

JUNE 2021
VOL. 3

BOOKWORM BULLETIN

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF SPALDING
MEMORIAL LIBRARY



GET TO KNOW TIFFANY!

Position: Library Director

How Long Have you worked here?: I have been here since 2011

Hometown: Big Pond, PA!

Favorite Library Book: *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr

Favorite Author: 1. Juliet Marillier 2. Margaret Atwood 3. Isabelle Allende

Favorite Genre: Historical Fiction

Favorite Color: Emerald Green

What do you want the Patrons to know about you?: I want each patron to know that it is my great joy to help them on their path to happiness.

Favourite Story from working at the Library: My favorite memories from the library are of watching my youngest son nap in the office when his grandmother was the director here. We have watched all the staff members' young ones grow over the years. Our library community has always felt like a family.

Check out what's inside this issue:

BOOK REVIEWS

GET TO KNOW TIFFANY!

NATURE PHOTO
CHALLENGE
SUBMISSIONS

GARDEN TOUR



Why you think libraries are important: Libraries are able to quickly adapt in times of uncertainty. As enduring institutions, libraries have evolved through many eras and much cultural change. We provide our communities an avenue to connect, relate to, and understand each of its members through story.



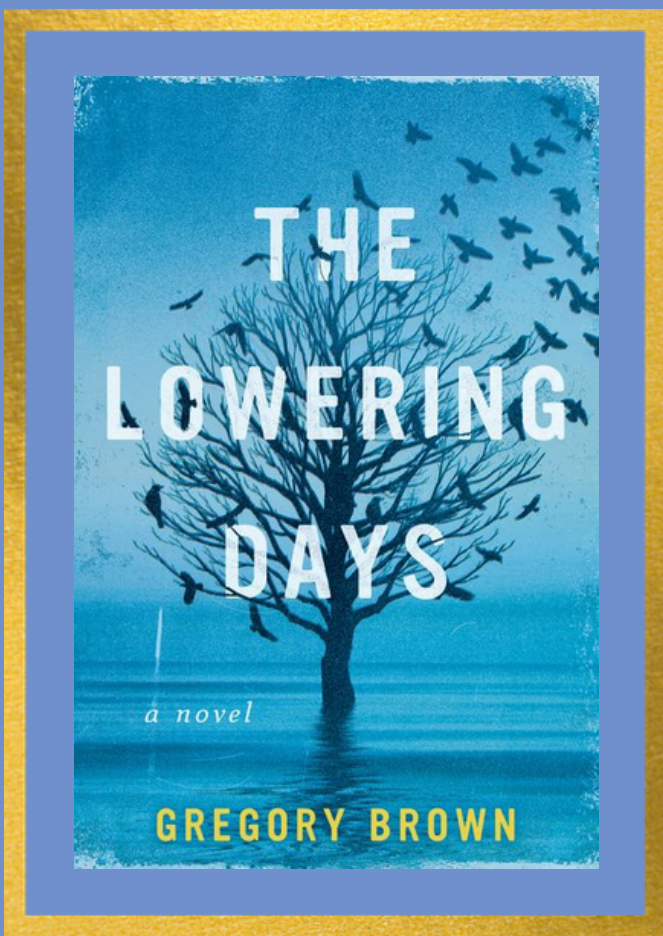
ADULT BOOK REVIEWS!

Memories End
by
Gary Petras



An unusual tale of unusual friendship. Tragedy compels Basil, a gentle, philosophical elephant and Moe, a chimp much too smart for his own good, to take to the road, traveling through a summer landscape for a legendary refuge. Their journey is challenging and feels doomed to end in tears. The reader comes to appreciate that the real point of life is the friendships made along the way. I liked to compare the simple dignity of the animal friendship with the machinations of the circus humans. Who is the more developed creature, really?

Written by Kathy Brown



The
Lowering
Days
by Gregory
Brown

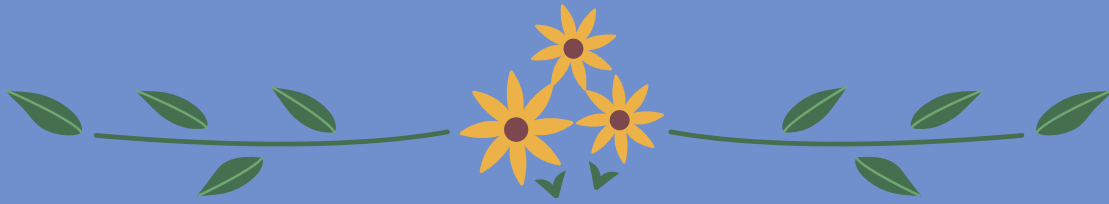
Written by Tiffany Robbins

“What’s the story of this place? This valley? This river? This bay?”

So begins the novel *The Lowering Days* by Gregory Brown. I found myself drawn into this book about three families whose lives are intertwined with each other, the river, and the land, in a valley along the Penobscot River and the sea. It is the 1980s, and the three Ames brothers grow up wild along the shores of the bay, where their father builds beautiful boats and their mother runs her own newspaper. Their lives are steeped in local myth and the pull of the river and the bay. But beneath this idyllic backdrop, tensions are about to erupt. Long-standing is the tension between the local industries and the people of the Penobscot Nation. When a young Penobscot teenager sets fire to a local paper mill in an act of environmental justice, the unfolding chain of events also brings tensions between the Ames and Creel families to the surface. The result will be an unimaginable tragedy that shatters these families and shakes the community they all share.

This book will immerse you in the natural margins of where the river meets the sea, in a way that reminded me of the setting of the novel *Where the Crawdads Sing*. Though this story has no mystery in the classical sense, there is a lyrical and heavy suspense that carries throughout until the end. I enjoyed reading this debut novel, and look forward to more work by this masterful writer.

A Garden Tour



If you have visited the grounds of the library recently, you have probably noticed that our garden is particularly lovely this year. Season after season, a handful of volunteers have taken charge of this tranquil public space, shaping it over time. Their dedication and efforts have created this serene garden nestled along the banks of the Chemung River.

The name, Chemung, it is said, comes from an Indigenous word meaning “place of the big horn.” The river was so named because of the mastodon tusks uncovered along its banks. Also found along its banks by the Native tribes that lived here were alluvial deposits that yielded clay for their unique pottery. Louise Welles Murray writes in her 1908, *A History of Tioga Point and Early Athens*, the Natives “made use of ‘blue clay’ found in abundance at the foot of Round Top, on the Chemung, and just below Mile Hill . . .” (1908). Clay is also what was found here, in the Spalding Memorial Garden, in the summer of 1999 when the idea of it first began.

That year, the Library Association had recently removed a number of trees from the property, opening up the area and letting in more light. A team of volunteers spear-headed by Deb Landy and the Valley Garden Association undertook the task of transforming the library’s riverfront grounds. But instead of rich river loam, they discovered hard clay. Compost had to be hauled in, and layers of leaves were added for several years. During this time, the gardens gradually began to take shape. Their present-day layout is part design and part happenstance.

“It was a gem of a space for a garden,” recalls Deb Landy. She often walked her dog there along the river and thought that more people should be able to enjoy this place in Athens Borough with a riverfront view. The library garden was one of several in the Valley area that the Garden Club took responsibility for.

Planting began in the spring of 2000 with pachysandra and ivy. Deb had several dedicated helpers, including Rex Soper, John and Sherry Simonds, Ned Margie, Maria Mathews, and Penny Wetzel. The original idea was for a Native garden. A place to teach and learn about the plants of Pennsylvania. Plants that attract butterflies were another focus. But some of these first plantings failed to thrive. Being a community garden, it began to be shaped by the tastes of everyone involved. And more and more plantings were donated by local residents, helping the garden to slowly evolve.



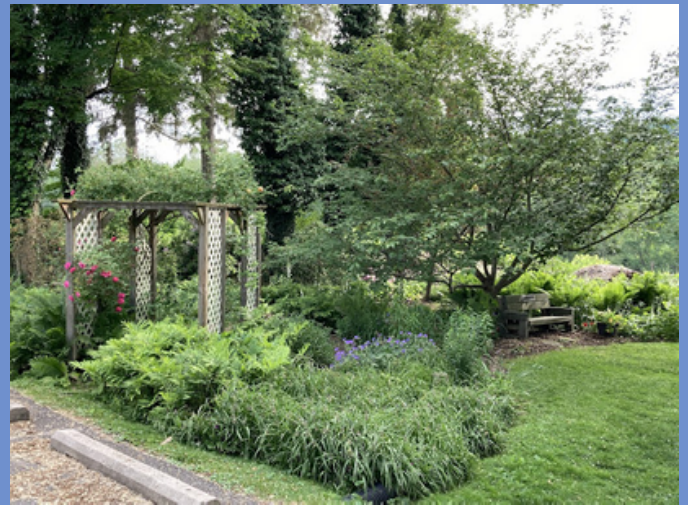
Photos from April 2000

Continued-

If you wander out into our garden today, you will find a cool and lovely shade garden of rhododendrons, hostas, and ferns along the south border. It extends out towards the river where there is more sunlight. Here you will find lovely tall foxgloves and butterfly bushes. Your eye may perhaps be drawn back in toward the arbor. It was built by Paul Young, a local student at the time. The rose bushes that grow around and through it were planted in honor of retired Board members Don Barton and Ella Louise Johnson, and also of deceased members of the Valley Garden Club.



There are several memorials placed throughout the garden. Marjorie Rider was a former librarian here, and she is remembered by a thriving hydrangea bush. A bench sits near the center given in memory of librarian Marilyn Tidlow. A marble bench in memorial to Jim Vath was given to us when it lost its previous location in Towanda. A healthy flowering cherry honors the life of local resident Kevin Grazul. Former Board member Warren Nagle is remembered by a lovely rhododendron. The graceful peacock sculpture near the river helps us to remember another Board member, our friend, Connie Roupp.



Most of these memorials, most of the garden as we know it today, was overseen by local gardener Betty Gregory. She had been involved with the project from the start, and she took on the task of overseeing the library gardens for fifteen years, from 2002 until 2017. She did so at the urging of her friend, Pat Corl, who was another advocate for the garden. Betty will tell you that “Pat loved this garden.” Betty also had the help of several more dedicated volunteers, among them Glen and Barbara Tolbert, CoAnn May, Nancy Swartwood, and Ceil Daher.



This “Friends of the Library” group even hosted a River GardenFest vendor-event on the grounds when the gardens were new.

Though Betty helped to shape the garden, she let the community of people caring for it guide its course. As she led me through the tour of the garden that might not exist without her steadfast support, she remarked, “I always believed it was the community’s garden and what the community wanted is what we did.”

Continued-



Photo of pottery found during excavation in 1895, as shown in A History of Tioga Point and Early Athens.



A 1928 photo of the grounds, looking out at the Chemung River.

Continued-

Just how much the greater community has contributed to the garden isn't really known, though it is witnessed when you walk through it. At the center of the garden is a large maple tree and picnic table. Across the path from it, beside the brilliant rhododendron, which remembers John Marcussen, and next to the mountain laurel given in memory of Nancy Raife, there is a proliferation of lilies of the valley. The first plantings of those came from John and Gladys Knowles. And the iris next to St. Joseph's bell was given to us by Roxie Callear. The bell found a home here in the garden in 2016. A weigela bush nearby is a planting in memory of local resident Frank Doyle. A flowering cherry near the bell bears no plaque, but was a gift from Board member Maria Worden. An azalea bush is the most recent perennial planting, given to honor the contributions of local author Maureen Wright. In bloom in the springtime, there are bright daffodils and tulips amongst all these plantings. Time and the spirit of community have shaped the garden into what it is today.

Since 2017, the garden has been in the hands of Janet Giggie, Board member and retired library director. She, too, was an integral part of bringing the garden into reality. She worked with Deb to get the plans for the library garden approved in 1999. She does have some helpers, and her husband, Cliff, is often found working alongside her. Her brilliant eye for color can be seen in the annuals that are scattered throughout the beds this season.

These days, when Deb Landy visits the Spalding Memorial Garden, she sees "an amazing place . . . the river view as the sun sets is one of my favorites." She loves that it has continued to be maintained to the present-day. She looks into the river and at the fish that can sometimes be seen swimming together in the water on lazy summer evenings. She likes to think about local history, which goes back to the time when Native Americans portaged there. When she sits on the now weather-worn benches that Rex Soper helped to install on the riverfront, she likes to muse on the peacefulness of this place, where the Natives took rest and held council. Evidence for these councils was found in the ashy remnants of fires, deer bones, and potsherds found when the ground was excavated for the Tioga Point Museum and Spalding Memorial Library in 1895.



Another 1928 photo of the grounds, looking Southward.

Later, the early white settlers maintained these grounds as a public square for decades before Jesse Spalding gifted the building to our town. The grounds along the river were populated with maple and oak trees around that time, some of which still grace us with their lovely and enduring shade to this day.

We hope you have enjoyed this expository tour of the history of the Spalding Memorial Garden. But you cannot have the full pleasure of it without taking a stroll through our grounds. So please do. Sit and take rest in one of the most peaceful public places you will find inside Athens Borough. If you see one of our volunteers working, remember to thank them for keeping up this beautiful space that is accessible for all to enjoy.

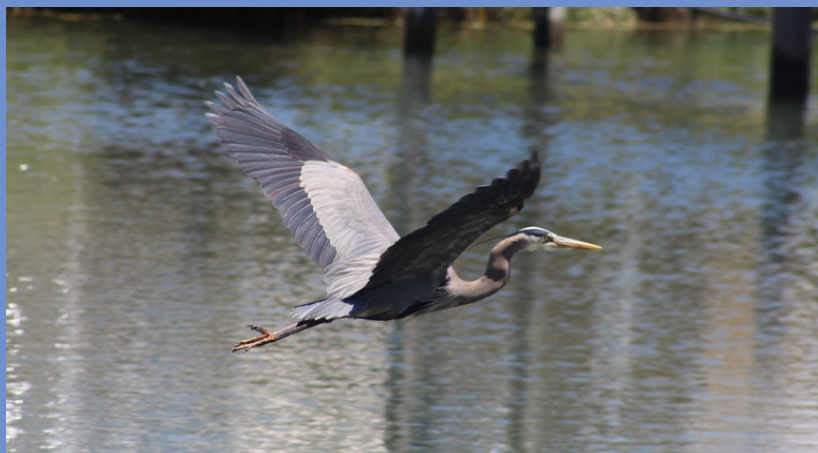


The first wedding in the Spalding Memorial Garden took place in June 2021.

Entries to the Teen Nature Photo Challenge



Gracelyn Laudermilch
8th Grade



Michael Gee
11th Grade



Bennett Smith
7th Grade



Hannah Spaulding
7th Grade



Nicholas
Hunsinger
7th Grade



Emma White
9th Grade

Thank you to all of the teens who participated in our Nature Photo Challenge! We are so relieved that we didn't have to choose a favorite photo because all of the entries were so beautiful! Each participant was entered into a drawing to win a gift card to Valley Snow Co, and the winner of the drawing was Corey Seck. Congratulations, Corey!



Corey Seck
7th Grade

*Some entries not represented because of Photographer Permissions

Middle Grade Fiction Book Review

Written by Miss Jess



Echo Mountain, by Lauren Wolk, is a work of historical fiction set in the wilderness of Maine during the Great Depression. Twelve year old Ellie and her family are forced to leave their home in town and start their lives over on Echo Mountain. When Ellie's father is hurt in an accident and falls into a coma, Ellie feels responsible and is determined to do whatever it takes to heal her father.

This journey leads her up the mountain to a healing woman known as "the hag." Along the way, she finds friendship, adventure, and courage. This story is recommended for ages 10-13, but the themes of resilience, interconnectedness, and healing may make it appealing to adult readers as well. I was drawn in by the strong complex female characters and could not put this book down!

Library Hours

Mon-Thurs 12-3pm
and 4-7 pm

Fri 12pm-3pm

Saturday 12pm-3pm

Beginning July 5th we
will be returning to
pre-pandemic hours.

Monday-Thursday
Noon-8PM

Friday 9AM-3PM
(July and August)

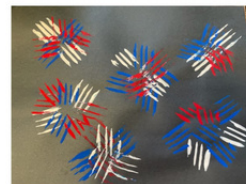
Saturday 9AM-1PM
(September-June) 9AM-
4PM.



Register for Summer Reading!

Log on to our website at www.spaldinglibrary.org and click on "Reading Programs." Create your own avatar, unlock games and missions, log your reading time to earn free books and cool prizes from the treasure box, and participate in weekly drawings for free snow cones and ice cream cones! (If you prefer to use a paper reading log, just stop in at the library!)

Patriotic Craft Kits



Each craft kit contains the supplies to make a fork firework painting and a beaded necklace. Call the library at (570)888-7117 to reserve a free kit for your child while supplies last!

If you or someone you know has
read a good book and wants to
share a review send an email to
mcampbell@spaldinglibrary.org!