Friends To Present

Exploring Space at RPI
During Homecoming/Reunion 2013

On Friday, October 4th, Friends of the Folsom Library will host a talk given by Assistant Archivist Jenifer Monger on Rensselaer spaces used over the years for different functions and activities. Space can be described as “the stage upon which the drama of communal life unfolds.” At Rensselaer, the academic, athletic, social, and common spaces used, and often created, by students and administration have come and gone, ebbing and flowing from one decade to the next.

Monger has dug deep within the Archives collections to place at center stage key spaces that have been utilized, advocated for, appropriated, and experienced throughout campus and its environs. Inspired by photographs and documents, she will explore these spaces from myriad vantage points, analyzing the meanings of spaces that have played major roles in campus life and memory, both past and present.

The presentation will take place in the Russell Sage Dining Hall’s banquet room at 9:00 a.m. during Homecoming/Reunion and will include a continental breakfast. The event is free and everyone is welcome, but an RSVP to Adrienne Birchler (518-276-8329 or bircha@rpi.edu) by September 27th is required to secure a seat.

New Resident in Folsom

Barbara "Brea" Barthel (M.S. ’92) recently relocated to Folsom room 154-C, adjacent to the Center for Communication Practices (CCP). For the past 12 years, she has served as part-time adjunct lecturer with the Advising and Learning Assistance Center, offering programs to help Rensselaer’s international community adjust to American language and culture. Usually she coordinates hourly small-group discussions in the fall as part of an oral communication course for graduate teaching assistants, then teaches a section of the course in the spring that is also open to others. Brea notes, “I love working with people from around the world. Their passion for technology introduces me to cutting-edge science, while I help them learn effective ways to share their knowledge and interests.”

(continued on page 2)
Edifying Lunch & Learn Programs

Since last fall, we’ve enjoyed a diverse program of Lunch & Learn talks. Jointly sponsored by the Rensselaer Retirees Forum and the Friends of the Folsom Library, here’s what attendees were treated to:

Last December, RPI Athletic Director Jim Knowlton spoke on “Athletics at RPI—An Inspiring Story!” We learned there’s certainly a lot more to the Institute’s sports than ice hockey!

February’s program brought Rensselaer County Historical Society Curator Stacy Pomero Draper to campus to talk about "The Great Fire of Troy." The event happened more than 150 years ago, and from it came the rebirth of a new and prosperous Troy.

In March, we heard all about the “Rensselaer Plateau Alliance” from Board Directors Jim Bonesteel and Lawrence Howard. The group is involved in many projects to preserve and protect what is the fifth largest forested area in New York State, and it’s right in our backyard. Many of us didn’t realize that.

April’s talk, “Wrought with Steadfast Will and The Historic Connections Between Emma Willard and Rensselaer,” was presented by Trudy J. Hanmer, author and Associate Head Emerita at Emma Willard School.

In May, Department of Cognitive Science lecturer Bram van Heuveln topic’s was “Visual Reasoning: Visual Interfaces for Logical Reasoning.”

September's lecture on the 13th, "Factors Leading to the American Civil War," will be presented by retired Rensselaer chemistry professor Kenneth Miller, who is also an historian and trustee of the Pittstown Historical Society. Come October 11, Rensselaer employee Janice Naylor will describe her experience self-publishing her novel Sea Story, a copy of which she has generously donated to the library’s collection.

Lunch & Learn is held the second Friday of every month (with the exception of January, June, July and August) at noon in Folsom’s Fischbach Room. Everyone is welcome. You can either bring a bagged lunch or purchase food and beverages in the Library Café. Dessert is provided.

(continued from page 1)

New Resident in Folsom

Barthel’s connection with Rensselaer began in 1990 when she started her M.S. in Technical Communication, and has continued on and off ever since. Though she enjoyed her previous office (very near the Sage Building's Beanery Café, so she'll be a familiar face for many folks), she is looking forward to collaborating with the CCP, catching up with librarian friends, and enjoying Folsom's air conditioning. If her office door is open, feel free to stop in. She can also be reached at barthb2@rpi.edu or via voicemail at 518-276-2198.
Board Update

With Chair Ray Lutzky’s term ending this April and the vacancy of a Chair Elect (Carlos Godoy left the Institute last December to return to the University of Southern California), Barbara Lewis was elected and unanimously voted to the position of Chair Elect. But she didn’t get to sit in this seat for long; as Chair Elect, Lewis promptly took on the duties of Chair. The Board is now in the process of filling the Chair Elect position. Whoever fills this position will become Chair in two years when Lewis’ term expires.

In other news, we lost a wonderful Friend with the passing of longtime Board member Carl Westerdahl. He was an active member of the Friends for many years, served as Chair for many years, and in recent years spoke at Friends’ luncheons with former Rensselaer Assistant Archivist Amy Rupert on topics pertaining to the history of Rensselaer. He served as dean of students and as director of alumni and community relations at the Institute before retiring in 1993. Westerdahl was very active in his community of Williamstown, MA, and participated in many organizations, including some associated with his alma mater Wagner College, The Williamstown Historical Society, the Clark Art Institute, and Northern Berkshire Community Coalition. He and his widow, present Board member Susan Stetson Clark, were generous in many ways to the Friends and the Institute. The Board is looking for a way to memorialize Westerdahl in the Folsom Library for all that he has done through the Friends.

Loss of Another Friend

Friends lost another longtime friend with the passing of Dr. Bernard A. Fleishman, a former professor within the Department of Mathematical Sciences at Rensselaer. He retired in 1990 after a long and distinguished career teaching here. He was a community leader throughout most of his life, serving on the boards of various organizations. Up until this year, Dr. Fleishman was seen frequently in Folsom Library borrowing books, doing research, and faithfully attending monthly Lunch & Learn programs. Our condolences to his family.

Annual Open House Held August 23rd

Folsom Library held its annual open house for freshmen and new students last month. Over 250 students toured the library to discover what it has to offer them. Staff were on hand to show them how to navigate our all-encompassing website, teach them how to access the Rensselaer Digital Collections, show off some of the noteworthy items stored in the Archives collection, tell them about our “other” library that’s housed in the Greene Building (Architecture Library), and point out current bestselling books and over two dozen periodicals and newspapers available for them to read in the Leisure Reading area (thanks to the Friends!). All students taking the tour were given a goodie bag filled with items provided by some of our many vendors and were given a chance to win some nice prizes that were also donated. The grand prize was an Apple TV that was generously contributed by the Rensselaer Campus Computer Store. Make-your-own sundaes were offered to all who stopped in.
Friends Subsidize Price of Book About Alan Turing

Last spring, the LGBT Task Force hosted a showing of *Codebreaker*, a drama-documentary about the life, death, and legacy of Alan Turing, a British mathematician, logician, and cryptanalyst who was highly influential in the development of computer science. For those who were interested in learning more about Turing, Friends subsidized part of the purchase price of the book *The Man Who Knew Too Much: Alan Turing and the Invention of the Computer* by David Leavitt. Copies were sold in the Campus Bookstore and at the event. According to Chaz Goodwine ‘12, a member of both the Friends Board and the Task Force, there was an “absolutely amazing turnout” for the showing and 30 copies of the book were sold. He felt the book was a hit with buyers and stated that “the discounting provided by Friends of the Folsom Library certainly helped students, faculty, and staff to afford the books and clinch their purchase decision.”

Departure of Architecture Library Manager

Fran Scott, former Manager of the Architecture Library and Reference and Instruction Services, has left the Institute to accept the position of Director of Library Services at Georgian Court University in Lakewood, New Jersey. Her last day here was May 5th.

Scott joined Rensselaer in January of 1994 as Architecture Librarian. While here, she established a world-class architecture library, held leadership positions in the Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS), and implemented the New Reference Model at Rensselaer, including an online reference knowledge and metrics database. According to Library Director Bob Mayo, “While her leadership as Manager of the Architecture Library and Reference and Instructional Services – plus experience as Architecture Librarian – will be missed, this is a wonderful opportunity for Fran. She returns to her home state, very close to her hometown, and will take the helm of an impressive library on a gorgeous campus.”

Media and Digital Assets Jeanne Keefe and Library Specialist LaVerne Sankey will continue to work in the Architecture Library, which is housed in the Greene Building, and Mayo will act as manager. The Architecture Library, along with Folsom Library, are part of the Rensselaer Libraries.

Autumn Fires

*In the other gardens
And all up the vale,
From the autumn bonfires
See the smoke trail!*

*Pleasant summer over
And all the summer flowers,
The red fire blazes,
The grey smoke towers*

*Sing a song of seasons!
Something bright in all!
Flowers in the summer,
Fires in the fall!*

— Robert Louis Stevenson
2013 McKinney Contest

As the group does every year, Friends of the Folsom Library again contributed $250 to help the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences fund its annual McKinney Writing Contest. The event was co-sponsored by the New York State Writers Institute.

The winners of this year's McKinney Writing Contest for best entries in Fiction/Drama, Poetry, Essay, and Electronic Media received their awards from award-winning writer Marilynne Robinson in the Biotech Auditorium in the Center for Biotechnology and Interdisciplinary Studies Building on April 17th. Before the awards presentation, Robinson read from one of her works.

Robinson is the author of the bestselling novels *Home*, *Gilead* (winner of the Pulitzer Prize in 2005), *Housekeeping*, and some books of nonfiction, including *Mother Country*, *The Death of Adam*, and *When I Was a Child I Read Books: Essays*. In addition to the Pulitzer, Robinson has been awarded the National Book Critics Circle Award, the Ambassador Book Award, and the Orange Prize. She teaches at the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop.

For more than 70 years, the McKinney Writing Competition has recognized writing talent in various genres among Rensselaer undergraduate and graduate students. It is administered and judged by faculty in the Department of Communication and Media and is mainly supported by funding from The Mary A. Earl McKinney endowment, which was established in 1941 by Dr. Samuel P. McKinney, a 1884 Rensselaer graduate, set it up to memorialize his late wife. Prizes for this year's 20 winners ranged from $300 for first prize, $175 for second prize, and $75 for third prize. To read more about the contest and winners, visit [www.cm.rpi.edu/pl/mckinney](http://www.cm.rpi.edu/pl/mckinney).
IMPRESSIONS OF A LIBRARY

“To those with ears to hear, libraries are really very noisy places. On their shelves we hear the captured voices of the centuries-old conversation that makes up our civilization.” ~ Timothy Healy

“What is more important in a library than anything else — than everything else — is the fact that it exists.” ~ Archibald MacLeish

“Libraries: The medicine chest of the soul.”
~ Library at Thebes, inscription over the door

“A library is thought in cold storage.” ~ Herbert Samuel

“We may sit in our library and yet be in all quarters of the earth.” ~ John Lubbock