Friends Makes a Difference

Friends is a frequent sponsor of College and community-wide events, such as the Holocaust Film Series and the Remnant Trust Rare Books Exhibit.

Friends also has partnered with the Schools of the Humanities, Arts and Education, The Boyer Center, and other regional and state organizations to bring an array of luminaries to campus: Terry Gross, host of NPR’s “Fresh Air”; Newbery Medalist Katherine Paterson; Poets Laureate Robert Pinsky and Donald Hall; and journalist and author, Anne Applebaum, to name a few.

Friends likewise has funded a variety of enhancements to Murray Library such as: archival storage and display cases; Pullman steel benches for the terrace at the front entrance; the construction of glass-front study rooms on the lower level.

Library research grants

Since 2003, Friends has awarded more than $10,000 to fund selected proposals by Messiah students for research projects requiring special-resource libraries. Completed projects are catalogued and archived in Murray Library.

A grant recipient demonstrates the basics of making paper to Zambians interested in learning a sustainable skill which could help them earn money in a challenging economic system. Such a community enterprise could support individuals suffering from HIV/AIDS or the family and friends who care for them.

Annual Book Sale

For more than 15 years, Friends has sponsored an annual book sale which has grown to more than 25,000 books, videos, CDs, DVDs and other collectibles, and is open to the public. Proceeds support special collections, library research grants and other Friends initiatives. Book donations are welcome year-round during regular library hours. Donation guidelines appear on the Friends website: messiah.edu/murraylibrary/friends.html.

Book sale remnants have been donated to Better World Books, Teen Challenge International, Advance Global Literacy, Glad Tidings India, Rwanda, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Gulf Coast communities and prison ministries.

Friends of Murray Library encourages gifts and bequests, particularly of significant personal collections, both of books and manuscripts. (Please contact us if you or someone you know would like to bequeath a collection or recommend one for consideration.)
From its beginning in 1993, Friends has promoted the mission of Murray Library with a variety of purchases, projects and programs. In addition to providing resources and services that extend beyond the library's operational budget, Friends helps form a link between the campus and the community of learners.

We invite you to join us in our efforts to enrich the resources of Murray Library, a central component in the education of Messiah students.

Memberships also make great gifts. Honor a family member or friend, or celebrate the life and legacy of a loved one with a special memorial gift.

Benefits of Membership

Annual Friends memberships cover immediate family members and include:
- library borrowing privileges
- 12 interlibrary loan requests per year
- invitation to Friends events (annual dinner and general meeting, occasional excursions to places of literary or historic interest, lectures, exhibits and other cultural or social events)
- receipt of Friends mailings highlighting the group's activities, as well as library activities and plans
- eligibility to serve on Friends board

Murray Library’s Collections

Today the Murray Library holds more than 400,000 items, including books, periodicals and audiovisual media, as well as online databases and journals. Subject specialties include religion, music and nursing. Among the library’s most notable holdings are the archives of Messiah College, the Brethren in Christ Church and The Boyer Center, as well as the four special collections, presented herein.

Special Collections

Each of Murray Library's four special collections traces its beginning to Friends of Murray Library.

Artists’ Books

Visually exciting and intellectually provocative, artists’ books push to the outermost limits our assumed definition of what a book is, and turn the practice of reading into a novel experience.

Simply defined, artists’ books are a hybrid art form in which books and art intersect. Many of the over 100 artists’ books in Murray Library’s collection are the work of well-known book artists, including works by Messiah College art faculty. Friends funds new acquisitions to the collection each year, enhancing its use as an interdisciplinary teaching resource.

View an online brochure of the Artists’ Books collection at messiah.edu/murraylibrary/friends.html.

W. Jim Neidhardt Collection on Religion and Science

Dr. W. Jim Neidhardt’s keen interest in the relationship between modern science and the Christian faith, as well as the presence of several longtime friends at Messiah College, led him to give his extensive personal library to Murray Library. Subject areas in the collection are astonishingly diverse, ranging from physics, engineering and theology to cybernetics, chaos theory and aesthetics. A Friends-commissioned bookplate bearing Neidhardt’s likeness portrays aspects of his lifework and identifies volumes in the collection.

Canadian Literature

Friends committed more than $10,000 to establish this special collection, currently consisting of more than 700 titles by such influential Canadian authors as Margaret Atwood, Rudy Wiebe, Robertson Davies, Leonard Cohen and Alice Munro, each identified by a Friends-commissioned bookplate. The collection is being expanded to include poetry, plays, critical and other non-fiction works.

Ruth E. Engle Memorial Collection of Children’s Book Illustration

Dedicated in April 2004, this collection of original picture-book art by award-winning illustrators began with gifts given to Friends of Murray Library in memory of Ruth Engle, a charter member who also served on its board. New artworks are added to the collection annually, funded by Friends and gifts from donors. Currently, more than two dozen artworks are on display, reflecting a variety of media, styles and subjects including works by illustrators from Australia, China, Korea, Mali and Russia, as well as the USA.

View an online portfolio of the Engle Memorial collection at messiah.edu/murraylibrary/friends.html.

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