

Brooks Memorial Library — Fine Arts Committee Meeting

August 16, 2018

Present Judith Bellamy, Howard Burrows, Christine deVallet, Sirkka Kauffman. Staff: Starr LaTronica.

Call to order Howard called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

Changes to agenda None

Public comment None

Minutes of June 7, 2018, meeting No corrections or additions.

FA Collection • **Inventory:** Crystal Gilman, working part-time, created an Excel spreadsheet from the FA catalog records, physically located all 370 items in the catalog, identified their specific locations in the FA storage room, and assessed what information is missing on each. Christine added framed measurements. Still to be done: add unframed measurements; suspend large paintings against walls once hanging devices are received; insert acid-free dividers between items in bins; decide how to catalog the 400-plus books in the FA collection.

• **Preservation assessment:** Consultant Billy Myers visited the library August 15 to discuss strategy. He conserved the sculpture *La Becqué*, the surface of which had been damaged over years of standing on the main circulation desk, and placed it in the front window near the *Spirit of Life*. There was some discussion of clustering major sculptures and William Morris Hunt works (*The Prodigal Son* painting, *Flight of Night* bas relief, possibly others by both Hunt and his brother Leavitt Hunt) in a corner of the front window. It was agreed that *Flight of Night* could be moved there from the second floor, but neither decisions on other works nor a specific plan or schedule were made.

• **Catalog discovery ideas:** Howard said that Alex Stinson is presently implementing at Harvard the Wiki database project he proposed for the library. He may use that project a model for the project at Brooks.

Exhibits **Children's Illustrators:** • No exhibits have been lined up beyond August 31 when the present one ends, but Starr knows of an illustrator attending the Literary Festival who might possibly exhibit for September and October. • Judith had emailed the committee an announcement for a Volunteer Art Coordinator that had appeared in the Friends newsletter some years ago. It could be modified for use now and distributed as soon as possible to multiple likely outlets, including the Friends' newsletter, the library's website, the Reformer, and the Commons. It was suggested that journalist Joyce Marcel, the Friends' president, could be approached to write a press release for local newspapers.

General: • Starr said we need to find a place on the main floor to put the two remaining Children's Illustrators cabinets. • Starr also noted that Billy Myers had recommended removing the fluorescent lights from the display cabinets and the Snow Angel and replacing them with LED lighting. • Judith initiated discussion of reinstating the public art exhibit program on the main floor. Appropriate display furniture would be needed, as the panels used previously were unstable and inconvenient. Christine said that there are now many venues for public art display, and it had become more difficult to find people who wanted to exhibit at the library. • Starr said that the Brattleboro Words project will have a new exhibit on 18th-century playwright and Brattleboro resident Royall Tyler in the cases in the Local History Room.

FA community opportunities/programming partners Alex Stinson's regional training on wikidata and Billy Myers's workshops on frame conservation to be scheduled.

Review of Bylaws, Rules, & Budget Sirkka said the Trustees are in the process of reviewing all the library's governing policies, as required by the Bylaws at least every five years. She has reviewed the Fine Arts policies and associated forms. She said only a few changes are needed to update the FA policies; she will edit the policies and forms as necessary and present them at the next FA meeting.

Other • Starr announced that the sound booth donated by Guilford Sound has been delivered and can be seen at the end of the first aisle stacks on the main floor. • Starr said the Friends will hold a donor recognition event at the library on September 21 from 6 to 8 p.m., to highlight what the Friends have done for the library. She said this will be an opportunity to educate people about FA at the library and recruit them to help us. She would like to have a FA "wish list" developed that a committee member on each floor could use in talking to people, and requested that we email her our "wishes."

NEXT MEETING Thursday, September 6, 9 a.m.

Adjournment The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.