

MUSEUM ROAD

SPRING 2011

A publication of Reading Public Museum • Planetarium • Arboretum

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Second Floor Ready to Go!

Second Floor Renovations Completed

You may have noticed that in the past our Second Floor Galleries were periodically closed as we got ready for the latest temporary exhibition. We've noticed too, and have done something to remedy this sometimes-necessary, often-frustrating, situation.

After months of planning and several weeks of execution, The Museum's Second Floor galleries are ready to open with a brand new, user-friendly layout and design. Central to the project was the reconfiguration of the temporary exhibition space, which had for decades flanked the Founders' Gallery on the east and west wings. The new temporary gallery space occupies only the east wing galleries and will facilitate much better traffic flow through exhibitions and will allow sub-sections and thematic groupings within exhibitions to unfold in a much more logical manner. Another advantage to the new temporary exhibition space is greater flexibility to mount shows of varying sizes and make necessary adjustments according to the scale of the exhibitions. Perhaps the best benefit to visitors, however, is the fact that no longer will the second floor need to close during installation and de-installation periods—a process that occurs up to six times during the year.



The second part of the renovations involves some exciting changes to the permanent collection galleries. The Early European and 19th Century European galleries have transferred from the east wing to the west wing of The Museum. Now, as you enter the west wing off of the Founders' Gallery, you will first encounter the European Galleries, starting with works from the Renaissance through Rococo in both Northern Europe and in Italy. The next gallery displays European nineteenth-century art with an emphasis on France, specifically the Barbizon School and the Impressionists. Next comes the American Gallery followed by the Twentieth Century and Pennsylvania German Galleries.

Now you can meander through the history of Western art from the sixteenth through the twentieth century in an uninterrupted way. Founders' Gallery will become a dynamic space for exhibiting sculpture, glass, and for hosting special events.

Discovered in Our Collection – Big Bird Now Residing in Our Director's Office

A very rare bird specimen — often called the “holy grail of bird-watching” — from our extensive Natural Science collection has temporarily found a new spot to roost (stuffed and mounted, of course). You'll find him hanging out in John Graydon Smith's office, guarding the doorway.

Since documented (but controversial) sightings of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers (*Campephilus principalis*) in the swampy Big Woods of Arkansas in 2004, efforts to locate this bird in Florida, Arkansas, and elsewhere have proven difficult, and no unequivocal evidence of the species have emerged. An unprecedented five-year search across the species' former range was conducted by the Big Woods Conservation Partnership and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Until these sightings, the scientific world was in agreement that Ivory-billed Woodpeckers had gone the way of the dodo. A new study conducted by University of Georgia researchers revealed that this species could have persisted if as few as five mated pairs survived the extensive habitat loss during the early 1900's.

Nicknamed the “Lord God Bird,” this aristocrat is one of the largest woodpeckers in the world. Its great stature, heavy, ivory-colored, chisel-tipped bill, pale lemon-yellow eyes, crisp black-and-white markings, distinctive crest, and lean, long appearance distinguished it from all others.

Note: Our very own Ivory-billed Woodpecker will migrate from John's office to our Animal Secrets exhibition, scheduled for 2012. Be on the lookout!



Registration for Museum Discovery Camp – open now!

Exciting programs, unmatched environment, qualified instructors, individual attention and convenience are the ingredients that make the Reading Public Museum's Discovery Camp



exceptional! The Museum facilities provide the highest quality setting for a delightful and educational summer camp! 2011 camp dates are as follows — registration forms and more information are available on our Web site or by request.

Ages 4 & 5

June 27 - July 1 and August 15-19
(both 4 & 5 yr. old sessions are 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.)

Ages 6 & 7

July 5-8 (4 day session) and July 25-29

Ages 8 & 9

July 11-15 and August 1-5

Ages 10 & 11

July 18-22 and August 8-12

Food for Thought: The New Noontime Knowledge

There's a new twist on an old program at The Museum. Our "Noontime Knowledge" series is getting a much-needed update: an edible one! Those of you who have attended the program know that it's our best "secret" program here at The Museum. On the first Tuesday of each month, you can come to The Museum on your lunch hour and feed your imagination with a lecture or talk on a variety of fascinating topics in science, art and more. Past lectures have included The Planetarium lecture "Joe Kittinger: Pioneer of Space," "Not Your Mother's Hot Chocolate" based on the ancient Maya's love of chocolate and "Walk this Way: A History of Shoes" in conjunction with fashions at The Museum.

This season, The Museum has three great topics on the horizon. In April, Susan Marshall, Ph.D. will present "Red Sky at Night, Sailor's Delight...The Science of Sky Color." May's topic is all about Mom as Selby Doughty, art professor, presents "Mama Mia." Finally, Director of Education Anne Corso will round out the season with the June presentation, "The Harlem Renaissance."

So that feeds your imagination, but what about your appetite? **The Atrium Café** couldn't come at a better time. Currently, The Museum has a luncheon menu of chicken salad, tuna salad, turkey/cheese and ham/cheese sandwiches as well as chef's and Caesar salads. Now you can pick up a lunch (or pre-order if your heart is set on something specific) and feed your appetite and your imagination. Truly, food for thought!



Noontime Knowledge costs: Free for Members/cost of admission for Non-Members; Special lunch & lecture cost: \$5 for Members/\$10 for Non-Members



The Planetarium Is “All Aboard” Starlight Express: Earth

Beginning in April, a new feature will enhance your Planetarium experience. “Starlight Express: Earth” is a new full-dome newsreel segment featuring current space events. These three-to-five-minute-segments will play prior to each Show and will change monthly.

Produced by Starlight Productions, these fascinating segments use (taxpayer-funded) NASA imagery and transform it into full-dome animations for digital planetariums like ours. Starlight Productions (Salt Lake City, Utah) is dedicated to the production of educational and entertainment presentations for planetarium immersive technology, and taking it to the next level.

Using content from these affordable, informative segments, we will also be able to create our own Shows tailored to our future needs.

For a complete schedule of Star Shows, including titles, times and process, see the Calendar page of this issue or check www.readingpublicmuseum.org/planetarium/index.php.



The 2011 Gala – Saturday, April 30, 2011

We're moving back inside! Enjoy dinner stations, hors d'oeuvres, and drinks while mingling in the galleries among The Museum's celebrated collections. Enjoy self-seating areas within the gallery spaces. After dinner, you can choose to dance the night away in the Auditorium or catch up with friends in a quiet lounge.

Cost is \$150 per person and registration is required. Look for your invitation in the mail. For more info, call 610-371-5850 x230.



Easter at The Museum – Sunday, April 24, Noon - 4 p.m.

Since the 1940s, families have been visiting The Museum and making memories together on Easter Sunday. Thanks to our partnership with local radio station Y-102, the tradition lives on!

Join the classic “Easter Promenade” and celebrate the arrival of spring in our Arboretum, visit and take photos with the Easter Bunny, enjoy hands-on activities and story readings for the kids, catch a Star Show at The Planetarium, enjoy a talk about one of the treasures on display at The Museum, *The Raising of Lazarus* by Tintoretto, and take another look at the current exhibitions, *American Scenery: Different Views in Hudson River School Painting* and *The World of Sea Shells: Jewels of the Ocean*. Children can participate in one of the area's largest Easter egg hunts (starting at 1 p.m.) for different age groups, with candy and great prizes!

Admission to The Museum is free for children 13 and under on this day (regular Star Show fees apply). Visit our Web site to learn more.



From the Director

*Spring has sprung, the grass has ris',
I wonder where the birdie is?*



No matter how the next few lines of the poem go in your version, here at the Reading Public Museum, we know where the birdie is – The Arboretum! There is no more glorious time here at The Museum than spring, as the trees, flowers, and fauna flourish in one of the most spectacular public spaces many of us are likely to ever see in person. Whether you come for the hiking trails, bird watching, tree identification, or just to relax with your thoughts, the welcoming Arboretum has something to offer you this, and every, season of the year.

I'm often struck by how people I meet react when they meet me and learn what I do for a living. Inevitably, upon hearing that I am the Director at RPM, they comment on what a great museum it is, and usually lament how long it has been since they've visited. They're always quick to point out though, that they love the park nearby! As you, our members know, it isn't just any park but rather the



living and growing part of The Museum. The Arboretum, which has been a gem of Berks County since the current museum building opened in 1928, is lovingly and expertly cared for by a dedicated group of gardeners and volunteers and serves as our outdoor classroom for the thousands of school-aged children who visit here annually.

Because we want our community to take advantage of all that we offer at the Reading Public Museum, we're using this issue of *Museum Road* to highlight all the facets of

The Museum, including The Arboretum, The Planetarium, and the spectacular new and improved experiences inside The Museum proper. From our new Arboretum tours, led by some of Berks County's Master Gardeners, to the new rental and birthday party opportunities in The Planetarium and Museum, to our current exhibitions featuring art from the Hudson River School throughout our galleries, what more excuse do you need to get out of the house and shake off those winter blues?

Of course, we continue to expand our educational programming for children too, so as they begin to look toward summer and no more school, you can begin to look toward summer with an eye on expanding the minds of the children in your life. Plan a trip to The Museum, either for our educational and fun summer camps, our sleepover "Night IN The Museum" programs, or just during a visit as a family, where kids and adults alike can experience the beauty and wonder throughout The Museum — both inside our walls, and out.

You may even find out where that birdie is!



Meet Me at The Museum

Say hello to Karin Wulkowicz, Chairperson, The Arboretum Committee

Drive by The Museum any Wednesday morning from early April through early October, and you'll see a crew working hard to preserve and enhance the beauty of our impressive front yard, The Arboretum. Shillington resident and Chairperson of the Arboretum Committee, Karin Wulkowicz, is passionate about her involvement and the obvious results we all enjoy.

What does The Arboretum Committee do for the Museum?

The Arboretum Committee oversees The Arboretum program. The program itself oversees the 25-acre grounds that comprise The Arboretum.

How did you become involved with the program?

I volunteered the second year of the program as a regular community volunteer like anyone else. From there, I was asked to become a Master Gardener (through Penn State, an 18-month process), and I just basically worked my way up. They needed members for the Committee, I asked to be on it and was accepted. It's all volunteer. There are no paid gardeners on the grounds of The Museum.

Karin's five-year anniversary farmer's gardening knife



What keeps you involved?

I love it here. I would do it even if the Master Gardeners bowed out. Now, I get volunteer hours towards my Master Gardener hours that I have to log every year, but that doesn't matter... I would do it no matter what. This is a premiere property. Some of the large trees that you see here are beyond maturity — you can't duplicate that

anywhere else. There are not a lot of areas that are like this, and I love it. I mean, I'm a landscaper and this is my life.

How do you feel The Museum and the community benefit from this program?

The first thing that comes to mind is curb appeal. This is not a home, but it is a showpiece in the county. People gain by just the aesthetic value. We get comments all the time saying "Thank you so much!" *People notice.* They know how it used to look many years ago, and they see us out there, and they know how it looks now.

We try to do native plantings and do things that show people that this is sustainable landscaping. Sustaining wildlife... I've seen mink out here, deer, herons, hawks... all kinds of fauna. Bird people come here to watch.

I think a big part for the volunteers is the social aspect. I'm amazed, because we work them very hard. Some of them are



retired, and they tell me that this is the most exercise they get in a week, and they like the camaraderie. We have mostly people who return year after year. We give out five-year anniversary farmer's gardening knives (see photo below), and we give out less and less every year because everybody already has them!

What are some of the current projects?

Right now, the committee is working on the spring training of the volunteers — getting that coordinated and ready to go, handling information that has to go out to everyone and lining up the volunteers this year. The volunteer coordinator is Chris Heiser.

The person in this position the last several years was Diane Schwerdt, and this very important position has been now split into three different areas, due to the volume of work.

We have coordinators of various areas of horticultural. There's a Master Gardener Coordinator (for Berks County), Beth Finlay, and also, we have a Dedicated Gifts program, which Donna Weik runs. Pete Poncheri, The Museum's Director of Building and Grounds, is the direct liaison between the Committee and the Foundation.



Gerry Gobright and Patricia Meinhardt oversee placement of new birch plantings.



What are some of the future projects?

We are still working on the Birch Island project, which is actually part of the master plan for the Arboretum. We are looking to maintain the current areas that we have — unless, of course, funding would come in for another large project. The project, which started last fall, hasn't all been planted. There are underplantings — actually thousands of plants that still need to go in — to make a ground cover, for low maintenance.

We're also starting now to do more educational things — tying things together with exhibits that are going on inside The Museum.

How does the volunteer program work?

Our season is from the beginning of April through the beginning of October every year. We work every Wednesday — each volunteer signs up for about eleven Wednesday mornings. Approximately 25 current volunteers are Master Gardeners, but you don't need to be one to volunteer. We can teach you about gardening.



Karin Wulkowicz leads a group on a "Noontime Knowledge" tour of The Arboretum during Reading Hospital's Garden Party.

How can people support the program and see that it remains vital?

By either volunteering, if you can, or by financial means. Not to just The Arboretum, but if you donate to The Museum proper, it helps everyone — it's a ripple effect. If someone is interested in funding a specific part of the master plan (see www.readingpublicmuseum.org/arboretum/master_plan.php), we have drawn up a schedule with current dollar figures... a package deal, so to speak.

The Museum Shop

Looking for a unique gift? You'll find handmade gifts, toys and games for children, exquisite jewelry and more. Our stock is always changing, so stop in often to see our new items!

Open during regular Museum hours (no admission required).

And remember, Members get 10% off every day!

Museum Phone:
610-371-5850

Museum Hours:
Tuesday – Saturday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.;
Sunday Noon to 5 p.m.
For Holiday hours, please check our Web site.

Museum Admission:
\$8 Adult (18-59); \$6 Seniors/Children/Students (w/ID);
Members and Children 3 and under: free.

Planetarium Hours:
Sun. 1, 2 & 3 p.m. plus Weekday Shows at 4 p.m.
(Tuesday through Friday)
Show Prices (for each show): \$7 Adults (18-59);
\$5 Seniors/Children/Students (w/ID);
Members and Children 3 and under: free.
For more info, call 610-898-1565.

Join Your Museum Today!

The Reading Public Museum is dynamic and ever-changing, offering diverse exhibitions all year long! Temporary exhibitions featuring science and art combine with our permanent galleries to offer you an engaging experience every time you visit. As a Member, every visit to The Museum and Planetarium Star Shows is FREE! Plus, there are even more benefits... check www.readingpublicmuseum.org and click on "Membership" for complete details and to join securely online.

Calendar of Events and Activities



500 Museum Road
Reading, PA 19611-1425

Planetarium

Star Shows

EVERY SUNDAY IN APR., MAY & JUN.

- 1 p.m. – *Our Place in Space*
- 2 p.m. – *Light Years from Andromeda*
- 3 p.m. – *Daughter of the Stars*

WEEKDAYS – TUES.-FRI., 4 p.m.

A different Show each day
Check Web for titles

Prices for the Star Shows are \$7 for adults and \$5 for children, seniors and students. Members and children 3 and under free.

Rock/Music Shows

FRIDAYS – APR. 29, MAY 27 & JUN. 24

- 7 p.m. – *Pink Floyd: Wish You Were Here*
- 8 p.m. – *SonicVision*
- 9 p.m. – *Pink Floyd: Dark Side of the Moon*

Prices for each Music Show are \$5 for Members and \$7 for Non-Members.

For Show details, check our Web site.

Exhibitions

Through 2011

Nefrina's World

Through June 5, 2011

The World of Sea Shells: Jewels of the Ocean

Through June 5, 2011

American Scenery: Different Views in Hudson River School Painting

Through July 7, 2011

American Landscapes: Works on Paper from the Permanent Collection

Events

APRIL

24 Sunday, Noon – 4 p.m.
Easter at The Museum

Includes egg hunt with prizes, Easter Bunny and more! Free admission for kids 13 and under:

30 Saturday, 6 p.m.
2011 Gala – "The Artist's Palette"

See the article in this issue and don't forget to make your reservation!
For info, call 610-371-5850 x230

JUNE

8 & 9 Tues. & Wed., 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Reading Hospital Garden Party
Rain date Thursday, June 10 – Buy one, get one admission free (of equal or lesser value)

Adult Programs & Events

Noontime Knowledge

APRIL

5 Tuesday, Noon
Red Sky at Night, Sailor's Delight...
The Science of Sky Color
Susan Marshall, Ph. D.

MAY

3 Tuesday, Noon
Mama Mia
Selby Doughty

JUNE

7 Tuesday, Noon
The Harlem Renaissance (Rescheduled!)
Anne Corso, Director of Education
Free with Museum admission (Members free)

Lectures

APRIL

15 Friday, 6 p.m.
Beyond the Valley: Exploration with Hudson River School Painters
Scott Schweigert, Curator of Art and Civilization

MAY

6 Friday, 6 p.m.
We the Petticoated Ones: Women of the Hudson River School
Nancy Seigel
Series: \$35 Member/\$55 Non-Member
Per-Lecture: \$20 Member/\$30 Non-Member

RPM Business Breakfast Series

THIRD TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH
(Apr. 19, May 17, Jun 21 – 7:30 - 8:30 a.m.)

Join us for breakfast before work in one of our unique gallery spaces. Chat with John Graydon Smith, Director and CEO, network with other business professionals and learn about The Museum's collection while enjoying hot coffee and a light breakfast. Don't miss your most important meal of the day!

RSVP to lauren.mccarroll@readingpublicmuseum.org or at 610-371-5850 x264. Free for Reading area business professionals with your company business card. Sponsored by Weidenhammer Systems Corporation.

Bus Trips

APRIL

13 Wednesday
Brooklyn Museum
Lecture at Museum on Judy Chicago at 8 p.m., trip, tour and boxed lunch at Brooklyn Museum included in cost.
\$100 for Members/\$125 for Non-Members.

JUNE

8 Wednesday
Grounds for Sculpture and Princeton Art Museum
Guided tour of Grounds for Sculpture, boxed lunch and trip to Princeton Art Museum.
\$100 for Members/\$125 for Non-Members.
For more details and registration forms, visit our Web site.

Note: Special "Noontime Knowledge" lunch & lecture cost: \$5 for Members/ \$10 for Non-Members

Family-Friendly Activities

Story Thursdays

Our popular preschool program on first & third Thursdays at 1 p.m. – \$5/Participating child, parent/grandparent free.

APRIL

7 Thursday, 1 p.m. (meet in The Planetarium)
I Took the Moon for a Walk by Carolyn Curtis

21 Thursday, 1 p.m.
If You Give a Moose a Muffin by Laura Numeroff

MAY

5 Thursday, 1 p.m.
Suki's Kimono by Chieri Uegaki

19 Thursday, 1 p.m.
Not a Box by Antoinette Porter

JUNE

2 Thursday, 1 p.m.
Brontorina by James Howe

16 Thursday, 1 p.m.
A Promise is a Promise by Robert Munsch and Michael Kusugak

Youth & Family Programs

THROUGH JUNE 5

Family Learning Center Exhibitions
The Artist's Studio (Hudson River)

MAY

13 Friday, 4:45-7 p.m.
Under the Sea Family Night
Museum activities, light dinner and Planetarium Show.
Members: \$10 per adult, \$5 per child or \$30 for a family of five
Non-Members: \$15 per adult, \$10 per child or \$50 for a family of five.

20 Friday, 6:45 p.m.
Girl Scout Sleepover
A Night IN The Museum for registered Girl Scouts.
\$35 per scout/\$20 per adult/One troop leader free per every ten scouts

Subject to change —
For more info and the latest updates, check www.readingpublicmuseum.org