

The Gryphon



The Newsletter of the Friends of the
Osborne and Lillian H. Smith Collections

Spring 2021

Patron: Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra,
The Hon. Lady Ogilvy



FROM THE CHAIR

We look forward to seeing you all at the Albert and Clara Lahmer Memorial Lecture on April 29 at 7:00 p.m. It is a joy to be able to write that sentence; it seems like a scrap of near normalcy among the events of the past fourteen months.

What will be unusual for the lecture (though not so unusual this year) is that it will take place virtually. What will be “normal” is that we have a wonderful speaker and a fascinating subject: “Finding Winnie.” Author Lindsay Mattick will bring us the true story of Winnie-the-Pooh, and her own literary journey exploring the story behind the story. Lindsay had been scheduled to give this talk last April and we are delighted that she has been able to reschedule. I am looking forward to a virtual lecture that all of us will enjoy.

Further information on the lecture and how to access it can be found on page 2.

Looking ahead to the fall, we are planning for virtual Stubbs and Pantazzi lectures and will keep you posted with all the information you need to view them. More details on page 6.

After the 2020 Sybille Pantazzi lecture was cancelled, a decision was made to repurpose that year’s lecture funds. Jane Dobell, whose

endowment supports the lecture, authorized the Osborne to use the 2020 funds, along with some unspent monies from previous years, for acquisitions instead. As a result, wonderful Edward Gorey and Pinocchio pieces have found a home at the Osborne Collection. You can read more about them in Martha Scott’s report, “Notable Acquisitions,” on page 4.

Sephora Henderson’s report on page 3 demonstrates how very busy the Osborne staff have been during the last nine months. The Friends were delighted that amid all those challenges, the staff managed to put together an Edward Gorey exhibit that opened on October 31. The lockdown that came a few weeks later meant that not as many people visited it as we would have liked,

Welcome to the Osborne Collection!

The Osborne Collection of Early Children’s Books has four main areas of concentration. The Osborne Collection itself contains literature published before 1910. The Lillian H. Smith Collection comprises books of literary and artistic merit published in English from 1910 onward. The Canadiana Collection is a selection of 19th- and 20th-century children’s books in English, related to Canada, or whose authors, illustrators, or publishers are associated with Canada. The Jean Thomson Collection of Original Art has over 5,000 original illustrations for children’s books in watercolour, pen-and-ink, woodcut, multimedia, and many other media.

As part of the Toronto Public Library system, the Collection is open and available to all.

facebook.com/Friends-of-the-Osborne-Collection-of-Early-Childrens-Books-177552168943174/ * osbornecollection.ca
www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/osborne/

Email the Friends at: FriendsOsborne@gmail.com.

Lillian H. Smith Branch/ Toronto Public Library, 239 College Street, Toronto, ON, M5T 1R5, 416-393-7753. Hours are on the website. Membership and donation details are on page 12 of this newsletter.

but it is hoped that if circumstances allow, the exhibit can be extended for a short period of time once the collection reopens. Our thanks in these pandemic times to all the staff for this and for all they do for the Osborne Collection.

In early December came the very sad news of the death of William G. B. Humphries (1944–2020). Bill Humphries took a deep interest in the Osborne Collection and was a wonderful friend. Among his many roles, he was Chair of the Norman and Marion Robertson Foundation, whose grants have enabled the digitization of a considerable part of the collection, making many

treasures of the Osborne accessible around the world. Bill was a man of wide interests and great generosity, energy, and acuity, and he will be deeply missed. In his memory and in recognition of his deep interest in and work with Indigenous communities, the Friends have authorized the purchase of books or art by some of Canada's noted Indigenous authors and illustrators.

In late February, we were sorry to learn that Services Specialist Martha Scott will be retiring on June 2 after thirty-two years at Toronto Public Library, twenty-one of those years at Osborne. On behalf of all the Friends, I thank Martha for her knowledge, curiosity, and

passion for the Collection and for the invaluable contribution she has made over the years. We will miss her very much. (A full appreciation of Martha will appear in the next issue.)

Our first virtual Annual General Meeting takes place on Wednesday, May 19, 2021, when members will also enjoy a tour of some Osborne treasures. See page 12 for details. And please make sure we have your email address, so we can send you updates, and links to this and other events. You can reach us at FriendsOsborne@gmail.com.

—Gillian O'Reilly

SPRING 2021 VIRTUAL LECTURE

**17th Annual Albert & Clara
Lahmer Memorial Lecture**
Thursday, April 29, 7:00 p.m.

Lindsay Mattick
Finding Winnie



Lindsay Mattick is the great-granddaughter of Captain Harry Colebourn, the Canadian veterinarian and soldier who purchased the small black bear cub

that went on to inspire the creation of A. A. Milne's Winnie-the-Pooh.

Lindsay has spent the last twenty years retracing her great-grandfather's steps and the incredible consequences his purchase had on children's literature. It's a journey that has resulted in a radio documentary on the CBC and the publication of her picture book *Finding Winnie* (2015), illustrated by Sophie Blackall, which won the prestigious Caldecott Medal and became a *New York Times* bestseller. Her middle grade novel, *Winnie's Great War* (2018), was named a finalist for Canada's Governor General's Literary Award.

Lindsay has shared her story around the world from the Lincoln Center in New York to the House at Pooh Corner near Ashdown Forest (the Hundred Acre Wood), and notably to HRH Prince Charles,

as part of Canada's National Arts Centre's National Orchestra's UK tour. In her talk, Lindsay will share the adventure she's had exploring her family history.

Join us for a wonderful evening. This will be a free live online event, available on Crowdcast: <https://www.crowdcast.io/e/tpl-lindsay-mattick-finding-winnie/register>.



FROM THE COLLECTION

The latter half of 2020 saw a continuation of the system-wide closure of Toronto Public Library that started in March 2020, to help the City of Toronto's efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19. By Canada Day, staff had already been working from home for three and a half months, and adjusting to the peculiarities of working remotely. In a department such as the Osborne Collection, one might wonder what work there is to do when separated from the physical collection, and the answer is LOTS! Staff were as busy as ever, and remained very productive. The new circumstances challenged us to be creative in the way we planned and executed work, and necessitated good communication among peers. We were fortunate to be provided access to our electronic files, and staff made every effort to quickly become acclimated to online meeting platforms that allowed us to meet (virtually) to collaborate and actively participate. We continued to monitor our department email and respond to customer inquiries, and also used well-established tools such as blogs and social media to provide information.

Following the staged reopening plan for the City of Toronto, Special Collections areas were able to reopen to the public with limited services in mid-September. Staff had already returned to their work spaces a few weeks prior, to make necessary preparations. There were some very big changes in the way we would be providing service, but every effort was made to maintain the excellent quality of service that it has always been our mission to provide. Special Collections moved

to an appointment-based system in order to maintain the department's capacity limit while also allowing for appropriate physical distancing for staff and the public, and also to allow for cleaning and sanitization of spaces between appointments. Customers could call or email to book an appointment up to one week in advance, and walk-in customers were accommodated based on room capacity.

Appointments were two hours in duration with the option to extend based on bookings and capacity. The care and handling guidelines for special collections materials remained firmly in place, with the added guidelines for sanitization, distancing, and mandatory personal protective equipment (PPE). Acrylic shields were added around the information desk, and floor decals were added to indicate safe distancing. After each customer vacated their designated spot at one of the reading room tables, staff sanitized the table surface and chair. Thirty minutes was added to the end of every appointment to allow time for cleaning and drying, and preparation of the space for new users. The Conservation staff sourced a special natural cleanser that could be used on surfaces that would come into contact with collection materials, to ensure their safety and integrity. Any Collection materials used were placed in quarantine along with any book supports: paper materials required a seventy-two-hour quarantine, whereas items made of metal or wood required ninety-six hours.

Just when staff and the public were beginning to adjust to a new

kind of paradigm, we saw another closure at the end of November, which took us across the holidays and into the new year. During the brief time that the department was open between lockdowns, over one hundred individual appointments were made, and several more customers came by to look at the exhibit, or ask questions.

Staff worked diligently to plan and install a delightful exhibit about Edward Gorey, and a blog post was also shared (https://torontopubliclibrary.typepad.com/arts_culture/2020/11/gorey-tales-the-stories-and-art-of-edward-gorey.html). Now we face uncertainty yet again, in the midst of the current lockdown. The circulating collections of the Lillian H. Smith Branch, separate from the Special Collections areas on the third and fourth floors, are open for curbside pickup of holds materials, allowing one customer to enter the building at a time, and only long enough to check out their pre-arranged holds.

As of March 2021, the Osborne Collection remains closed to the public, but in-person services will resume as soon as it is safe to do so. We look forward to welcoming the public again at a future date, and in the meantime, staff are working away diligently in the department, answering public inquiries, tending to the collections, creating content that can be shared virtually, and planning for the future.

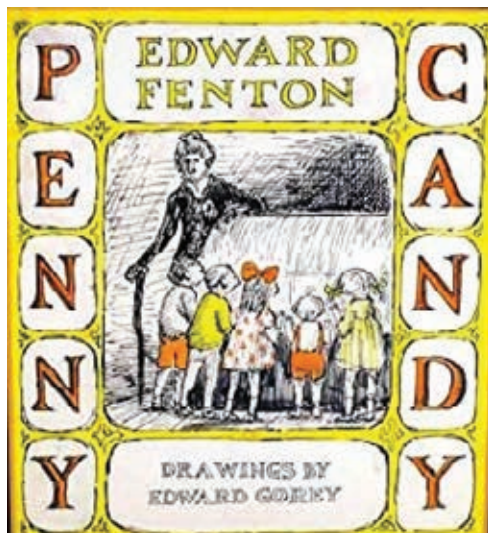
—Sephora Henderson

NOTABLE ACQUISITIONS

Despite the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Osborne Collection has been fortunate to acquire a number of outstanding items in recent months.

The Sybille Pantazzi Memorial Trust Fund, generously established by Friends of Osborne Executive Member Emerita Jane Dobell, has enabled the purchase of three extraordinary children's book-related illustrations.

The first is a preliminary cover design by Edward Gorey for *Penny Candy* by Edward Fenton (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970). This book tells the story of a young boy named Paul who is always tagging along with his older sister and her friends. On the last day of school he finds a nickel and treats his companions at the Widow Shin's candy shop. As the children eat their candy Paul experiences mysterious visions of their grown-up lives. In this preliminary design, the five children peer intently into the display case as the Widow looks on. It differs from the final cover illustration in that the Widow Shin looks less severe, the children appear younger, and their clothes have been coloured.



The next item purchased with the assistance of the Sybille Pantazzi Memorial Fund is not an illustration per se, but an original Pinocchio-themed “Birthday Greeting” created by Walt Disney Studios, circa 1945–50. This pen, ink, and wash drawing features the classic movie characters Pinocchio, Jiminy Cricket, Cleo the Goldfish, and Figaro the Cat. The 1940 Disney film had an enormous impact on the popularization and reception of the Pinocchio story by Carlo Lorenzini

(aka Carlo Collodi), which first appeared in the Italian children's magazine *Giornale per i bambini* in 1881. This cheerful work enhances Osborne's extensive Pinocchio collection, which includes first Italian and English editions, magic lantern slides, fine illustrated versions, pop-ups, dolls, and an original Disney animation cell. (Many of these items were donated by Sybille Pantazzi herself, who was a noted Pinocchio collector.)

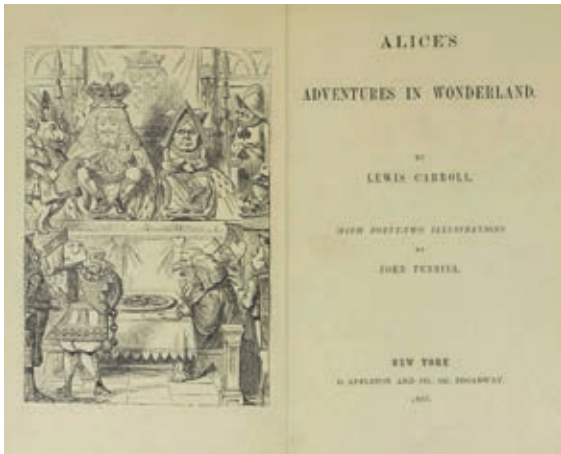
The final item is a striking pen-and-ink drawing by Hungarian American artist Willy Pogány for his Art Deco-influenced *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (New York: Dutton, 1929), in which Alice is famously dressed as a flapper. Osborne holds four other *Alice* drawings by Pogány—these were featured in the 2018 exhibit *Alice Opens the Door* at Toronto Reference Library's TD Gallery. This piece, depicting Alice, the Queen of Hearts, the King of Hearts, the Executioner, and the disembodied head of the Cheshire Cat, is captioned “The moment Alice appeared she was appealed to by all three to settle the question.” (The question being how to carry out the Queen's order of execution when the Cat appears without a body from which to remove its head...)



We invite you to visit the Collection to view these three remarkable pieces in person. (We sincerely hope that Osborne will have reopened to the public not too long after this issue of *The Gryphon* is published!)

Through the Osborne and Lillian H. Smith Trust Fund the Collection has acquired a rare early edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. When the first edition of *Alice* was published in 1865, it was withdrawn by

Lewis Carroll because the illustrator, John Tenniel, was unhappy with the quality of the printing. Fifty advance copies had already been published and Carroll recalled as many of these as he could—twenty-three survive in the world today. The unbound sheets for the remainder of this 1865 edition were sold to the American publisher D. Appleton. These sheets were bound and sold by Appleton in 1866. This sought-after edition is known today as the “Appleton Alice.” Osborne’s copy has been rebound in red calf by Rivière with the original cloth covers and endpapers bound in.



ten-panel lithographed work which unfolds to reveal a dramatic six-foot-long French coastal scene: port, marina, beach, seascape, fishing village, harbour, etc. Illustrated by Russian emigrée artist and stage designer Alexandra Exter, this book forms part of the influential Albums du Père Castor series founded by Paul Faucher in 1931. The series, which sought to incorporate new educational theories into children’s book production, is celebrated for its striking modernist illustrations and innovative content.

During these stressful times, jigsaw puzzles have reached new heights of popularity as pandemic “stress-busters.” Their invention is credited to English cartographer and engraver John Spilsbury, who, in the 1760s, sold maps mounted onto hardwood and cut along political boundaries as “dissected puzzles,” useful for teaching children geography. The Osborne Collection holds a number of early puzzles on historical, geographical, and other themes. A newly acquired example, *Roman History* [box title] (London: W. Darton and Son, circa 1835), consists of forty-eight puzzle pieces housed in a wooden box with a sliding lid. The pieces assemble to depict twenty-four action-filled scenes from Roman history such as Romulus and Remus discovered by the shepherd Faustulus, the Battle of Actium, and Caesar crossing the Rubicon. Shown here is the box lid, which, like many similarly aged wooden toy and puzzle boxes, has suffered from warping. This puzzle is certain to have provided many hours of entertainment and learning to its former child owners.



Panorama de la Côte (Textes de Marie Colmont. Paris: Flammarion/Albums du Père Castor, 1938) is a

2019 marked the three hundredth anniversary of Daniel Defoe’s *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner...* Although not written for children, the book was enthusiastically “adopted” by child readers. Osborne holds an extensive collection of Crusoe and Crusoe-inspired items in a wide variety of formats. A newly purchased shaped book adds to the mix. It contains a retelling of the story in verse by Lydia L. Very (Boston: L. Prang, 1864). Note that the cover image of Crusoe offers both front and rear views!



George Morrow (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1934).

Gideon Sheps presented two Robinson Crusoe prints, dated 1780 and 1835, from the collection of his late uncle's partner, Dr. David Blewett. Dr. Blewett was the author of *The Illustration of Robinson Crusoe, 1719–1920* (Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire: Colin Smythe, 1995).

Sydney Smith donated twenty-five original illustrations from *Grant and Tillie Go Walking*, written by Monica Kulling (Toronto: Groundwood Books, 2015) and five illustrations from *Smoot: A Rebellious Shadow* by Michelle Cuevas (Toronto: Tundra Books, 2017).

From Keith Taylor we have received two original collages by Elizabeth Cleaver and a watercolour-and-pencil illustration by Eric Beddows for *Who Shrank My Grandmother's House: Poems of Discovery* by Barbara Juster Esbensen (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1992).

Additional gifts-in-kind were presented by Toni Allen, Deborah Bodiam, Nelson Cazeils, David Cohen, Leigh Davidson, Carol Dawson, Maureen Delaney, William Dougall, Jennifer Fisher, Shirley Fishman, Annie Gould, Tuida Hambleton, Yuka Kajihara-Nolan, Janice Lavery, Tom Maragos, Paul Marshall, Chris Mascarin, William McCallum, Ian McDougall, Patricia Merrilees, Bonnie Moore, Ralph Reid, James Douglas Rouse, Lyla Rye, Michah Rynor, and Anthony Usher.

We thank all these donors for their generous gifts.

—Martha Scott

The Osborne Collection received many wonderful gifts-in-kind in 2019 and 2020. The following have not yet been acknowledged in *The Gryphon*.

Lissa Paul donated a copy of her book *Eliza Fenwick: Early Modern Feminist* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2019).

Wendy Rebanks gave a scarce volume of original fairy tales titled *The Death of the Dragon*, written by English humourist J. B. Morton and illustrated by

FALL 2021 VIRTUAL LECTURES

14th Annual Sybille Pantazzi Memorial Lecture Thursday, September 30, 2021

Artist Roy Henry Vickers

TO BE CONFIRMED



Roy Henry Vickers is a renowned carver, painter, printmaker, storyteller, and recognized leader in the First Nations community. Based in Hazelton, BC, he is the illustrator and co-author of

Harbour Publishing's popular children's series *First West Coast Book*, and *Northwest Coast Legends*. He is the illustrator of Groundwood Books' *If You Want to Visit a Sea Garden*, written by Kay Weisman.

33rd Helen E. Stubbs Memorial Lecture Thursday, November 11, 2021

Author Kathy Stinson

The Reader I Was, The Writer I Am



Kathy Stinson will explore connections between her reading as a child and her writing as an adult, between the world as she knew it then and the world as she knows it now.

Watch our website, Facebook page, and the fall issue of *The Gryphon* for more details on both lectures.

“THE DAUGHTER OF TIME”

I told students at the beginning of the pandemic that later generations might be shocked at reading children’s books in which unmasked people carelessly gather in groups and *shake hands*: Will this happen, or will the book portraying masked, carefully distanced adults and children be a rare relic of the COVID epidemic? Time will tell, and the Osborne Collection will provide the answers to this and other questions.

In the recent highlighting of the Dr. Seuss titles that have ceased to be published, we are reminded again that truth is the “daughter of time.” What titles do we now applaud that in the future will be looked at with pity, indignation, or horror? How fortunate we are to have the Osborne Collection where both the wisdom and the ignorance of the past is captured for study. Those who doubt the messages of children’s books or question decisions to keep them on circulating shelves can come and see for themselves, while scholars can delve into the books to find solid evidence to support their research.

This is where the continuum of children’s literature takes up what society has left behind. A book is written and hits the vogue, filling a need or an interest. It may inspire other books, or it may fade quickly into obscurity. Unless it becomes a “classic,” and is honoured by popular material spinoffs and products, it may languish virtually unknown, but suppose it does catch on, and is both well-loved and widely read.

Many people may love it ... but over the years, popular opinion changes. New generations of readers look at the book with different eyes, and to a growing number of readers it begins to strike a wrong note. Criticism emerges, followed by defence, but the tide is turning, though authors may rewrite the story and take it in new directions. The original book can no longer be promoted, and is relegated to the research collection.

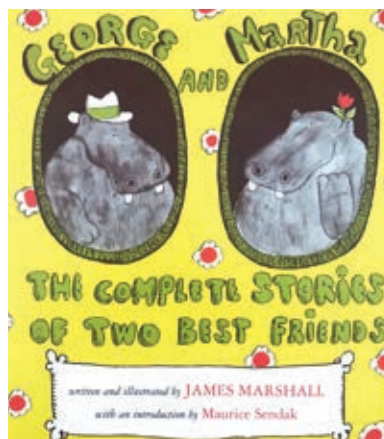
But there it comes into its own again! The book becomes a valuable part of the family tree that shows us what we are growing *away from*, even as new books are placed at the outermost leaves until they, too, are found outmoded. It is a great tribute to the wisdom of libraries that they help us examine our unvarnished early history by preserving and contextualizing it, in addition to preserving fragile and valuable physical artifacts. New truths are found by looking at old evidence, but the greatest lesson is that we ourselves are changing, and should not be complacent, or make assumptions that future generations will agree with what we believe today. Librarians can take pride in belonging to a system that continually evaluates how its holdings serve the needs of children, and in having the wisdom to preserve the past, which through the Osborne and other research collections, is our gift to future generations.

—Leslie McGrath

GEORGE AND MARTHA AND THE ETHICS OF FRIENDSHIP

George and Martha are best friends and hippopotamuses who live in a world of animal friends created by James Marshall, who wrote and illustrated the George and Martha series of children’s books, beginning with the title contribution *George and Martha* in 1972. Each book contains several short stories (adapted for television in 1999–2000 and now available on YouTube). They were compiled into one volume, *George and Martha: The Complete Stories of Two Best Friends* in 1997, now available as a reference text in the Osborne Collection.

George and Martha’s adventures examine the way we relate to one another in the context of friendship.



But they might be interpreted more broadly, as a prescription for behaviour not only in relation to our friends, but to all people. Conceiving of the difference means we have to admit to something that contemporary ethicists would rather we not: that there is a prescriptive difference between how we treat our friends compared to how we treat other people.

Ethics (the philosophical discipline) often asks us to imagine how to optimize our relations with others—nameless, faceless others, who remain nameless and faceless because of the discipline’s commitment to impartiality. Ethicists believe that to come up with an objective

ethical truth, it has to be universal, which means it should apply everywhere and at all times. Ideally, there should be no difference between how we treat the people we know versus the people we don't know. (A notable exception to this attitude is Aristotle, who accounted for friendship in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.) The ideal is especially important when ethics comes to have a political consequence. In large groups, we want people to be treated fairly and justly, and that begins with our not differentiating at the outset between our friends and those who are not our friends.

But the ethical ideal of impartiality doesn't allow us to account for some seemingly self-evident ethical truths. When we see that Martha invites George to her dance recital, we expect him to go, *because he is her friend*. (This is the first episode of the television series.) We ascribe to the situation a set of norms and regulations that don't apply outside the context of their relationship. We do not have the same intuitive support for some more impartial ethical truth, e.g., "All people should go to all dance recitals when they are invited." The statement seems as absurd as the situation. Not only should I not have to go to all dance recitals to which I am invited, I also assume that were I not the friend of someone in the recital, I shouldn't be invited. (Indeed, I should think we might even be rather suspicious of anyone sitting in the back of the audience at such a recital, who in fact had no friend or relation involved in the performance.)

This example highlights what I think is a key problem for the ideal of impartiality within contemporary ethics—that there are situations that only occur within the context of relations that are decidedly partial. To maintain, therefore, the ideal of an impartial ethics, is to set a limit to the application of such an ethic. It can govern relations between strangers well enough, but when we attempt to apply the same principles between friends, it seems to demand that we treat those friends as strangers—and to treat our friends as strangers seems itself quite unethical.

We expect better from our friends. While George and Martha are certainly flawed individuals, in each story one is able to teach the other something important about friendship. Consider the story "Split Pea Soup." Martha makes a split pea soup, which she feeds to George while he pretends to like it, eventually pouring a bowl into his shoes in an attempt to hide his distaste for it from Martha. But Martha catches him, admitting that she doesn't much like the soup either (she just likes to make it). The moral of the story is that friends should

always be able to tell each other the truth. He should have told her he didn't like the soup.

The story would not work if George and Martha were strangers. You can't go around telling strangers that their shoes are stupid and their soup is terrible. The real moral of the story is that even though you're expected to be polite in the company of strangers, pretending everyone's shoes are fine and all soup is good, this moral is superseded in the context of friendship, where hard truths are preferred to soft lies. A wrong becomes a right, and the difference is the relation between the individuals involved.

What George and Martha have to teach us is not that our friends should be exempt from some more general ethics. Rather, there is a more refined ethics that takes into account the sort of relation of the people involved, where the relation isn't an impartial one to nameless and faceless strangers. While "Don't lie to your friends" might seem a less universal, more restricted truth than a general statement like "Don't lie at all, ever," the former is much more representative of how we expect people to behave in the actual universe—not an abstract universe where everyone is impartial to everyone else, but the real universe, where the people have names, and we know more or less who it is our actions will affect. George and Martha's ethics are lessons for the real world, where people have names and faces and make soup, and where they might be offended if you don't like their soup—or be even more offended if you don't respect and trust them enough to tell them you don't like the soup.

—Charlene Elsbey

WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG

Who was your favourite mischievous or charmingly naughty character from a children's book or series?

Linda Granfield: Pippi Longstocking and Jo March

Sephora Henderson: Pippi Longstocking

Leslie McGrath: Isabel, from *The Adventures of Isabel* (Ogden Nash; illus. James Marshall)

Gillian O'Reilly: Mary Jane, from A. A. Milne's *When We Were Very Young*

Carol Percy: Tom Kitten

Martha Scott: Petunia the silly goose (Roger Duvoisin)

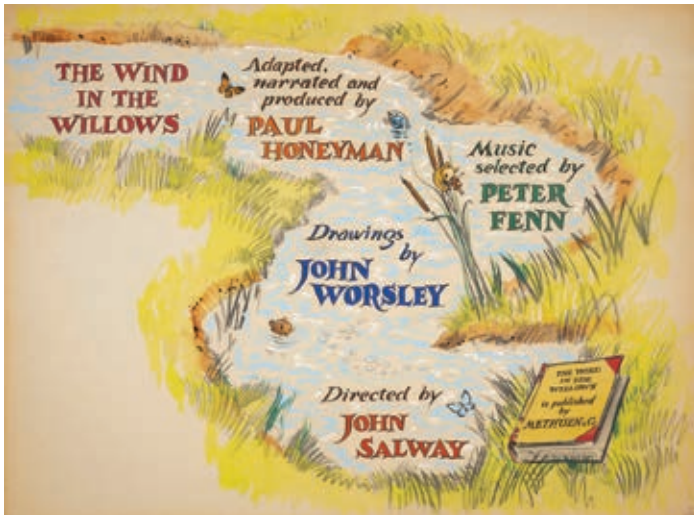
Ken Setterington: Pippi Longstocking

Chandra Wohleber: Witcheena, from *The Resident Witch* (Marian T. Place)

CONSERVATION PROJECT: *THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS* (1970)

Work began in September 2020 on a conservation project sponsored by the Osborne Friends for drawings by British artist John Worsley, from Anglia Television's 1970 production of Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*.

The Collection has fifty-five of the total 550 drawings that Worsley made for the eighteen-episode series. In every episode, the drawings were filmed and accompanied by a narration by Paul Honeyman. Some drawings feature multiple vignettes, which formed a distinct scene as the camera panned across the drawing.



This drawing was used as the title card at the end of every episode.

The first part of this project involved a condition assessment of the drawings. Each drawing was photographed and then examined to determine the condition of the paper support and media. A thorough assessment is essential to determine what, if any, conservation treatment is required.



Photographs are taken to document the drawings before and after treatment.

In this case, the drawings were determined to be in good condition with some minor tears at edges or corners. There was a moderate amount of surface soil and offset media, where media from one drawing was transferred to another through close contact—both a result of years of previous inappropriate storage conditions.

Because these drawings are in generally good condition, the treatment that followed was minimal and focused on long-term preservation. Minor tears were mended with Japanese paper and wheat starch paste,



Here I am surface cleaning a drawing with a chemical sponge.

and minor board splits were re-adhered with wheat starch paste. The most extensive treatment was cleaning with chemical sponges to remove surface soil and offset media from the primary support of each drawing.



A detail of the surface dirt picked up by the chemical sponge.



Before surface cleaning (left) and after surface cleaning (right).

Because much of this surface soiling was the result of the drawings rubbing against each other, it was important to create long-term storage solutions to prevent this from reoccurring. The smaller drawings are now housed inside custom-made folders across four boxes that are also fitted with custom-made spacers. The largest drawings have been placed in four custom-made portfolios. There are interleaving sheets between the drawings to prevent media from transferring from one drawing to another.

—Emily White



Custom portfolios were constructed to house the largest of the drawings.

CONDOLENCES



Condolences to the family and friends of:

Peter Dobell (1927–2020), C.M., public servant, trailblazer and innovator, husband of Jane Dobell.

William (Bill) G. B. Humphries (1944–2020), chair of the Norman and Marian Robertson Charitable Foundation, whose support through the years has enabled, among other things, the accelerated digitization of Osborne materials.

Walter Ross Murray (1930–2020), who donated the bulk of the G. A. Henty holdings in the Osborne Collection.

Recent Class Visits to Osborne

Nov. 26, 2020

Introduction to Osborne Collection and Children's Book History

York University class, via Zoom

Nov. 30, 2020

Children's Book Illustration

Sheridan College, class of author/illustrator Carey Sookocheff, via Zoom

Feb. 11, 2021

Children's Book Illustration

Sheridan College, class of author/illustrator Carey Sookocheff, via Zoom

Mar. 13, 2021

Children's Book Illustration

Presentation to Arts Society of Greater Toronto, via Zoom

FARTHER AFIELD

Merril Turns Fifty

Congratulations to the Toronto Public Library's Merrill Collection, celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, and our colleagues, the Friends of the Merrill Collection.

<https://torontopubliclibrary.typepad.com/local-history-genealogy/2020/11/merril-collection-at-50-stories-from-the-spaced-out-library.html>



Cameron Hollyer Memorial Lecture

Our colleagues the Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at the Toronto Public Library sponsor the annual Cameron Hollyer Memorial Lecture. You may enjoy the 2020 lecture, given by Rebecca Romney: "Collecting: A Tour of Clever, Creative, and Weird Pursuits."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-6kaMJFDkU&feature=youtu.be>

Rebecca Romney is a rare book dealer and co-founder of both the Washington, DC-based firm Type Punch Matrix, and the Honey & Wax Book Collecting Prize. Happy viewing!



Victorian Alphabet Books

Play with Language and the Nonsense of Alphabet Books: Victorian England and Beyond

A lecture by Robin Hoffman at the Rare & Special Collections, Osler, Art, and Archives (ROAAr), McGill Library.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vD43Zybn-Qc>

Robin Hoffman's research focuses on Victorian picture books and print culture. She is currently an editor in the Publishing Department at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Annual General Meeting

Join the Friends of the Osborne
for our first virtual AGM and
a virtual tour of Osborne treasures.

May 19, 2021, at 4:00 p.m.

Please make sure we have your email address
to receive the AGM link.

We look forward to seeing you.



CONTRIBUTORS

Charlene Elsby has a Ph.D. in philosophy from McMaster University and was recently a tenure-track professor. She is the author of *Hexis* (Clash Books, 2020), *Affect* (The Porcupine's Quill, 2020), and *Psychros* (Clash Books, 2021).

Sephora W. Henderson is a reader, polyglot, musician, and magic enthusiast. She is the Senior Department Head of the Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books, and also of the Merrill Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation & Fantasy.

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