

A Word from Our President

Baker thanks Friends as he considers community teamwork in the past, present, and future

By JOE BAKER

It's hard to believe that ten years have passed since the Independence Branch opened on February 28, 2001. It seems like just yesterday I was soliciting prizes for a raffle to raise money for the initial collection for the Branch. I joined the neighborhood committee advocating for the library late in the process and was amazed at the progress the committee had already achieved in raising the \$200,000 required for the collection. We offer our continued thanks to community leaders Liza Seltzer and Mel Buckman and to all the committee members for bringing our library from a dream to a reality. Within six months of opening, the Independence Branch was the busiest neighborhood library in the city and has remained one of the three busiest during the past ten years.

I want to thank the many friends of the Independence Branch for their generous support. We all know the economic history of the city during the past decade has been up and down and, lately, very down.

Friends' purchases of books, electronic media, equipment and furniture and the underwriting of programs for children, teens and adults helps keep the library the essential, public, neighborhood asset it is meant to be.

Perhaps even more critical than contributing money for the library, the Friends advocate for library services. The successful advocacy of the last few years not only kept six libraries from closing, but it also imprinted on the minds of our political leaders just how important the libraries are to their constituents. The fight for libraries will continue, however, as one community after another, at home and abroad, tries to close its libraries to "save" money.

A *New York Times* editorial on January 31, 2011, titled "Mr. Pullman's Compass" commented on a speech by noted author Philip Pullman opposing the plan to close 20 of 43 public libraries in Oxford County, England. His speech ranges from the motivation of elected officials to close libraries to his own

experiences in public libraries as a child, college student and author. He cites the public library as, "That open libraries as a child, college student and author. He cites the public library as, "That open democratic space full of thrills, full of excitement and fear, full of astonishment, where your own emotions and ideas are given back to you clarified, magnified, purified, valued. You're a citizen of that great democratic space that opens up between you and the book. And the body that gave it to you is the public library. Can I possibly convey the magnitude of that gift?"

Ten years ago we opened our great gift, the Independence Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia. It is truly a gift of wonder.

For more on the
Branch's 10th
Anniversary
TURN THE PAGE!

In this edition of Bib.li.o.FILE:

- *Details on the library celebration of the year!
- *Confirmed -Bib.li.o.FILE introduces new films
- *Study reveals economic benefits of the Free Library
- *Ways to get involved!
- *See what's going on this month!

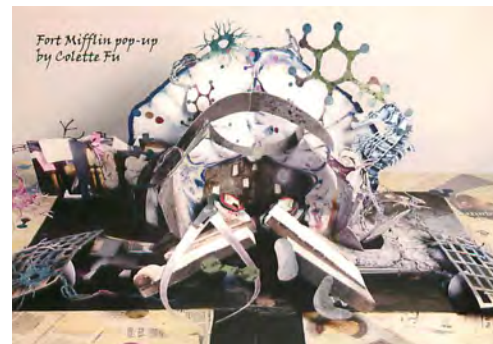
The Athenaeum of Philadelphia
219 S. 6th St. Philadelphia, PA 19106.
215-925-2688

HAUNTED PHILADELPHIA

Photography and Pop-ups by Colette Fu
February 1 - March 18, 2011

Free Admission

Colette Fu brings new insight into Philadelphia as a "City of Firsts," adding expression and a large scale pop-up technique to such Philadelphia landmarks as the Rodin Museum, Fort Mifflin, and the Academy of Music. Exhibition generously funded by the Beneficial Foundation.



10th Anniversary Celebrations!

Long-time supporters of the Independence Branch remember past trials and joys as they commemorate the tenth year of serving the community

By JESSICA BURKHARDT

This February marks the tenth anniversary of the Independence Branch! The branch has an interesting history and was made possible through the hard work of many individuals. According to Branch history, Philadelphians of the eastern part of Center City had been asking for a branch for 30 years before any progress was made. In 1997, the East Philadelphia Coalition for a Free Library was formed. The Coalition petitioned to create a branch of the library to serve residents in Society Hill, Old City, Chinatown, Washington Square West and Queen Village. On February 28, 2001, the Independence Branch was opened in a space that was previously the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies.

Mel Buckman, president of Society Hill Civic in 1995, discussed the trials that were

involved in opening the new branch, and the progress that was made by successor Liza Seltzer. According to Buckman, Seltzer began a letter writing campaign, which resulted in a meeting with Mayor Ed Rendell. He agreed that a library branch would be established, with the condition that the neighborhood raise \$250,000 to pay for books. The money raised was subject to a 15% library overhead, so their efforts were increasingly under strain.

Despite initial difficulties, the library was opened and commemorated by "a beautiful ceremony at the entrance to the library," according to Buckman. The branch now houses the Chinese Language, African-American, Children and Teens, and the Barbara Gittings Gay and Lesbian special collections.



FAVOR FROM FRIENDS: NEW MOVIES

By WILLIAM IRBY

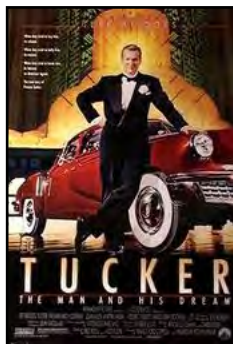
A strong and generous Friends group allows Independence to acquire materials unavailable through library vendors. Here are two films recently added to the collection thanks to our Friends.

The Landlord (1970) stars Beau Bridges as Elgar Enders. To escape his upper class family, Elgar buys a building in a black ghetto in the Park Slope section of Brooklyn and moves in with the intention of evicting the tenants and converting the building into an upscale residence. But as he comes to know and grow fond of his tenants and neighbors, his racial and class attitudes slowly change. A serious story, it is told with a lot of humor. One scene between Lee Grant, as Elgars' mother, and Pearl Bailey, one of his tenants, is hilarious. The cast includes Louis Gossett, Jr. in one of his first movie roles and Diana Sands, an award-winning actor who would tragically die of cancer three years later.



The Landlord was the first film directed by Hal Ashby who went on to make *Harold and Maude*, *Shampoo* and *Being There* among other films.

Beau's brother Jeff Bridges stars in **Tucker: The Man and His Dream** (1988). Directed by Francis Ford Coppola it is the story of Preston Tucker and his attempt to build a new and innovative automobile in the late 1940s. Tucker achieved his dream but his company quickly went out of business thanks to the machinations of the "big three" automakers and certain political interests. *Tucker: The Man and His Dream* is a wonderful story and re-creation of postwar America. It also stars Joan Allen as Tucker's wife and Martin Landau as his financial officer. As Tucker, Jeff Bridges gets to play a much "spiffier" character than his latest, Rooster Cogburn.



Friends Membership Application

I want to join the Friends of the Independence Library as a:

- Friend \$10 Sponsor \$50
 Patron \$25 Benefactor \$100+

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

I would like to volunteer! Please contact me!

Make checks payable to & mail with completed form to:

Friends of Independence Branch Library
18 S. 7th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Please send my newsletter electronically to my e-mail address.

The official registration and financial information of the Friends of the Free Library of Philadelphia may be obtained from the Philadelphia Department of State by calling toll free, within Philadelphia, 1-800-732-0999. Registration



Library Staff

Marianne Banbor
*Branch Manager, Adult/Young
Adult Librarian*

Margaret Bernardi
Children's Librarian

William Irby
Adult/Young Adult Librarian

William Clossey
Patricia Hunt
Diane Burgess
Beatrice Kuczynski
Naquawna Brown
Library Assistants

Mary Westbrook
After School Leader

Roy F. Baldwin
Jasmine Coleman
Teen Leadership Assistants

Xiaohang Pu
Philadelphia Youth Network

Lifu Su
Tianyu Zhang
Benxin Xu
Shanxiang Liu
Senior Assistants

Robert Barnes
Guard

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Independence
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Membership Chair

Lee Gutman
Used Book Sale Chair

Jessica Burkhardt
Newsletter Chair

Joan Behr
Lois Kaalund
Mary Anne Hunter
Amy Michael
Becky Stoloff

What's on Schedule at the Library

CONTINUING EVENTS:

-Tai-Chi Class

Enhance your overall health and flexibility.

Wednesdays: 2:00 PM

-Folk Dance

Come learn Chinese folk dance.

Fridays: 1:00 PM

-United States Citizenship Classes in Chinese

Prepare yourself for successful results in this examination.

Tuesdays and Thursdays: 12:00 PM (with Jack Burch)

Mondays: 10:30 AM (with Shuping Hou)

-English as a Second Language Class

Increase your ability to communicate and interact with others more successfully

Tuesdays and Thursdays: 2:00 PM

-Let's Speak English!

Conversational English practice for ESL speakers

Wednesdays: 2:00 PM

ONE-TIME EVENTS:

-The First Monday Book Group will next meet at **6:30 PM** on the first **Monday** of every month.

Let the Great World Spin by Colum McCann will be discussed at the

March 7th meeting.

Also please see the monthly flyer or the library's website for information about other programs added to the schedule.

-Tax Preparation Help in Chinese and English

Bring your tax questions.

This is a free program presented by H & R Block.

On **Monday, February 28, 2011**

-Free Chinese Colorectal Cancer Education and Health Fair in Mandarin

Health Fair (4:00-6:30 PM)

Speaker: **Dr. Ma, Xiao Li (5:00-6:00 PM)**

Monday, March 28, 2011

Call the American Cancer Society at 215-985-5307.

Free Library as Money Maker

Local study reveals the monetary value of the Free Library of Philadelphia and the resources and services it provides for patrons



By JESSICA BURKHARDT

The University of Pennsylvania Fels Institute of Government published a study on October 21, 2010, that stated that the Free Library of Philadelphia is generating more than \$30 million worth of economic value to the city of Philadelphia. Titled "The Economic Value of The Free Library In Philadelphia," the study was based on three integral roles the library plays within the city as stated by a 2007 study conducted by the Urban Libraries Council. These roles include: increasing and enhancing individuals' literacy, strengthening workforce development through access to computers, databases and career materials, and helping entrepreneurs and small businesses gain insight and information to grow and sustain business.

The Fels Institute gathered statistics from all the Library branches, interviewed 17 libraries and surveyed 3,971 additional patrons and librarians. Through analysis of this

material, along with data provided by the Census and Bureau and Labor Statistics, the Institute discovered that the Library's direct economic impact comes to almost \$4 million.

The economic value of the Library services that help individuals from Philadelphia learn to read totals \$21.8 million for the fiscal year 2010, according to the survey. Amazingly, 10% of survey respondents reported that they "couldn't have learned to read without the library;" the Fels institute estimates that approximately 10,788 people attribute their ability to read to the Free Library. Also, 979 Philadelphians found jobs through access to Free Library resources, and the Fels Institute estimates that this impact generated approximately \$6 million in economic value. Businesses rely on Free Library services as well, according to the survey. An estimated 8,630 business have benefited from the Library, stating that they "could not have started, grown, or improved their business without the Free Library."

Want to get Involved?

Our Friends group needs volunteers to:

- Help publish our newsletter Bib.li.o.**FILE**. We need people to write articles and help keep our members knowledgeable and involved! Our goal is to produce a newsletter quarterly.

- Join the steering committee. This small group meets about every six weeks for an hour to discuss ways to help our branch succeed.

- We need volunteers to help plan new programs with a Philadelphia Activities Fund grant we recently received.

To volunteer, email indyfriends@verizon.net or leave your name and number for us with a librarian.

Are you relying more and more on email to keep current with the organizations you belong or subscribe to?

Distributing the BiblioFILE by email will save the Friends the cost of printing and postage. Volunteers label, add postage and seal the print copy.

When you join or the next time you renew, you now have the option to check a box to receive the Bib.li.o.**FILE** by email as a PDF file. This is an experiment on the part of the Friends, so be patient as we work this process out.

Independence Branch's Hours of Operation	Monday, Wednesday — 12 pm to 8 pm
	Tuesday, Thursday, Friday — 10 am to 5 pm
	Saturday, Sunday — CLOSED

Nearby Saturday Service at:
Charles Santore Branch and Philadelphia City Institute

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