

# The Gryphon



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

Spring/Summer 2026



## FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Friends,

It has been an exciting fall at the Osborne as the inspiring work of the Friends and the dedicated team at TPL continues.

The Pantazzi Lecture (pages 6–7) featuring the brilliant Lauren Soloy was very well attended and received. The line-up for book sales was practically out the door! Kathy Stinson, who introduced Lauren, had never met her in person, so it was a joyful greeting. The Stubbs Lecture (pages 8–9), given by the hilarious Kevin Sylvester, reminded us that the creative journey can take many twists and turns, but that fundamentally we all need to foster and encourage creativity in children.

What struck me was that both lectures were family events—Lauren’s kids and husband were in the front row so the children saw what a rock star their mom is in the world of books for young readers. Kevin’s family was also there in support; Basil, his equally talented and hilarious child and co-writer, introduced Dad.

The award-winning Barbara Reid will be giving the Lahmer Lecture on Thursday, April 30 (page 2). We hope to see you there! Barbara Reid has a close relationship with the Osborne, which has many of her works in the Collection. See her making a giant snowball on page 16, snow often

being a source of inspiration for her books.

It is with great sadness that I report that Brian Doyle passed away on January 1 (page 18). I thank Jeffrey Canton, for his insightful interview of Doyle, which we ran in our fall 2025 issue. The children’s writing community is grieving the loss of this icon who was nominated multiple times for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award.

The Friends have contributed to the conservation project on the Margaret Bloy Graham fonds (page 19). On pages 14–15, read the fascinating interview with Emily White as she shares how she became a conservator and the nature of her work.

Martha Scott’s article (pages 10–11) on mermaids and other merpeople is fascinating. The Osborne has in its collection a 1591 edition of Ovid’s

## Welcome to the Osborne Collection

The Osborne Collection of Early Children’s Books has four areas of concentration. The Osborne Collection 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 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 illustrations for children’s books in watercolour, pen-and-ink, woodcut, and other media.

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

[facebook.com/Friends-of-the-Osborne-Collection-of-Early-Childrens-Books-177552168943174/](https://facebook.com/Friends-of-the-Osborne-Collection-of-Early-Childrens-Books-177552168943174/) \* [osbornecollection.ca](http://osbornecollection.ca)  
[www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/osborne/](http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/osborne/)

Email the Friends at: [FriendsOsborne@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsOsborne@gmail.com)

Lillian H. Smith Branch / Toronto Public Library, 239 College Street, Toronto, ON, M5T 1R5, 416-393-7753. See the website for hours.



JOIN/DONATE:

[www.osbornecollection.ca/donatembership.html](http://www.osbornecollection.ca/donatembership.html)



*Metamorphoses*, which portrays a fish-tailed Triton! Who knew? Now you do.

Turn to page 12 to read about Valentina D'Aliesio's love affair with *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens*, by J. M. Barrie and illustrated by Arthur Rackham. The Osborne has two copies of this beautiful, important work.

The Friends are fortunate to have Dr. Naomi Hamer on our executive. On pages 17–18 see what happened

when she brought a group of TMU students to visit the Osborne.

A big thank-you to Maggie Knaus and the Outreach Committee who are responsible for “the merch” described on page 4. Please consider supporting us by purchasing these items for gifts and celebrations. There is something for every age group, including charming *Harry the Dirty Dog* tea towels. We are working with TPL to facilitate selling “the merch” in the main rotunda of the Lillian

H. Smith Branch after our lectures.

Thank you for your continued support. It's because of you that we can champion the Osborne Collection and the TPL staff in its wonderful work. Please note the great news that the Collection is now open on Sundays from noon to 5:00 p.m. We hope that you will find time to “come on down” for a visit and be blown away by the treasures of this world-renowned Collection housed right here in Canada!

—Nancy Hartry

## SPRING/SUMMER EVENTS

### 22nd Annual Albert & Clara Lahmer Memorial Lecture Barbara Reid: “Picturing Stories” Thursday, April 30, 6:30 p.m.



Barbara Reid



Picture book illustrator and author Barbara Reid is our Lahmer speaker this spring.

Barbara has been telling stories with pictures for as long as she can remember. She will be sharing experiences from her prolific career and her most recent book, *Story Hunter*, which follows a prehistoric child's first experience of seeing and creating cave art. Reid was appointed to the Order of Canada for her contributions to children's literature and is the Honorary Chair of Family Literacy Day.

### Exhibitions

#### *Unconventional Materials* March 15–May 31



*Der Pudl ein Freund der Treue* from greeting card (circa 1900), artist unknown.

An exhibition of intricately crafted books, artworks, and more. Highlighting the use of unconventional techniques and materials in children's literature, this exhibit includes Plasticine art by Barbara Reid (see left and page 16), dioramas, postcards, and hornbooks.

#### *70th Anniversary of Harry the Dirty Dog* June 14–August 30



*Harry the Dirty Dog* (1956). Written by Gene Zion and illustrated by Margaret Bloy Graham.

The book cherished by generations celebrates its 70th birthday this year! Get a glimpse of the Margaret

Bloy Graham Archive, including sketches and early versions of the book. You'll also learn about Bloy Graham's creative process in bringing to life Harry, his family, and other characters. Read about conservation of Bloy Graham's artwork on page 19.

#### *Franklin's 40th Birthday* September 13–November 29



*Franklin in the Dark* (1986). Written by Paulette Bourgeois and illustrated by Brenda Clark.

*Franklin the Turtle* turns 40 this year! To celebrate the special occasion, selected items from the archives of Paulette Bourgeois and Brenda Clark are featured in this exhibition.

### Friends AGM

Precedes the Lahmer Lecture.  
6:00 on April 30.

Please join us!

## SPRING/SUMMER BOOK CLUB FOR ADULTS

Saturdays, 2:30–4:00

**March 14:** *Adventures of Pinocchio*, by Carlo Collodi

**April 11:** *A Wrinkle in Time*, by Madeleine L'Engle

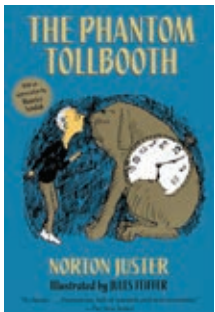
**May 9:** *The Phantom Tollbooth*, by Norton Juster

**June 6:** *Heidi*, by Johanna Spyri

**July 11:** *The Wind in the Willows*, by Kenneth Grahame

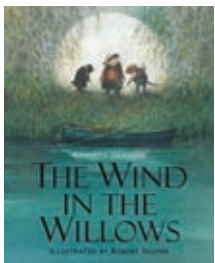


Iassen Ghiuselev, illus. Jay Colvin, book des.



Jules Feiffer, illus.

Maja Dusíková, illus.



Robert Ingpen, illus.

Please note the book covers above have been chosen for illustration purposes only, and may not reflect the edition that will be read in the book club.

## FALL EVENTS

### 38th Annual Helen E. Stubbs Memorial Lecture Date and time TBA

**Speaker and topic TBA.** Please stay tuned for updates by email and on our website, as well as in the fall 2026 issue of this newsletter.

### 19th Annual Sybille Pantazzi Memorial Lecture

**Brenda Clark: “Imagining a Turtle Named Franklin”**  
Thursday, November 12, 6:30 p.m.



Lee Higginson

Brenda Clark

Award-winning picture book illustrator Brenda Clark is the original illustrator of the beloved *Franklin the Turtle* book series, by author Paulette Bourgeois. In this lecture, Clark will share how she became an artist and how Franklin was created.

Award-winning picture book illustrator Brenda Clark is the original

Brenda’s illustrations have played a key role in Franklin’s worldwide popularity, inspiring an animated TV series, merchandise, spin-off books, a children’s garden on Toronto Island, and a postage stamp. She will discuss the process of designing and painting the art and explain how it takes amazing teamwork to meet the challenges of Franklin’s success.

Over 70 million Franklin books have been sold in more than 30 languages worldwide, making it the most successful picture book series in the history of Canadian publishing. In 2011, the archives of Brenda Clark were donated to the Osborne Collection and recognized by the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board as cultural property for their “Outstanding Significance and National Importance.” In 2014, Brenda was named a Member of the Order of Canada.

The events listed on pages 2 and 3 are in-person. The lectures are in the lower-level auditorium, and the exhibitions and book club are on the 4th floor. Lillian H. Smith Branch, 239 College St., Toronto.

All events are free and everyone is welcome. After the lectures, you’re invited to the 4th floor for a reception. You can also buy our merch (see page 4) while you’re up there.

See “Events” at [torontopubliclibrary.ca/osborne/](https://torontopubliclibrary.ca/osborne/).

## NEW SOCIAL MEDIA MAVEN

The Friends are hoping to get more people vibing with the rizz of the Collection so we can slay new

members, no cap . . . So let’s hear from our new social media expert, Lizz Kidd. (*Continued on page 4.*)



Lizz Kidd

**Gryphon editor:** How did you discover the Osborne Collection, and what inspired you to get involved with the Friends?

**Lizz Kidd:** I found out about the Osborne during my publishing program at Humber. I've always been a lover of history and an advocate for accessibility—especially when it comes to

books and literature—and the Collection brings those two passions together. The Collection is one of the few public-access archives, so I want to help the Friends raise awareness of the Collection and all it has to offer.

**GE:** What have you got in mind for the Friends' social media?

**LK:** I'm working on curating the "brand" or aesthetic of the Friends' socials. My focus will be on awareness and visibility, especially among younger demographics, who it's hoped will champion the Collection in the years to come.

**GE:** I know you're just getting started, but is there anything you'd like to say right now about what we might expect to see on the socials?

**LK:** I'm still getting my social media sea legs, but you can expect to see sneak peeks at future exhibits and "come visit the Osborne Collection with me"—style posts. And I'll be gathering content for reels to encourage people to visit the Osborne!

## CHECK OUT OUR OSBORNE MERCH



### Greeting Cards and Postcards

We have a selection of cards available, featuring modern and classic images, such as Tenniel's *Alice* illustrations.

Cards: \$2.50/ea. Postcards: 50¢/ea. Pkg. of 8 cards: \$14.  
Pkg. of 10 new postcards: \$18.



### Stick with Us!

Introducing four fun stickers. About 2 inches tall.  
\$3 each.

- Stella (Marie Louise Gay)
- Harry the Dirty and Clean Dog (Margaret Bloy Graham)
- Tall Alice (Sir John Tenniel)
- Cat (Louis Wain)



### Tea Towels

*Harry the Dirty Dog* and *Alice* tea towels are available for sale at the Lillian H. Smith branch.

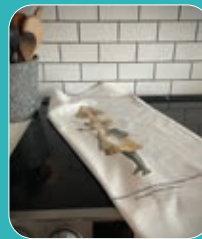
5 designs. 100% organic cotton.

1 tea towel: \$20.

Any combination of 3: \$50.

All proceeds benefit the Osborne Collection.

See more images at  
[www.osbornecollection.ca](http://www.osbornecollection.ca).



*All merchandise is, for now, available to buy only in person, on the fourth floor at the Lillian H. Smith Branch.*

## READERS OF THE LOST ARC

### Success at IBBY KidLit Trivia Night!

The Friends of the Osborne Collection fielded a team for the fourth IBBY Canada KidLit Trivia competition, which took place at Toronto's Duke of York Pub on November 4. While Friends Executive members Karen McMullin and Nancy Hartry and volunteer Ian Usher did not win the competition, they did receive the prize for the best team name: Readers of the Lost ARC.

IBBY Canada's regular fundraising event offers contestants challenging questions in six categories, but also strongly encourages them to purchase hints and even answers—all in support of the international book organization. This year's winning team, the Green Gables Slayers, spent liberally on hints, a strategy that proved successful.

The quizmaster was the energetic Kevin Sylvester (to read more about him, see pages 8–9). Categories were: Artists, Books About Books, Dark and Stormy Night, Elevator Pitch, Fish Out of Water, and Name That Book (or Illustrator)!

IBBY Canada ([www.ibby-canada.org/](http://www.ibby-canada.org/)) is the Canadian branch of the International Board on Books for Young People, an organization set up in 1953 to foster international understanding and connection. Founder Jella Lepman saw children's books as a bridge through which to build world peace. There are now more than 70 branches around the world. The 40th IBBY World Congress is being held in Ottawa in August 2026. Plans are in the works for post-congress visits to both the Osborne Collection and the IBBY Collection for Young People with Disabilities (housed at Toronto Public Library's North York Central Library at 5120 Yonge Street).

With thanks to Friends Executive member Kirsten Brassard who organized the team, although she was already committed to play for the Groundwood Shrews. Friends archivist Mary Anne Cree played on the Hardy Girls team of three librarians and author Sharon Jennings.

—Gillian O'Reilly  
(Long-time member of the Green Gables Slayers)

### Sample Questions from the “Elevator Pitch” Round

**Q:** *Huckleberry Finn* in the suburbs.

**A:** *Into the Ravine*, by Richard Scrimger.

**Q:** Two children run away from home and hide in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

**A:** *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*, by E. L. Konigsburg (won the Newbery Medal in 1968).

**Q:** A young girl helps her dad navigate the long, overnight drive from Toronto to New York.

**A:** *Getting Us to Grandma's*, written by Nadia Hohn and illustrated by TeMika Grooms.

**Q:** A graphic novel: Three generations of women seem to have nothing and yet everything in common.

**A:** *Age 16*, by Rosena Fung.

**Q:** A little boy experiences the first snowfall of the year.

**A:** *The Snowy Day*, by Ezra Jack Keats.

### Membership Renewal Tips

To renew online at the Toronto Public Library Foundation's Osborne site, please visit: <https://donate.tplfoundation.ca/osborne>. Our membership renewal letter will go out in the fall. If you have already renewed this year, our thanks to you. Whatever way you choose to make your donation and whenever you do it, we appreciate your enthusiasm and support for this world-class collection.

—Gillian O'Reilly and Carol Percy

## VISITORS TO THE COLLECTION

### A Lively Gathering for the Pantazzi Lecture in September



Lecturer Lauren Soloy.



(Left to right) Claudine Crangle, Melika Saeeda, Ashley Barron, Carmen Mok, Ellie Arscott.



Lauren signs books at the reception on the fourth floor.

### Another Lively Gathering: The Stubbs Lecture in November



Kevin Sylvester with Basil Sylvester.



An enraptured audience listens to Kevin Sylvester's talk.

*Pantazzi photos by Maggie Knaus. Stubbs photos by Lizz Kidd.*

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## ROVING REPORTER AT THE FALL 2025 PANTAZZI LECTURE

“Drawing from My Pocket: Making Connections and Making Books” was author and illustrator Lauren Soloy’s subject for the 18th Annual Sybille Pantazzi Memorial Lecture on September 18, 2025. It was a delightful look both into the fictional world of “the Pocket” that she’s created as well as at some of the fascinating things she puts into and draws out of those pockets! As Soloy told an enraptured audience, “Pocket’ is such a versatile and delightful word. It can refer to a secret pouch, any small piece of a larger thing, or a precious lull in a busy life. And a pocket can hold so many things—a rock or a feather, a moment or an idea. It can even hold your hand.” Some highlights from this talk were: Soloy’s willingness to share the breadth of her experiences, personal and creative; her love of nature, which she draws on for much of her inspiration; and how she tries in each book to express joy. (She even shared some coveted gnome knowledge!)

Soloy is the author and illustrator of *When Emily Was Small* (Tundra Books, 2020), *Etty Darwin and the Four Pebble Problem* (Tundra, 2021) and her Gnome books, *The Hidden World of Gnomes* (Tundra, 2023) and *The Newest Gnome* (Tundra, 2025); she is the illustrator of *I’s the B’y* (Greystone Kids, 2022) and *A Tulip in Winter, a Story About Folk Artist Maud Lewis* (Greystone, 2023). In her biography online, she notes that she’s “lived on both coasts of Canada, always within reach of the sea and . . . shares her home with her librarian husband, two curious children, an ever-expanding collection of books, two hives of bees, and one cat.” As well as a visual arts BFA with honours from the University of Victoria, she also has a certificate in fine furniture from Camosun College.

After a moving introduction by Kathy Stinson, who wrote the text for *A Tulip in Winter*, Soloy took listeners on a journey into her world. She sums up her very deep connection—making connections is one of the things Soloy does best—to the natural world in a poem she shares on her website and that conveys the poetry that underscored her Pantazzi Lecture:

I believe in wonder.  
I believe in rain,  
and eggs that hatch,  
and plants that dance.  
I believe in the hum of bees  
saving summer for a winter’s day,  
and memories of places we have never been,  
and the scent of a loved one,  
drifting in the wind.

You can read the rest of the poem here: [www.meandmypencil.com/about-me/](http://www.meandmypencil.com/about-me/).

As Soloy told Osborne listeners, she’s drawn to the pocket because of a sense of intimacy that she feels with these small, intimate spaces. “Pockets hold stories—you take things out of your pocket (or put things back into them) and each thing has a story.” She fills her “pockets” as well, with ideas she’s garnered from other artists, books she’s read, long walks, and gardening. “My house is full of treasures from the ocean—special rocks, sand dollars, and starfish, broken bits of pottery that have been rubbed smooth, interesting bits of wood—I love it all!”

She compared the books she’s written and illustrated to things she’s taken out of her pocket, and is fascinated by the interplay of words and pictures whether it’s remembering Emily Carr feeling the “primal call of paint” in her memoir *The Book of Small*, and Soloy’s own deep admiration for Carr’s evocative paintings of the forests of British Columbia; or the hilariously charming Lear-like doodles that Etty Darwin and her siblings left on the manuscript of their father’s magnum opus, *The Origin of Species*, which Soloy saw in the Cambridge University Library. She described her need to create picture books as positively compulsive because they’re the perfect space to play and to tell a story, whether it’s about folk artist Maud Lewis or author Tove Jansson, a story that lets Soloy explore a personal connection with a classic Canadian folk song like “I’s the B’y” or share her fascination with gnomes. “Every project is a little bit different, but for me, every project starts with an idea that lingers, and in lingering, grows.”

It was interesting to hear about her journey as an artist: from working with traditional media like watercolour paints, ink, pencil crayons, and pastels to transitioning to digital media. She also talked about the difficulties of learning how to connect her images to a story written by someone else and how this challenges her to make space for her pictures to tell a story that complements the text. But as she noted, “Every book definitely has its own language that I have to learn. Even when I am using the same materials, the feel of each book is, to me, unique. Sometimes that can be frustrating, when I’m trying to figure out what a particular story needs, but it’s also a huge part of the joy of making books!”

And it was fascinating too to hear about her passion for gnomes! She’d been drawing them for years, she explained, almost as a palate cleanser, but could never pin

them down in one story. “I tried to force them to behave, but they’re too tricky for that. I filled page after page with doodles!” But after talking about gnomes, Soloy took her listeners back to the pocket.

“Aren’t pockets amazing?” she asked. “Useful *and* cozy.” Soloy creates books that she hopes make young readers feel safely wrapped in a pocket of coziness “with

everything you need, nowhere else to be, and a whole lot of love.” She shares her joy in the world with her readers and, in turn, her young readers share their joy with her. What could be better than a creator who wants to share her love for the world, her creativity, and her joy.

—Jeffrey Canton

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## ROVING REPORTER AT THE FALL 2025 STUBBS LECTURE

What made Kevin Sylvester’s lecture, “The Mountain, the Valley and the *Titanic*” particularly memorable was the homage he gave throughout his talk to the importance of books and reading, of libraries in general, and of how the Toronto Public Library, and in particular, the Osborne Collection, have been key to his development as an author and illustrator. His very touching 37th Annual Helen E. Stubbs Memorial Lecture, delivered on November 8, was filled with delightful anecdotes, sharing tips from what he called his “own loooooong journey to figuring out what he wanted to say, how to say it, and creating children’s books!”

After a lovely introduction by Basil Sylvester, who affectionately offered us an insider’s view of their father, Kevin began the talk by sharing why giving the Stubbs Lecture was such an honour, chronicling his connection with TPL, which began at the Palmerston Branch where he started on his path to writing for children by signing out stacks of books. “Then I’d pore over illustrations by Ian Wallace, Barbara Reid, Tony DiTerlizzi, Peter de Sève, Kim LaFave . . . Marie-Louise Gay. How did they compose those pages? What colours did they combine? It was a free arts education.”

“Now, I get to do that here at the Osborne . . . holding, *in my hands*, originals by Sendak, the one precious Phoebe Gilman, E. H. Shepard . . . sometimes looking at them *with* my heroes in what I would call this golden age of Canadian kids’ books . . . Qin Leng, Sydney Smith . . . the Fans, Matt James, Jillian Tamaki. I walk away from every visit, every lecture, every image I see under glass cases or laid out on tables in carefully made boxes of archival paper—I walk away smarter and happier and (I hope) better armed to keep getting better.”

Kevin Sylvester is an award-winning author, cartoonist, broadcaster, and illustrator of more than 30 books, including *Apartment 713*, the MiNRS trilogy, the Neil Flambé Capers, *The Almost Epic Squad: Mucus Mayhem*, and the Hockey Super Six series. Sylvester

has won awards from across Canada, among them the Silver Birch Award, the Red Maple, and the Hackmatack Children’s Choice Book Award. He co-wrote, with Basil Sylvester, the Governor General’s Award–shortlisted *The Fabulous Zed Watson!* and *The Night of the Living Zed*. Known for blending humour with learning, his work spans fiction, non-fiction, and picture books—covering everything from sports to monsters. His latest book, *Time Surfers*, is a fast-paced illustrated time-travel adventure.

As he noted during the lecture, with great humility, “Sometimes the journey of being an artist feels like a tumultuous trek up a mountain or a voyage on a ship doomed to sink. There’re so many reasons to turn back or jump ship but if you do . . . you might miss the part of your journey that leads to a lush valley of creativity. The journey of artistry doesn’t have to be trekked alone.”

In the course of his lecture, he took us on a whirlwind journey every bit as splendid as Bilbo Baggins’s to find Smaug’s treasure in the Lonely Mountains, offering us glimpses into his childhood and his love of art-making. He discussed how Ernest Buckler’s Canlit classic, *The Mountain and the Valley*, one of the first Canadian novels he studied at U of T, made an indelible impression on him, the power of art, learning to be a reader, and some of the many authors and illustrators who have inspired him. Book magic!

But going back to the title of this lecture, “The Mountain, the Valley and the *Titanic*,” he explained that “these were the places I visited on my journey from ‘I want to be an artist’ to ‘Hell yes, I *am* an artist.’ The three places we all visit as creative people.” The valley for Sylvester represents a space that we universally share—childhood—or as he described it, “your internal life and imagination. We can stay there. But some of us want to move on.” Next is the mountain—another Sylvester universal—“adulthood and life as an actual artist. Goals and the obstacles to reaching them. If we want this, how do we get there?” And then, for him, personally, the *Titanic*, both the actual ship

and the James Cameron film, which is different for each of us but leads us to find “that *inner* drive that motivates us to climb that mountain, stay there. And these three symbols also represent, in my life, the power of other people’s art. Works of art that helped *me* find *my* voice.”

This writer couldn’t help but think of Charlotte in *Charlotte’s Web* describing Wilbur as “Some Pig” as Sylvester was speaking, so generously giving us insights into that journey filled with ups and downs! And, as with any master mariner, Sylvester ended with the destination, in his case, the *Titanic*, suggesting that like a ship hitting an iceberg, as a creator “you are going to face obstacles . . . and nothing I’ve mentioned so far is going to make you keep going.” But you do.

“I have no secret,” he admitted, “for how you can find that inner resolve, that inner conviction that will

force you to risk both myopia and hemorrhoids to sit for hours alone in your pajamas trying to write a book. I can only tell you what flipped the switch for me. The movie *Titanic*.”

With humour, with humility, and with his audience in the palm of his hand, he neatly took us to where Kevin Sylvester is today. “I now have more 30 books in print. I’ve worked with almost every publisher in Canada: Scholastic, Simon & Schuster, Annick, Groundwood, Tundra, Penguin, Kids Can. I got over that damned mountain.”

With a smile that felt remarkably like a chuckle, he closed by telling his listeners, “It’s nice over here and I hope you will join me.”

—Jeffrey Canton

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## FROM THE COLLECTION

Last year was a remarkable milestone for the Osborne Collection as we celebrated 75 years. Anniversaries of note continue into this year, as 2026 marks the anniversary of several beloved characters in the world of children’s literature.

*100 Years of Winnie-the-Pooh* was the first exhibit of the year, on display from December 14, 2025, to March 1, 2026. Osborne celebrated this milestone with a charming exhibit of bear-related materials from the Collection including books, artifacts, and artworks.

We are fortunate to have Barbara Reid (pages 2, 16) as the guest lecturer for this spring’s Lahmer Lecture. Osborne is home to several pieces of her elaborate and beautiful Plasticine art, and a whole exhibit of unconventional art (page 2) is planned to coincide with the spring lecture. The exhibit *Unconventional Materials* will run from March 15 to May 31.

*Harry the Dirty Dog* (page 4) is also celebrating a milestone: 70 years since its first publication, and an exhibit of works by Margaret Bloy Graham will feature the beloved canine from June 14 to August 30 (page 2).

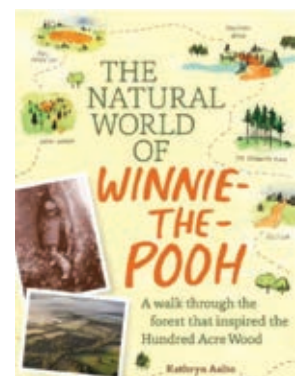
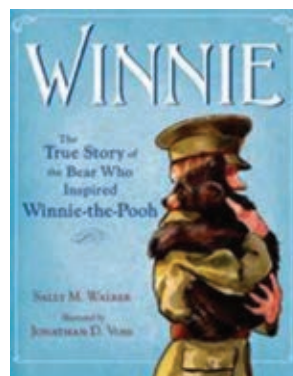
Finally, an exhibit celebrating the 40th anniversary of *Franklin the Turtle* will round out the fall season, on display September 13 to November 29 (page 2). We are excited to welcome Brenda Clark as the guest speaker for the Pantazzi Lecture on November 12 (page 3), during the run of the *Franklin* exhibit.

Programs remain an important component of the work we do, in an effort to share knowledge and provide opportunities for engagement and discourse. In the second

half of the year, programs were attended by more than 280 participants, including class visits from several post-secondary institutions (pages 17–18), art crawls, lectures, tours of the exhibits, and staff-led presentations.

Visitors to the Toronto Public Library website will have noticed that it has a refreshed look and more streamlined search functions, with a greater number of helpful filters to refine searches. Everyone is encouraged to check the website for upcoming programs and for information about newly catalogued acquisitions, as the site is updated frequently and the staff are diligent about adding information about upcoming and ongoing events. We also hope everyone is enjoying the Digital Archive when they cannot visit in person, as so many wonderful Osborne treasures have been digitized and reside but a click away.

—Sephora Henderson



## “TO SEE A MERMAID!”\*

I recently read *The Poisoned King*, Kathleen Rundell’s 2025 sequel to her immensely enjoyable children’s fantasy novel, *Impossible Creatures* (2024). Both books are set in a magical island archipelago that is chock-full of imaginary animals, some mythic or legendary, some invented by the author.

This led me to thinking about Osborne, and the proliferation of fabulous beasts referenced within its volumes. I decided to focus on mermaids and mermen, perhaps the most intriguing of all “impossible creatures,” and to share a few occurrences from the Collection’s holdings.

Mermaids are presently “having a moment.” Mermaid parades, pageants, and schools (a phenomenon known as “mermaiding”) proliferate in North America and beyond. Yet mermaids and mermen have captured our imaginations for a very long time. A Mesopotamian myth tells of Oannes, a fish-tailed god who emerged from the sea as a bringer of civilization. Indigenous tales and legends feature hybrid water spirits, such as the Inuit goddess Sedna, who is often depicted as half woman, half fish.



*Aesopi Phrygis, et alorum fabvlae.*  
Venetiis: Apud haeredes Petri  
Rauani & socios, MDLIV.



Glaucus pursues the nymph Scylla.  
*P. Ovidii Nasonis Metamorphoses.*  
Antverpia: Ex officina plantiniana,  
apud viduam, & Ioannem  
Moretum, [1591].

Osborne’s earliest representation of a mermaid, to my knowledge, is a printer’s mark in a volume of Aesop’s fables published in Venice in 1555. This two-tailed mermaid is also seen within the decorated initial letter *A* in the fable entitled “The Two Adolescents.”

In Osborne’s 1591 edition of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* we have fish-tailed Triton, who blows his conch shell trumpet to end the Great Flood, and Glaucus, a fisherman who consumes a magic herb and is transformed into a merman-like sea deity.

Magical creatures, such as mermaids, dragons, and unicorns, were often represented in medieval bestiaries.

*The Illustrated Book of Natural History* (1845) echoes the bestiary tradition by including “Fabulous Animals” within its pages.



*The Illustrated Book of Natural History.* Glasgow: David Bryce; Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd; John Johnstone; London: Hamilton, Adams & Co., MDCCCXLV.

There are numerous stories involving mermaids within Osborne’s fairy-tale collection. The Scottish selkie is a close cousin to the mermaid. In water, selkies take the form of seals. On land, they cast off their sealskins to appear as humans. In a well-known variant, a selkie is tricked into marriage by a fisherman who steals her sealskin. Eventually she finds her skin and returns to the sea, leaving husband and children behind.



New York: M. K. McElderry  
Books, 1986.

After he rejects her, she kills him and is herself transformed into a stream. There are several children’s adaptations of *Undine* held at Osborne.

Matthew Arnold’s haunting poem “The Forsaken Merman” (1849) is anthologized in *The Fairy Shoemaker* (1928), a volume of fairy verse illustrated by Boris Artzybasheff. In it, a merman’s human wife leaves the sea to return to her Christian life on land. Similarly tragic is Oscar Wilde’s tale “The Fisherman and His Soul”

\*From J. M. Barrie’s *Peter Pan & Wendy*, 1911.



Illustration for Hans Christian Andersen's "The Mermaid" by Katharine Cameron from *In Fairyland: Tales Told Again* by Louey Chisholm. London; Edinburgh: T. C. & E. C. Jack, [ca. 1904?].

(1891), in which a fisherman gives up his soul to marry a mermaid. (For more on "The Little Mermaid" and "The Fisherman and His Soul," see Myrna Scully-Ashton's article "So Many Mermaids" in the fall 2022 issue of *The Gryphon*.)

In J. M. Barrie's novel *Peter and Wendy* (1911), Peter uses the promise of mermaids to lure Wendy to Neverland. Unfortunately, the inhabitants of the Mermaids' Lagoon behave spitefully to all except Peter, splashing Wendy with their tails and attempting to drag her into the water.

On a lighter note—"The Fishes Grand Gala" (1808), one of the many imitations of William Roscoe's bestselling poem, "The Butterfly's Ball and the Grasshopper's Feast" (1806), includes



J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan & Wendy*. Illustrated by Gwynedd M. Hudson. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1931.

I'm also partial to *Punctuation Personified, or, Pointing Made Easy* (1824), a humorous guide to the rules of punctuation, which contains a surprise appearance by a mermaid masquerading as an apostrophe.

Finally, one of my favourite contemporary picture books, *Julián Is a Mermaid* by Jessica Love (2018), tells



*The Fishes Grand Gala: A Companion to the "Peacock at Home."* Part II. By Mrs. Cockle. Engravings after William Mulready. London: C. Chapple; B. Tabart; J. Harris; Darton and Harvey, 1808.



*Punctuation Personified, or, Pointing Made Easy.* By Mr. Stops. London: J. Harris, 1824.



Somerville, Mass: Candlewick Press, 2018.

the story of a young boy who is inspired to dress as a mermaid. Unfortunately, this delightful, affirmational story has been repeatedly challenged in American libraries, tying for second place on the PEN America list of Most Banned Picture Books of the 2023–24 school year.

These works are but a brief selection of books involving merpeople at the Osborne Collection. Further treasures await those inclined to take a "deeper sea dive" into Osborne's extensive holdings!

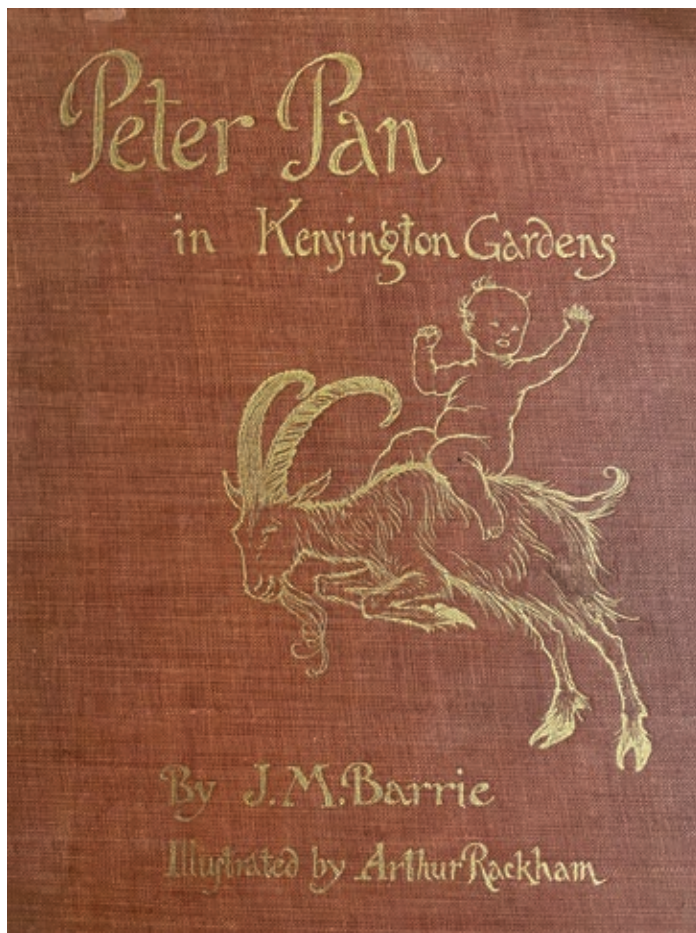
—Martha Scott

## IN ITALY I FELL IN LOVE . . . ENTIRELY BY ACCIDENT

### On *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens*, Illustrated by Arthur Rackham

I fell in love with J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* entirely by accident.

One summer, my family was visiting relatives in rural Italy, far from city centres and even farther from bookstores with English books. I was a voracious reader as a child—completely undiscerning in the best way—devouring *The Babysitters Club*, *Nancy Drew*, *The Boxcar Children*, anything I could get my hands on. It wasn't unusual for me to run out of reading material within the first week or two of our long trips abroad.



My prized copy has certainly seen better days. The spine is in shambles and halfway ripped off, the pages have that tea-stain look to them, and it definitely has that “old book smell.” However, what makes this edition special are the well-preserved 50 colour plates by Arthur Rackham, nestled in the very back of the book.

Rackham's colour plates for this edition enrich the emotional landscape of the story and bring Barrie's world to life. While Barrie's narrative is whimsical and magical, it carries an underlying sadness, an almost eerie quality that emerges in its themes of innocence and the fragile transition from childhood to adulthood.

During that particular summer, we found a small local bookshop that carried a single shelf of random English-language books. Most were mysteries meant for adults or pulp fiction with covers a 10-year-old child would find utterly boring. But tucked between them was a mass-market paperback Penguin edition of *Peter Pan*. I remember being drawn to the fairy artwork on the cover—and, truthfully, it was the only story I was even mildly familiar with (thanks to Disney's *Peter Pan*). My parents bought it for me, and I, naturally, sped through it.



Rackham's delicate linework, atmospheric settings, and thoughtful compositions visually express this tension. His Peter is enchantingly magical yet profoundly melancholy.

That was the moment I fell in love with Barrie's prose and boundless imagination. The story felt both magical and melancholy, full of innocence and the quiet vulnerability of childhood—even if, as a child, I didn't yet grasp those deeper layers. Still, something about it lodged itself in my mind and stayed with me.

As an adult, that fascination turned into an ever-growing personal collection of *Peter Pan* editions: different printings, different languages, different cover designs. One favourite is an undated Hodder & Stoughton copy of *Peter Pan and Wendy: Retold for Little People*, which I stumbled upon in a Paris bookshop.

But my absolute favourite edition—gifted to me by my sister and brother-in-law—is a 1907 third edition of *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens*, illustrated by Arthur

Rackham. The Osborne Collection houses two copies of this beautiful and historically significant book, and any admirer of Rackham's work should make the visit to the Collection to view the artwork in person.

—Valentina D'Aliesio



The image of baby Peter sitting alone on a toadstool playing music while faeries and other sinister-looking creatures dance about, has always stuck in my mind.

What amazes me about Rackham's work in this book is that the figures in his illustrations have an otherworldly, often unsettling quality—worlds apart from the bright, friendly Disney versions that many of us grew up with.



Some of Rackham's *Peter Pan* characters are downright frightening, their magic tinged with mischief or menace.

Rendered in soft, washed, muted colours, Rackham's artwork adds a dreamy, nostalgic dimension to Barrie's prose. Together, the text and illustrations create a haunting, beautiful vision of childhood that feels as alive to me now as it did that summer in Italy.

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## FACES OF OSBORNE—AND TPL

### An Interview with TPL Conservator Emily White

For several years now, *Gryphon* readers have been following along as Emily White reports on the conservation work she's been conducting on a number of Osborne holdings, such as *Harry the Dirty Dog*—a great favourite of the late (redoubtable and beloved) Jane Dobell—drawings from the animated TV program *The Wind in the Willows*, paste-ups for *The Wind Has Wings* by Elizabeth Cleaver, and more. Emily is a conservator for the TPL generally, but is frequently called on by Osborne; funding by the Friends helps to support this vital work.

**Gryphon editor:** How did you get started on the path to becoming a conservator—both in terms of education and work? And how/when did you decide to go into paper conservation specifically?

**Emily White:** Growing up, I always loved art class and working with my hands and must have heard of art conservation some time in high school. I decided to study art and art history in university, and graduated from the University of Toronto in 2015. I think it was here that I decided I was most interested in paper conservation because I loved working in the print studio. After graduation, I worked for a couple of years and took chemistry courses so I could apply to the Master of Art Conservation program at Queen's University. I was accepted and graduated from the paper stream in 2019. I did two internships while at Queen's—one at the Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA), and one at the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau. I returned to work at the PAA in 2019 before I moved back to Ontario in 2020 to work with the Osborne and I've been at TPL ever since!

**GE:** Can you describe a day in the life of a conservator?

**EW:** One thing I like about work as a conservator at TPL is that every day is a little different. I could be working on treatment, doing research, or working on long-term preservation projects with my colleagues. Conservation treatments involve numerous steps before working on the item, including photography, writing condition reports, and testing (e.g., for media solubility). For treatments like tear repair, I usually have another project on the go while waiting for things to dry. After a treatment is done, I finish up with photography and documentation.

**GE:** Are there any common myths or misconceptions about conservation?

**EW:** One misconception that we run into frequently at TPL is the use of gloves for Special Collections materials. We recommend using clean hands to access most materials because this offers greater dexterity for handling. But gloves are required when handling sensitive materials, like photographs and negatives.

**GE:** Outside of libraries, archives, and rare book dealers, are there other, perhaps surprising, places where paper conservation is done?

**EW:** Anywhere there is paper, there can be paper conservation! We don't treat objects outside of Special Collections at TPL, but paper conservators in private practice might treat a variety of precious materials from someone's home like a family cookbook, photographs, or favourite childhood book.

**GE:** What's one of the greatest conservation challenges you've had to deal with?

**EW:** One of the most challenging projects I have faced so far was the conservation of the Margaret Bloy Graham dummy books at the Osborne. This project was challenging because the tape and adhesive used to construct the books was yellowed and failing, but these components remained essential elements of the books' history and use. I had to come up with some creative solutions to re-create the look and feel of tape with new materials, but in the end, I think it is one of the projects I most enjoyed because of all the problem-solving involved.

**GE:** Which aspects of books and illustrations are usually the focus of conservation efforts? (Covers, interior pages, spines, bindings/frames/mounts, foxing, fading, mould, markings . . . ?)

**EW:** All these concerns can be addressed by conservation efforts! The condition of each object depends on its materials and how it was stored and used in the past. We often see damage to bindings like split hinges that can be the result of poor-quality materials and heavy use. We can address that kind of damage through conservation

treatment. We also try to address damage through preemptive actions called preventive conservation. This encompasses things like correct relative humidity and temperature in storage to slow deterioration and prevent mould growth, and monitoring lighting conditions to prevent fading.

**GE:** Have there been significant changes in the methodology and/or technology used over the past 25 years or so?

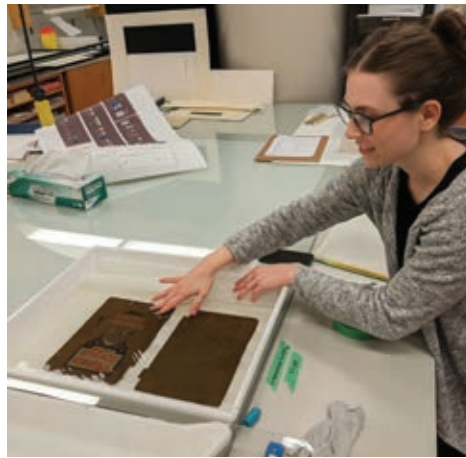
**EW:** There have been so many changes in materials and methods and technology over the years, it can be overwhelming! There are things like new materials, tools, methods, and equipment that we are keeping up with, even today. Generally, conservation has moved toward less intervention than in the past—or at least very thoughtful intervention—which I think has been helped along by advancements in methods of analysis, preventive conservation, and acceptance of change.

**GE:** What are a few of the essential tools or materials for your work?

**EW:** Although we keep a wide variety of tools and materials in the lab, I would say some of the things I use the most are a microspatula and Japanese paper. The microspatula is super handy for examining objects and even turning pages. Japanese paper can be used with different adhesives for all kinds of repairs (even leather!). We keep a large stock on hand with varying thicknesses, fibres, and colours.

**GE:** At the TPL, a massive organization with many special collections, how is it decided what's next for conservation? And is most conservation done for the Special Collections, or is some also done for "regular" branch holdings?

**EW:** That's a great question. At TPL, priorities for conservation treatment are largely decided by Special Collections staff. Once priority items are selected,



Emily washing the covers of a trade catalogue at the TRL conservation lab. Washing removes soluble degradation products, which helps to prolong the life of paper and improve its appearance.

conservators will consult with staff to determine the goals of the treatment (e.g., to repair tears for digitization, remove tape to prevent staining, etc.) and offer potential treatment pathways. Conservators at TPL don't treat general collections materials, but this can differ at other public libraries.

**GE:** Does conservation work extend to ephemera, items that are neither books nor two-dimensional illustrations?

**EW:** Conservation work can definitely extend to ephemera! We have a large ephemera collection at TPL, and ephemeral objects appear in most other collections. Treatments can involve the same steps as those for a work of art on paper like humidification and flattening, tear repair, surface cleaning, or washing.

**GE:** Is there anything else you'd like to tell *Gryphon* readers about being a conservator and/or about conservation work in the TPL / at Osborne?

**EW:** I just feel so incredibly lucky to be able to do something I love for work. I always wanted to be a conservator in a public institution so my actions could make a greater impact, and I really think there is truly no better place to do that than at the library!

**GE:** And to end with, something a little more personal. What was your favourite book as a child, and do you have a current favourite children's book and/or illustrator?

**EW:** One of my favourite books growing up was *Red is Best* by Kathy Stinson and illustrated by Robin Baird Lewis. This book lived at my grandparents' house, and was a miniature edition, which I think made it more special. A current favourite illustrator is Charlotte Parent. She and I went to Queen's together, but she has really found her calling with children's books (she has already received a Governor General's Award!) and has recently authored her first book, *Murielle et le mystère* (<https://tpl.bibliocommons.com/v2/record/S234C4638789>).

## A DONOR'S STORY

Sometime in the mid-1970s my high school art teacher noticed my obsession with Arthur Rackham's work and suggested I visit the Osborne Collection. That first visit was mind-blowing! The librarian was gracious but wary as I came close to getting nose prints (and possibly drool) on an original Rackham and other amazing pieces. Just shy of 20 years later, Margaret Maloney, on behalf of the the Osborne, purchased an illustration from my book *Two by Two*. It was a huge thrill because, as anyone can tell



Barb with giant snowball, 2016.

you, each night in the library at the stroke of midnight all the creatures and characters come to life and escape the pages. I love to picture my animals tumbling off the ark to play with creations by Maurice Sendak, Edward Gorey, Margaret Bloy Graham, Brenda Clark, Marie-Louise Gay, and all the rest.



Far left: A classic, published by Scholastic Canada in 1994. Left: From *Fox Walked Alone*, a ruined city. Scholastic Canada (North Winds Press), 2006.

My parents were tireless cheerleaders throughout my career and had first pick of artwork from each of my books. They made good choices. I inherited their collection and in 2022 was delighted to donate six of the pieces to the Osborne in their memory. One of my favourites is from *Perfect Snow* (Scholastic Canada, 2009). It's a recess scene in a snowy schoolyard and Jim is warning the other kids that the fearsome Mrs. B. is approaching their wild snow tornado. Art history lovers may notice



From *Perfect Snow*, "Here comes Mrs. B!"

that the composition was inspired by Goya's *The Third of May 1808*; the mayhem was inspired by my dad's Brian Doyle-like youth in Toronto's East York, and my own and my daughter's winter schoolyards. Are there midnight snowball fights in the stacks? Can you imagine?

—Barbara Reid

## FROM OUR ACADEMIC LIAISON

### Reflections on a Class Excursion to Osborne

Dr. Naomi Hamer with TMU students from the MA in Literatures of Modernity program

In fall 2025, I taught a seminar course focused on children's literature across media and the material cultures of childhood for the English MA program at Toronto Metropolitan University. As a fitting end to our course, I coordinated a class excursion to the Osborne Collection for a guided tour, and an introduction to a range of items relevant to our course: from the original watercolour illustrations for *The Illustrated Comic Alphabet* (1859)—the first Canadian picture book—to Kathy Stinson's rejection letters for her much-loved classic *Red is Best* (1982). We also viewed an exhibition focused on the legacy of Jane Dobell, a devoted children's book collector and champion of the Osborne. Afterward, the MA students were invited to respond to the excursion and share favourite texts from the visit.

Richard Kevis was inspired to capture this memorable excursion in the form of a poem:

There once was a seminar crew  
Who studied what childhood could do,  
From books into play,  
And media's sway,  
We saw that the Osborne held clues.

We wandered through shelves rich with care,  
Where texts met with toys, art, and flair.  
Pre-nineteen-ten lore  
Sat beside so much more,  
Blurring book, game, and heirloom fair.

Rare pages lay waiting in rows,  
Non-circulating, handled in slows.  
Each binding and seam  
Felt part of a dream  
Where meaning lived in the shows.

From hornbooks to pictures and bears,  
To objects that shaped how one cares,  
The past felt alive,  
As texts learned to thrive  
Across cultures, materials, and years.

On College Street's fourth-floor delight,  
We learned books hold wonder and weight.  
Not just words to consume,  
But play, craft, and bloom,  
They ask us to read—and to write.



Photo by Naomi Hamer.



Photo by Naomi Hamer.

Pictured are TMU MA students and (at right in the lower photo) librarian Myrna Scully-Ashton.

Aleks Stefanov reflected on how the visit made her nostalgic for her own childhood reading. She described the visit as “a magical experience that reconnected me to the excitement of children's literature. Seeing familiar stories that I grew up with like books by Barbara Reid was a nostalgic and heart-warming experience. I remember as a kid being drawn to her unique art style and I felt as if I

was looking through the eyes of my five-year-old self all over again.”

Another student, Ellie Guité, enthusiastically reported: “Going to the Osborne Collection was such a unique experience! I was absolutely fascinated by their collection of children’s literature, the care that is taken in preserving originals, and the thorough accompanying explanations! It was a truly eye-opening and enlivening experience for me!”

Melissa Johnston described the visit as a joyful experience: “I particularly enjoyed the ‘Three Bears’ book as the drawings were hilarious and sparked some serious joy in our admittedly very sleepy cohort. The staff were knowledgeable and spoke excitedly and eloquently about the items they had on display for us. Overall, it was a great time, and we all had a lot of fun! Would highly recommend coming here on a day off and just looking at all the stuff they have.”

Kenroy Ricketts reflected on the materiality of the texts in the collection: “I hadn’t considered the material aspect of those texts, particularly how some were designed for children. For example, there was these children’s texts present in a paddle-shaped peripheral, which children had frequently used while playing or perhaps studying.” He also shared impressions of one notable text: “What stood out to me the most was *The James Brown Reader*, which featured colloquial language aimed at Black children. It was notable to me that these were written and produced by children under teacher Welvin Stroud’s supervision. Its connections to the Black Panther Party were surprising to hear. I later researched the book online and found an

episode of a show called *Blacks, Blues, Black!*, hosted by Maya Angelou. The episode featured Black children from the late 1960s reciting pro-Black children’s texts. Overall, I thought of the importance of preserving children’s literature as it shows a side of childhood life embedded in the materiality of books. It was clear that there was a value in preserving children’s text, and researching these texts as fervently as texts with older demographics.”

Osborne visits and tours for TMU classes offer unique learning experiences with a range of children’s literature that may inspire future research projects, and sometimes even poetry.

—Naomi Hamer

## How to Donate Gifts-in-Kind

### Books, Illustrations, Manuscripts and Original Research, Ephemera

People considering donations can get in touch with the Osborne team by emailing [osstaff@tpl.ca](mailto:osstaff@tpl.ca) or the Foundation at [foundation@tpl.ca](mailto:foundation@tpl.ca) to discuss next steps. Ideally, the Osborne Collection aims to offer a representative sample of works and unfortunately this means we cannot accept every donation offered to us. Typically, we will need details about the donation—the more information the better. Helpful details for materials include title, author, illustrator, publisher, images, and place and year of publication. Staff will use the information provided to review the donation against what we already hold in our Collection. After careful review, we supply our findings to our management team for a final decision/approval. The entire process can be lengthy so please bear with us patiently as we take all the necessary steps to ensure that additions to the Collection are fully vetted and will have a valued and properly documented place in our holdings.

Donors wishing to leave a lasting personal legacy in the form of a gift in their will or a bequest can contact the TPL Foundation (<http://donate.tplfoundation.ca/osborne>) for more details.

We are grateful for your interest and for your donations—thank you.

—Jennifer Yan

## In Memoriam: Brian Doyle

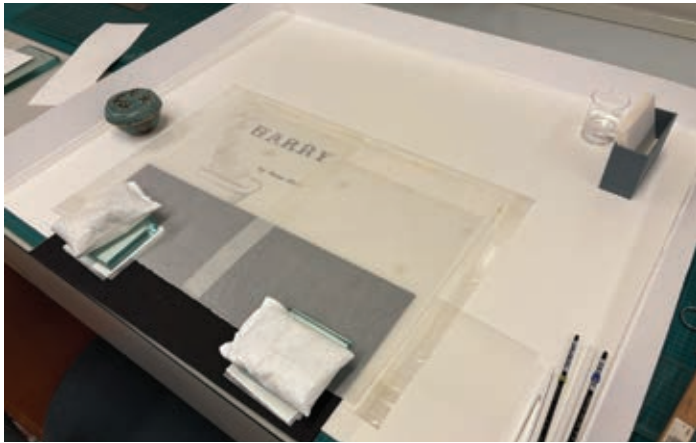


Much-lauded and dearly beloved author Brian Doyle, who was featured in our fall 2025 issue in a wonderful interview by Jeffrey Canton, died on January 1, 2026, at the age of 90. Brian delivered the 1997 Stubbs Lecture, “Listening to Voices” (<https://tpl.bibliocommons.com/v2/record/S234C3650761>). *The Globe and Mail* ran an obituary by Jeffrey Canton on January 13. You can also read about Brian here, in a memorial article by Gillian O’Reilly for the Canadian Children’s Book Centre: <https://bookcentre.ca/blogs/industry-news/three-things-i-ll-remember-about-brian-doyle>.

## CONSERVATION UPDATE

Conservation treatment has been underway for original illustrations in the Margaret Bloy Graham fonds. Thanks to generous funding from the Friends, I have completed treatment of items from four titles, including items for *Harry the Dirty Dog*.

The treatments were designed to retain original materials and be as minimally invasive as possible to retain their integrity as working production materials. This meant that I was focused on addressing physical damage like tears and reattaching loose elements, so as not to incur further damage when the items are accessed.



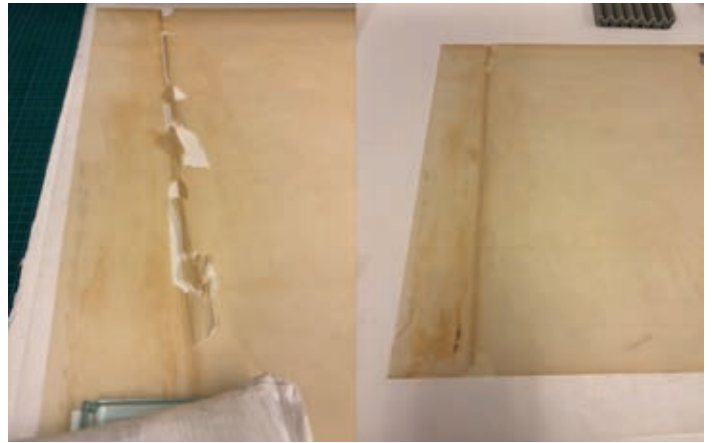
Folds on an overlay of a *Harry the Dirty Dog* paste-up are dried under weight after local humidification.

Many of the earliest paste-ups in the fonds have transparent paper overlays, but unfortunately, many of them suffered from severe tearing, folds, and losses. Folds were locally humidified and flattened and then repairs were made on the verso using very thin heat-set Japanese tissue.



(Top) A paste-up for *Mr. Upstairs and Mr. Downstairs* before treatment with tears and losses along the top fold. (Bottom) After treatment.

In keeping with the goal of making as few interventions as possible, I only made fills along the top folds of the overlays. These fills were necessary to prevent further damage from tears and snags when the overlays are lifted during use. To do this, I used very thin Japanese tissue that I toned with acrylic paints and then carefully cut pieces in the shape of the losses with a small blade. The fill paper was set in place with the same heat-set tissue used for tear repair. The result is unobtrusive but ensures the physical stability of the overlay when it is lifted back and forth.



(Left) An overlay for a paste-up from *Mr. Upstairs and Mr. Downstairs* during treatment. (Right) The same overlay after tear repair and fills.

Along with their new housings, these materials can now be safely accessed by users at the Osborne for years to come.

—Emily White



Emily reattaching a registration mark to the colour plate for the cover of *Harry the Dirty Dog*.



## The Origin of Our Gryphon

Maurice Sendak was a Life Member of the Friends. His connection spanned the tenures of three Collection heads: Judith St. John, Margaret Crawford Maloney, and myself. I recall with delight his cheerful call giving permission to use the gryphon logo he had drawn for Osborne in 1979. Our gryphon is witty and benevolent despite its fierce appearance. Gryphons are known for guarding treasure and are emblems of valour and magnanimity (Pseudodoxia Epidemica III in *Brewer's*). We owe a great deal to Maurice Sendak for creating such an evocative, inspirational logo.

—Leslie McGrath

## OUT AND ABOUT

Musician Nick Cave was interviewed last fall about grief and *Pinocchio*. You can read the interview, by Shilo Brooks of *The Free Press*, here: [www.thefp.com/p/nick-cave-on-the-best-childrens-book](http://www.thefp.com/p/nick-cave-on-the-best-childrens-book).

Architect Michelle Chan created a “biscuit” version of our beloved branch for the Toronto Society of Architects’ 2025 “Gingerbread City.” Check it out here: <https://torontosocietyofarchitects.ca/gingerbread-city-2025/>

## CONTRIBUTORS

**Jeffrey Canton** has been reviewing children’s books since 1988 and is the children’s book columnist for *The Globe and Mail*.

**Valentina D’Aliesio** is a learning experience designer in Toronto and moonlights as a freelance copy editor.

**Naomi Hamer** is associate professor of English at TMU. She researches children’s literature and cross-media cultures, and is the Friends’ academic liaison.

**Nancy Hartry’s** *Watching Jimmy* won the 2010 CLA Children’s Book of the Year. Her most recent picture book is *Snow Doves*.

**Sephora W. Henderson** is senior department head of the Osborne Collection and of the Merrill Collection.

**Gillian O’Reilly** is an award-winning non-fiction author and the former editor of *Canadian Children’s Book News*.

**Barbara Reid’s** Plasticine illustrations have won numerous awards including the Governor General’s Award. In 2013 Barbara was appointed to the Order of Canada.

**Martha Scott** worked at the Osborne Collection from 1999 to 2021, as librarian and services specialist.

**Emily White** is a TPL conservator whose work on the projects on page 19 was funded by the Friends.

**Jennifer Yan** is a services specialist with the Osborne.



You are always welcome (and encouraged!) to send ideas for *Gryphon* articles as well as general comments or questions to: [FriendsOsborne@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsOsborne@gmail.com).

If you would like to learn more about the Friends Executive and how you might contribute, please feel free to contact us at the email address just above.

To join the Friends, renew your membership, donate, or learn more about what we do, visit [www.osbornecollection.ca/](http://www.osbornecollection.ca/).

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