

HISTORY OF THE FRIENDS OF THE MARLBOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY **Founded February 1970**

The Friends of the Marlborough Public Library was founded on a cold and blustery evening in February of 1970 at the old Marlborough Post Office. Trustee Margaret Hayes and Library Director Bertha Shapiro were instrumental in forming a Friends group as the newly renovated plus addition to the 1904 Carnegie Library was in the process of completion.

The First Officers elected that February evening were: Dr. William Castelli, President; Raymond A. Johnson, Vice-President; Theodore Williams, Treasurer and Shirley Richards, Secretary. By-Laws were adopted to run the organization. Over the years The Friends have strived to meet the goals adopted as part of the By-Laws.

The mission of the Friends of the Marlborough Public Library is to stimulate the interest of the community in the services and needs of the library, to enrich the cultural life of the community, and to promote a program of assistance through volunteer help and fundraising that will enable the library to keep pace with the growth of the City.

To this end Martha Yacyshyn, First Music Chair, lead the charge to raise \$5,000 to purchase a Steinway Grand Piano for concerts. From Feb. to Dec. of 1970, the funds were raised and a Dedication Concert was held in December with Martha performing. The Friends donated the piano to the Library for general use by groups, musicians and The Friends. Thus the first concert took place and there have been now forty-one years of concerts. Martha was Music Chair for twenty years and after her retirement and subsequent passing, the concert series was named in her memory and is now designated "The Yacyshyn Concert Series" usually consisting of three concerts per season.

As Bertha Shapiro insisted when The Friends started, the emphasis has been "to add to the cultural life of the community." Therefore the programs have been geared to all of the performing arts as well as programs of general community interest. Presently The Friends Have "The Yacyshyn Concert Series;" "The Metrowest Daily News/Marlborough Enterprise McConnell Author/Celebrity Series" named in memory of Leo McConnell who hosted this Series for many years and which usually consists of four programs featuring well-known authors and celebrities. Also The Friends present "The Annual Regional Juried Art Exhibition" and "The Annual Friends Photography Show" Co-sponsored with the Assabet Valley Camera Club. In addition Special Programs are presented at various times such as "Antique Roadshow", the history of "The John Brown Bell", "Explosion in Halifax Harbor", "Refinishing Furniture"--to name a few.

As concerns fund raising, Membership is a big part of that plus the two One-Day Spring and Fall Book and Bake Sales, grants and donations from businesses. There is also On-Going Book Sale Carts in both the Adult and Children's Sections. The Friends have a Library Gift Account which the Library Director solicits funds from for library projects such as Museums Passes and special books. With over 300 Members, The Friends are able to support through fund raising a yearly budget now of over \$22,000. In this 2011-2012 Season The Friends are presenting in this their "42nd Year" once again many programs both to educate and entertaining not only the membership but the citizens of the Greater Marlborough area.

For Information about The Friends please go on-line at www.mpl-friends.org
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