

FRIENDS HOUSE LETTER

The quarterly publication of the Senior Association
of the Friends House Retirement Community
Sandy Spring, Maryland

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LIBRARIES!

Libraries Lead! Ours is central to Friends House, and we all share an appreciation of its rôle, its offerings, and those who keep it going. Here are some shared thoughts about the importance of libraries in our lives.

LIBRARY LOVE

When we moved to Rockville in the late '50's it was a very small town, just three blocks long, with a Post Office, a grocery store, a movie theater, a drug store, a laundromat—and a library housed in a tall red brick once-private home.

One day I decided to go to the library and return books. Jacob, our dog, would naturally go with me. On the way I stopped at the drug store. Jacob always waited for me outside, but he wasn't there when I came out. I continued on to the library and when I entered, Agnes, the librarian, said, "Oh, Jacob was just here; maybe he is upstairs." But he wasn't. I returned my books, chose others, and left.

The phone was ringing when I entered the house. It was Agnes. "Jacob is back again."

"OK," I replied. "Tell him to go home!" And 10 minutes later Jacob was at the front door. I called Agnes to let her know and she said, laughing, "I hope he hasn't taken any books without checking them out."

This small-town library was a wonderful rare treasure.

—Judith Simmons



LIBRARIES ARE US!

The first public library in the U S, was founded in 1833 in Peterborough, N.H. Now there are about 18,000 public libraries in the States from Fairbanks, Alaska, where Dorothy Harter's daughter Melissa is the Director, to northern Maine. Some are large, others are small, some are just put-and-take shelves. You can learn about most of them by looking at their Web pages.

At one time libraries lent only what they had in their buildings, but by 2010 public libraries lent 2.46 billion materials because you can ask your local librarian to borrow from most public, school, academic, or corporate libraries in the world.

In Maryland the public libraries own and lend about 19 million items per year. 3600 paid employees help at least 3.7 million Marylanders use their library cards to check out nearly 60 million items, including 23 million items for children. And nearby we have the Library of Congress, which has 164 million items and about 1.8 million visitors each year.

These days when you walk into public libraries you see people sitting at computers searching for job opportunities or writing resumé's, some with the help of the librarians and the available books, newspapers or computer resources. Or, young people are doing homework, or people are gathering reading materials for vacation or discovering recipes they've lost. Libraries are still important to our society.

Maybe you remember taking your children to the library and telling them to be quiet. Now, libraries like Noyes library, where Nora Caplan worked in Kensington, MD, encourage children to talk about what they see or read or hear. In fact, Nora and her staff created packages of books, DVDs, and coloring books on the subjects children enjoy, like dinosaurs, castles and spaceships.

Or, you might have known Caro Taylor as a beloved children's librarian in Olney or as the head librarian at Sherwood Library, housed in the old Ashton Meeting House.

There are other kinds of libraries as well. Corporate librarians like Carole Marks helped architects find drawings, measurements, or whatever materials they needed to be better at their jobs. She also worked at the National Library of Medicine from 2001–2007.

Maris Corbin was the head of circulation at a branch of the Duke University Library and brings that excellent experience to our Friends House library.

Helen Louise Liversidge began her career at the Atlanta Public Library and then enriched the academic careers of

students and faculty at Sandy Spring Friends School Library before leading our own library.

Library volunteers are indispensable around the world. Maris volunteered at a seminary library in Jos, Nigeria. Jean Galleher worked at the Sutherlin, OR, library, and became its volunteer director when the city could no longer afford a paid staff member. Vaughn Morrison volunteered with the Friends of the Library in West Jefferson, NC, helping run their book sales to raise funds for the county library.

Carole Marks worked her way through graduate school by being a substitute evening librarian at the Children's National Medical Center. Caroline Nevins worked with students who studied library science at the University of Maryland, and I did likewise in Kansas and at Catholic University.

As you can see, Friends House folk have been, and are, involved with libraries in many ways over many years. If I neglected to mention work you've enjoyed please forgive me (and let me know)!

--Marty Hale



The March library-table display celebrated India and its cultures, while the April display focused on the importance of immigration in America's culture.



SOME LIBRARY!

Funny you should mention libraries! On March 19th, Mary Ann Beall and I went to a college library in Richmond, VA, for a talk about a book in which we are both mentioned. The book is *Creating a Progressive Commonwealth: Women Activists, Feminism, and the Politics of Social Change in Virginia, 1970s–2000s*, by Clemson U. Professor Megan Shockley, to be published this fall.

The lecture was part of an event celebrating the library's new building and its acquisition of its three-millionth volume. (The book discussed in the lecture was volume 2,999,999!) The talk, titled "Listening to Progressive Women: The Virginia Feminist Oral History Collection," drew heavily from Dr. Shockley's account of collecting oral histories from activist women all over Virginia.

However, the highlight of the trip for me was the location of the lecture—the new Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Library. This wonderful 21st-Century academic library made me want to go back to school—even at my advanced age!

I always knew VCU had a fine Art department, but I did not know of the size and scope of the library until that day. The drive down from Maryland was worth it. This library has everything, including fabulous conference rooms with state-of-the-art projection systems, comfortable single- and multi-user study Carrels, many small discussion areas, and a large Special Collections and Manuscripts department. Not your usual commuter college!

—Lee Perkins



And this is the redesigned Cabell Library at VCU, completed in 2015. It received a New Landmark Library Award from Library Journal in 2016.

(Photo courtesy of library.vcu.edu)



A couple of days after Lee and Mary Ann enjoyed the shiny new library at VCU, Spring arrived at FH with an impressive snowfall. We were not amused, despite its beauty.
(Photo by Nancy Rea)

A TREASURE FROM A LITTLE NEBRASKA TOWN

When I was ten years old, the family moved from Casper, Wyoming, where there was a good-sized public library, to Wisner, Nebraska, a town of about 1,000 with its own little red brick library down by the railroad tracks. It was in that library that I came across a fascinating book about leprosy. I have been unable to locate the title, but it was written years ago by a veteran of the Spanish-American War who was found to have the disease and was immediately isolated in a shack, where he was attacked by rats, to await dead-of-night transport to a leprosarium.

For me the rats were more horrifying than the leprosy, but the book also humanized the disease for me. And it became even more humanized about fifty years later, when I was working as a clinical psychologist in Houston, Texas. The program director, José Ramirez, told me that he had had leprosy, an excruciatingly painful disease, as a young man in Laredo, and was initially carted to Mexican healers, whose treatments were torturous. Eventually, with help from his future wife, he was sent to Carville, the hospital in Louisiana for leprosy treatment. When I knew him, he looked fine; his only remaining problem was that he had no feeling in his feet, so his wife had to check them regularly to be certain no problems developed.

Although some people use an alternate name, Hansen's Disease, José prefers the old term, to challenge the stigma. An outspoken advocate for lepers, he wrote *Squint: My Journey with Leprosy*, published in 2009. The disease is not highly contagious, despite the Biblical story of the lepers crying "Unclean! Unclean!" as they approached Jesus.

I have no idea how that tiny little library in the rolling hills of northeastern Nebraska happened to have a copy of a book about leprosy. But the state has an impressive literary tradition, with writers such as Willa Cather, Mari Sandoz, and Wright Morris, so probably I shouldn't be surprised.

—Ann Gerike

QUIET!

My first library experience was at the Fifth Avenue Branch of the Paterson (N.J.) Free Public Library. Mommy and I and my little sister Linda, 3, walked up from our apartment three long blocks. Steep Madison Avenue made us breathe huffy-puffy by the time the cement lion in front of the yellow house was visible, mouth open, endless sharp teeth showing. A heart stopper!

A stone-type brick building in a residential neighborhood of one-family homes, our library was rectangular, a shorter end being the entrance holding two floor-to-ceiling windows with colorful little-kid displays changed monthly. Inside Mommy, Linda, and I could find books we didn't have at home—*Babar the Elephant*, *Hundreds of Cats*, *Thousands of Cats*, series such as *Flicka*, *Ricka and Dicka* and *Snip, Snap and Snurr*.

One entered by walking onto a protective rubber pad and then the remainder of the flooring looked like Grandma's bathroom only she had little white tiles. The library's tiles were pale blue. Mommy told us since this was the library's home and since lots of people visited we needed to wipe our feet extra thoroughly on the mat when entering.

One could smell typewriter ink, glue, library paste, old and new paper, and hear the sound of Dolores's shoe taps. The 18-year-old substitute librarian worked on Saturdays only and evidently had not yet been told that taps were not to be worn in the building where the cardinal rule was SHH! QUIET!!

As Dolores snapped by and Mommy realized too late what Linda's reaction would be—a delighted screech from her in hard-soled "baby shoes" and feet that couldn't be stopped—she had to use her emergency-alert stash of half a stick of Juicy Fruit gum and a lime-flavored lollipop plus a firm maternal push, to entice her three-year-old out of the library. She left Priscilla on the way to the books in the library. Phew, what a day!

—Priscilla Sabino

The four photos collectively titled "A Bench for all Seasons."



Judith's "Turkey Trot" in pastels.



From the Roarks through Hugh & Humphrey to Nancy Rea, our Wellspring artists were well displayed and much enjoyed.



Roger's scenes from Wales.



Hugh's clever title "duogram."



Two of Nancy's more fanciful photos: a thrush and ... a crow!

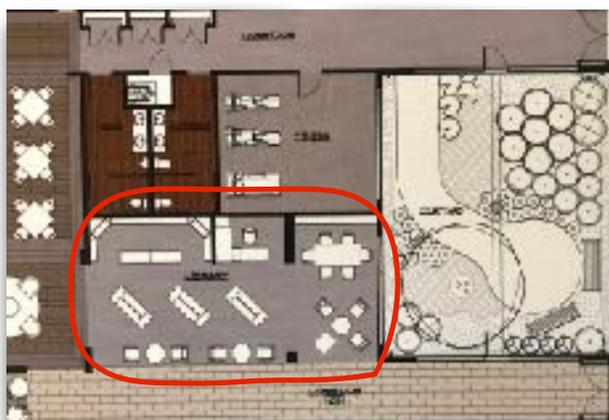
Mmmm—refreshments!



Among the treasures recently rediscovered in the library are these badges crafted for some anniversary occasion—probably the 10th or 20th.



Longtime residents Emily & C.J. Swet, now living in Stabler Hall, have always been appreciative library patrons.



The architect's plan offers clues about the locations of cherished spaces—in this case the library.

ABOUT OUR OWN LIBRARY

We don't know much about the history of the Friends House library, but assume that it was set up with the original building 51 years ago. It would be good to know more about its origins because the present library volunteers and current users are very appreciative of what we have inherited. Perhaps someone reading this piece will come forward with some history.

The library has about 1500 books, of which the mysteries, as you might guess, are the most popular. There is a reference section and there are books on religion (including many on Quakerism), on the social sciences, plants, animals, health, arts, history, biography. The reference section is also the repository for several binders containing Friends House history, including biographies of residents and past issues of the Friends House Letter.

The novels include large print and regular print. There are also books for visiting children. Residents offer book donations but because of space restraints we must be very selective in what we accept. We have a budget for buying new books—which currently means discarding old books to make space, a problem for libraries everywhere. We display about 40 periodicals, most of which are donated and not always up-to-date.

Members of the committee or other residents set up monthly themed displays on a library table, which encourages unusual books to be checked out.

Yes, we still have a card catalog rather than an on-line system, and you check out a book by filling out a circulation card.

The library has two “branches” in D Wings: books on environmental concerns in the lounge and books on gardening beside the door out to the greenhouse.

We are pleased about the plans for the new library. A great improvement will be the re-positioning of the bookshelves so that the top shelves will not be so high nor the bottom shelves so low. There will be a computer available for reference questions, now that so much information is easily available online. The new library space is expected to be close to the main entrance, flanked by a small courtyard on one side and a bistro on the other.

The library is run by two volunteer co-librarians and a Seniors Association committee of ten residents. We welcome ideas for enhancing the library, and suggestions for new books.

—Maris Corbin

While we shivered and watched the April snow fall, a do-it-ourselves mural appeared on the wall of the Flower Alley Gallery. We all contributed a little something, and enjoyed watching it fill up with springtime pleasures.



A GRASSROOTS PROJECT FOR SCOTTISH LIBRARIES

Because I have soft spots in my heart for nature, books, libraries and Scotland, I was intrigued by some articles I read about a library-related grassroots project that started in Scotland.

First some background. It has been determined that children are spending much less time playing outdoors and exploring the woods, fields and other natural areas that consumed their time not many years ago. Now their time is taken up with video games, smart phones, tablets and other indoor interests. When the results of the BBC-Oxford University Press annual 500-word story contest for children aged 5-13 were recently analyzed for word usage and themes, there was a definite shift to stories with a technology bent. Sound familiar?

In 2007 the Oxford Junior Dictionary was updated, following the guideline requiring that it must “reflect the current frequency of words in daily language of children.” About 50 new words were added, including blog, broadband, chatroom, MP3 player, and hashtag. But about 50 were deleted because they “held no relevance for modern day children.” The deleted words were mostly “nature” words—acorn, buttercup, dandelion, fern, ivy, heron, kingfisher, wren.

Unsurprisingly, there was a lot of opposition to this and a heated debate ensued in the press. Motivated by this, nature writer/wordsmith Robert Macfarlane and artist/illustrator Jackie Morris created and published in 2017 a beautiful large-format alphabet book featuring words from nature that have been deleted. That book is titled “The Lost Words.”



But that’s not the end of the story. A Scottish school-bus driver, Jane Beaton, started a campaign to get the book into the libraries of all 2,681 schools in Scotland. A crowdfunding (another new word!) effort that now includes Wales and many counties in England is now 98% funded and volunteers will soon be delivering the books to Scotland’s school libraries.

—Vaughn Morrison

A COUPLE OF LIBRARY STORIES

Our Bookmobile

When I think about libraries, I think about the special van that sometimes came with books to our little town in northern Maryland. For many years we did not have a library anywhere in the county, but had to go to Baltimore to visit a library. It was a treat to have that van come along from time to time.

The New Olney Library

Another rather amazing experience happened more recently, here at Friends House. We were all excited when the renovated Olney Library was finished, and planned a trip to go see it. I was taken there with my walker, but—oh, dear!—I had to walk up a path to the upstairs doors, no entrance for me on the ground level. I went home deciding it was too bad I couldn’t go to the library.

I told friends about that, and one of them telephoned the library. The librarian was shocked, and building changes were undertaken immediately. So I guess you could say I influenced local library history.

—Betsy Wollaston



Judith used forsythia and camellia, plus an elegant horse, for her library-table arrangement, while Maris used daffodils and pieris. Thanks to the Flower Arrangers, we could enjoy Spring indoors even when we couldn’t go out.



So what did we do while waiting for Spring to get her act together?



In February, we were treated to the staff's annual Valentine Tea Party featuring elegant and delicious foods and beverages, sophisticated hats & gloves, and music by John Salzberg and young Brandon of Activities.

Thanks to all who made it a special occasion for us!



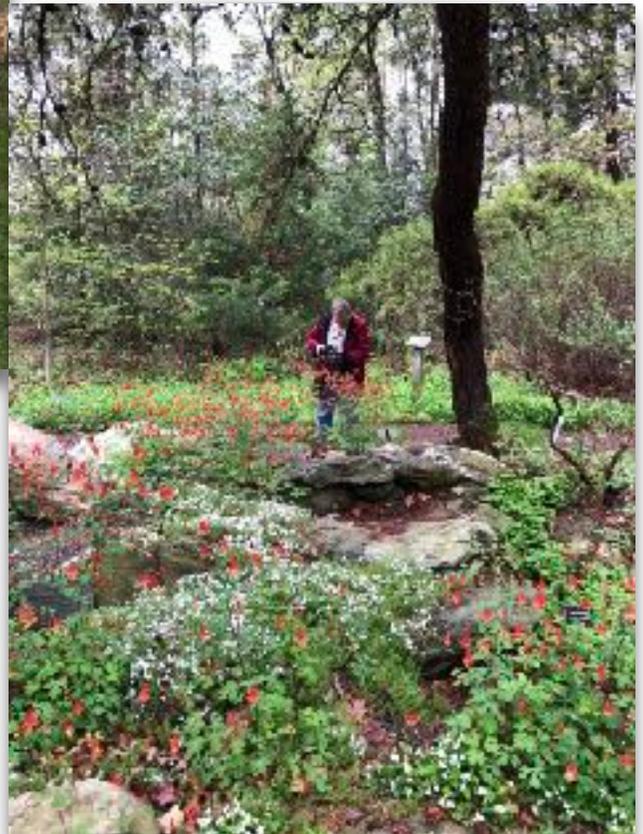
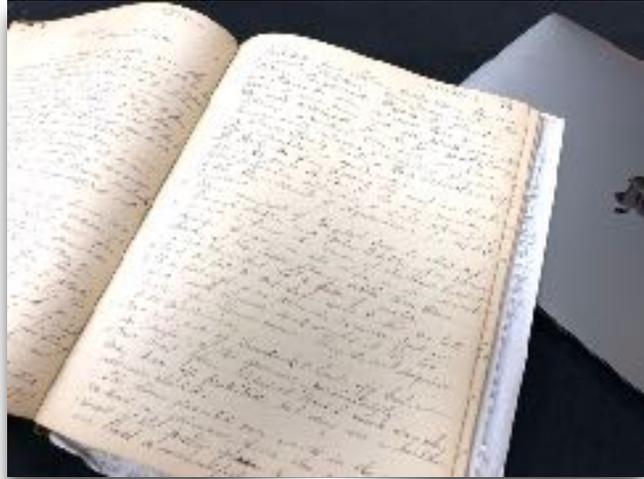
Photos by Lee Perkins (Miss you, Emily!)



In March, we were fascinated by Gary Hevel's talk on the insects he's collected in his back yard, intrigued by the lovely vase put together by the C Lounge Puzzlers, proud of Erin Mitchell for the medal she earned at the Philadelphia Live Run, and in awe at discovering yet another facet of our friend Karen Montgomery at her sculpture exhibit in the Sandy Spring Museum.



In April, still mostly indoors, we enjoyed a talk by Jennifer Schaffler about the Sandy Spring Horticultural Society, including the 1902 minutes book; appreciated Dipali's lovely and timely Earth Day exhibit in the Miller Center; and then got outdoors at last. Roger Roark had help from David and Alex, community-service volunteers, and Ari Preuss when setting the first of two planting tables on its supports in the garden. And several of us wandered happily in Fern Valley at the National Arboretum one afternoon. We also discovered another of Anne Eller's donated cross-stitch samplers. See if you can find where she put it!



NEW FRIENDS

KATHLEEN KELLER, B-6



Interviewing Sister Kathleen, with her great love for life, was an unmitigated pleasure. In February, 2017, she celebrated fifty years as a Sister of the Holy Names, but she made it very clear that she is not yet retired from her many years of active service.

An especially interesting part of her life was her time in Peru, where she was a missionary some forty years ago, from 1978 to 1985.

Living near the coast in a desert community without electricity or running water, she was one of two nuns stationed there, and the only one to remain healthy for her entire stay. The nearest local priest had 17 parishes to attend to, so Sister Kathleen was in effect also the pastor of her parish, in which there were five towns separated by 20- to 30-minute walks. The villagers were warm and caring.

She taught religion in schools so teachers learned methods and, as there was one high school in the area, she got older children to teach adult literacy. They had summer art crafts programs and obtained books and maps to start a library, including an encyclopedia in Spanish. Basically, “We did what we could to be present and to alleviate suffering,” training older youth to lead prayer services, visiting the sick (and well), and helping bury the dead, in all five villages. The area is extremely dry, and houses were built of mud and corn stalks, so the first real rain in 40 years (which she experienced) was a disaster.

When Sister Kathleen returned to the States, she found herself suffering from “touch-deprivation” after living in a more physically expressive society, and eventually discovered massage and began to study the subject. Now she works as a massage therapist at a residential treatment center and in private practice. And all of this she has done while living cheerfully with a “terminal” cancer diagnosis for the past 18 years.

An experienced gardener, Kathleen brought plants, equipment, and enthusiasm to Friends House, and hopes to be able to play in the garden when she really, finally, retires. In the meantime, she’s enjoying patio puttering in her free time.

We are fortunate to have her among us.

—Ann Gerike

ANN MAREAN, B-5



Ann is a true native of this area, having been born in Washington, D.C. She attended Catholic schools in Silver Spring while growing up in a family of four children—two girls and two boys. She has fond memories of her childhood days. She loved both school and sports.

In 1952 at the age of 18 she chose to join the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, a religious institute whose purpose is to educate young girls. Although the institute is headquartered in Portland, OR, Sister Ann has worked mostly on the East Coast, at Academies of the Holy Names in Tampa, FL and Albany, NY.

She was an elementary school teacher and eventually became the principal of one of those academies. The last part of her career was as a counselor in the elementary school. Now she does volunteer work at the Shepherd’s Table and St. Camillus Food Pantry, in Silver Spring.

She did a lot of research before choosing Friends House. She likes the Quaker philosophy of simplicity and the set-up here where you remain at Friends House even after your health declines. She and her housemate, Kathleen Keller, moved to B-Wing in February.

Ann likes to read, hike, walk, and especially to help other people. She said she would like to go to one mindfulness group.

This was a very rewarding interview for me. I’ve lately found myself explaining myself to myself and anyone else who would listen—and Ann is a great listener!

—Claire Inglis

To receive the Friends House Letter in electronic (PDF) format, send your request to bethm.nc@gmail.com.

AMONG US

BARBARA GIBIAN Friends House Board of Trustees



A member of the Board for some three years, Barbara Gibian is the daughter of our own Peg Gibian (B-9) and the sister of Tom Gibian, Head of Sandy Spring Friends School. She grew up in Sandy Spring and graduated from Friends School and Hamline University in St. Paul, MN, and received her J.D. from Georgetown Law. She is also a member of Sandy

Spring Friends Meeting.

Now semi-retired from a career as general counsel for international investment groups, Barbara serves on the Finance and Project Steering Committees of the FH Board, both good fits given her interest in project finance.

Barbara says this project work has helped her appreciate the strong sense of community here at Friends House compared to other retirement communities in the area. With the rest of us, she is looking forward to the preliminary site preparation scheduled for this summer, while continuing to work on finalizing the bank and bond financing for construction.

Barbara moved back to the family home on Dr. Bird Road from Bethesda when her parents came to Friends House in 2006. She has three grown children: one daughter lives in Abu Dhabi, UAE, another in Lake Placid, NY, and her son lives in Columbia and works in Olney.

Besides the FH Board, she serves with two nonprofit organizations concerned with Czech-American affairs, the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences (SVU) and American Friends of the Czech Republic. Those of us who knew her late father, Tom, and his friend Frank Backer, also know that the Gibian family's roots are as deep in the former Czechoslovakia as they are in Quaker affairs.

When she's not attending board meetings, Barbara enjoys several social groups here in Sandy Spring, including the Women's Association for Mutual Improvement, Neighbors, the Olney Salon, and a book club.

She also makes sure to visit her centenarian mother most every day when she's not traveling. Thank you, Barbara.

—Beth Morrison

TIM SANNA Director, Friends Nursing Home



Tim Sanna was a seasoned member of the healthcare profession when he came to Friends House last August as the new administrator of our nursing home.

After graduating from the University of Maryland with a degree in Health Care Management 30 years ago, his first job was at a nursing facility in Washington.

He stayed there for 14 years, serving in every department and receiving valuable hands-on experience. He's spent the last 16 years in administration in a number of retirement communities in Maryland.

Tim is married and has two adult sons, one of whom is a high-school teacher and the other a paramedic. So far he has no grandchildren—but there is still time, and he is hopeful.

He loves the game of baseball, and plays on weekends with a local amateur team. And, of course, he follows the fortunes of our local professional teams with enthusiasm.

A belated welcome to Friends House, Tim. We hope and expect that you will have a rewarding and successful term of service here with us.

—Helen Louise Liversidge

Ed. Note: On a recent busy morning in Stabler Hall, while Maintenance was doing some major work in the dining room, Tim was carrying breakfast trays back to the kitchen from residents' rooms—a good indication of his approach to the job.



WHAT'S IN THE LIBRARY?

Kendall gives us a list (partial and in no particular order, she says) of the books on the New Arrivals shelf in the FH Library. Check them out!

The Late Show, by Michael Connelly. Connelly introduces a new detective—Renee Ballard.

The Temptation of Forgiveness, by Donna Leon. A new Commissario Brunnetti mystery.

Midnight at the Bright Ideas Bookstore, by Matthew Sullivan. “A smart twisty crime novel that book-lovers will adore.”

The Ninth Hour, by Alice McDermott. “A cloistered life blows open.”

Being a Dog, by Alexander Horowitz. Following a dog into the world of smell.

No Time to Spare, by Ursula K. LeGuin (R.I.P.) Thinking about what matters.

Promise Me, Dad: A Year of Hope, Hardship and Purpose, by Joe Biden.

The Abundance: Narrative Essays Old and New, by Annie Dillard. A new collection to enjoy.

What She Ate: Six Remarkable Women and What They Ate, by Laura Shapiro.

Ways to Disappear, by Idra Novey. “At once playful and chilling.”

Heat and Light, by Jennifer Haigh. “An ambitious, human story of modern America.”

A Hero of France, by Alan Furst. Another of his engrossing novels about European espionage between the wars.

How Democracies Die, by Steven Levitzky and Daniel Ziblatt. Democratic institutions, even long-standing ones like ours, can fail without vigilance and support.

FRIENDS HOUSE LETTER UPDATE — MAY 2018

NEW RESIDENTS

Thelma Black, B-18

Sarah Dorsey, B-20

Lorraine Hutchins, C-3

Paula & Robert Kove, D-6

Terry Ries, B-11

John Van Dyke, C-10

IN-HOUSE MOVE

Margo Morrison to Stabler

DEPARTURE

Emily Walsh to San Diego, CA

IN MEMORY

Ladelia Becraft
7/18/1916–2/23/2018

Alice Foreman
5/25/1920–3/7/2018

Philip Minni
10/6/1921–4/27/18

Harold Vedova
4/13/1921–4/29/2018

PRODUCTION

Editorial: Kendall Anthony, Ann Gerike, Dorothy Harter, Claire Inglis, Helen Louise Liversidge, Beth Morrison, Priscilla Sabino (*Welcome!*)

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*When Spring arrived at long last, it came in a glory of pink blossoms,
from magnolias to redbuds to dogwoods to cherries to crabapples to bleeding hearts.
Nancy Rea captured the flowering cherry trees along Friends House Road in late April.*