurdson**, Winnipeg Free Press Books Editor & Wine Columnist, kept the proceedings

moving nicely. The three were a great team and we hope to have them back.

**A big thank you to all the volunteers who, over the past ten years, have made Books & Brunch the wonderful event it is.**

The complete *“Books I Have Known and Loved”* lists from Charlene and Ron are on our website.



To top it all off, there was *cake*.

**SPRING SUNSHINE** flooded the room at the Gates on Roblin on Sunday morning, May 3rd, for the Tenth Anniversary Books & Brunch, a Friends’ signature fundraiser. Guests were greeted by a gorgeous Gates’ Brunch, a great Rainbow Auction and some very entertaining speakers.

The highlight of Books & Brunch is always *“Books I Have Known and Loved”*. First we welcomed **Charlene Diehl**, Director of the Winnipeg International Writers Festival, poet, and extreme book-lover. *“Loving Canadian Kids Books”* was her title. She reminded us these books aren’t just for children and that the books we love as children stay with us all our lives.

**Ron Robinson** followed, with an eclectic list that ranged from *“The Poky Little Puppy”* to The Short Stories of Raymond Chandler, interspersed with the particular humour for which Ron is “known and loved”. Hear more of

**THANK YOU** to these generous donors to our Silent Auction \* Aveda \* Best of Friends Gift Shop \* Biagio Unisex Hair Salon \* Cristalla Spa \* D A Niels Gourmet \* Dorothy Dobbie @ Manitoba Gardener \* Heather Graham \* Lynne Gauld \* Manitoba Chamber Orchestra \* Midwest Tapes \* McNally Robinson \* The Gates on Roblin \* United Library Services \* Winnipeg Comedy Festival \* Winnipeg International Writers Festival

Photographs by Lorraine Koltek. Thank you!



Both Ron Robinson and Charlene Diehl obviously had it “in the bag”!



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# My Library is... Sir William Stephenson

My name is Margaret Platte and I grew up on a farm seven miles west of Virden, Manitoba. My passion has always been reading. Our two-room school had a library which was simply one set of book shelves. By grade three I had read it all from "The Yearling" to "Amy Vanderbilt's Book of Etiquette". I'm sure I did not understand all I was reading, but I just read. My parents joined a mail-order book club and I read everything they did.

Once I was married and came into Winnipeg, our children attended Shaughnessy Park School and there was a bookmobile which I avidly used for myself and the children.



The Sir William Stephenson Library was built in 1997, so now I can just walk over to enjoy books, magazines, newspapers. I have frequently rented the meeting room for groups that I belong to. There is so much space in the new library and they offer many different programs for all ages. When my grandchildren were young and staying with me, it was a great resource to entertain them and take out some books.

About 15 years ago I joined a book club. We read about seven books each year and this has encouraged me to read books that I would probably never have chosen for myself.

**In the heat of the summer, I can go over and read in the Library, as I have no air conditioning, and it is wonderfully cool and restful there.**

The staff are always so kind and helpful, as sometimes I choose to read an old book or play that is hard to find.

Libraries are one of the greatest resources we have in Winnipeg and it is all free.

*Margaret Platte is a long-time resident of Tyndall Park who loves having a Winnipeg Public Library branch right in her neighbourhood.*

## Friends helping Friends

To the many of you who gave me your email address at Books & Brunch - thank you!! Being able to contact you by email saves the Friends a lot of money on postage. Remember too that you can renew your membership and make donations directly from our website:

[friendswpl.ca](http://friendswpl.ca)

**Prize Package Winners:** *Joe Hardy* won our gift prize package including a complimentary Friends membership at the opening of the new Charleswood Library earlier this year. And our winner at *Books & Brunch* was *Mavis Whicker*. Congratulations to both - and welcome!

I look forward to seeing you at the Friends' table at the **River Heights Farmers Market** in September (not sure which Friday yet).

Have a great summer everyone!

*Kathy Blight, Chair, Membership Committee*

## 2015-2016 Board of Directors

- Billie Stewart — President
- Vacant — Vice-President
- Brenda Greenberg — Treasurer
- Heather Graham — Secretary
- Janet Carriere — Chair, Best of Friends Gift Shop
- Kathy Blight — Chair, Membership Committee
- Billie Stewart — Chair, Fall Book Sale
- Jillian Glover — Communications
- Janet Carriere — Volunteer Coordinator
- Rorie Bruce — Member at Large
- Luba Harasym — Member at Large
- Dianne Zuk — Member at Large
- Winnipeg Public Library Liaison — Ed Cuddy
- Manager, Best of Friends Gift Shop — Vacant
- Newsletter Editor — Jillian Glover

Friends of the Winnipeg Public Library  
 251 Donald Street, Winnipeg, MB R3C 3P5  
 204-488-3217 info@friendswpl.ca  
[www.friendswpl.ca](http://www.friendswpl.ca)



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