

What's in....

The Stacks

February 2019

A Message from PPL's Exhibition & Program Team — Christina Bevilacqua & Angela DiVeglia

We're excited to announce our 2019 Exhibition & Program Series titled **41.8219° N, 71.4171° W**. It will examine themes of permanence and impermanence, mutability and immutability, and create intentional links between the two. Although the object of each study differs, both the exhibition and programs read the evolution of the urban landscape and the imprints left by human activity.

Buildings, especially civic spaces, are designed with aspiration and permanence in mind, and reflect, in ways both intentional and invisible, the civic moment of their conception. Fifty or 100 years after that civic moment has passed, what can we read in the architecture and siting of a building? How does it reflect its past as well as our present? As PPL undertakes a major self-reinvention for the 21st century, **41.8219° N, 71.4171° W** programming will look closely at PPL's physical continuities and changes over the past 120 years to see what the building and its siting can tell us about the history and future of Providence.

Beyond our building, the **41.8219° N, 71.4171° W** exhibition will focus on the histories of vacant places and open space in the city that PPL serves. Our eyes often pass over vacant space, rendering it all-but-invisible in the profuse urban landscape. What are the stories of these nothing-places, these overgrown lots, parking spaces, crumbling foundations, and fields, and what urban processes have left them currently unoccupied? Given our current building renovation project, this exhibition will take place primarily off-site, utilizing site-specific installations and a digital tour featuring maps, photographs, and information gleaned from PPL's Special Collections.

With PPL's building as a focal point, rippling outward, **41.8219° N, 71.4171° W** will explore how our environment illuminates the city's larger history and encourage people to look at their surroundings in ways that they haven't looked before. More info soon!

Conservator Society

Did You Know...

PPL's 1950s Empire Street building takes its provenance from the Toledo Lucas County Public Library, which was built in 1940. Unfortunately, due to budget restrictions, many interior and exterior details and refinements were not realized!

Upcoming Events...

SPRING event planned for May 30

Save the Date! We're planning a special Conservator Behind-the-Scenes Renovation Tour to be announced soon. We're also pleased to let you know that our speaker for this program will be author, historian and educator Taylor M. Polites (a PPL Alum—see reverse) talking about the history of the downtown area, including the Library's location.

Look for your invitation in the mail soon and please feel free to invite a friend!

2019 Wine Gala set for Friday, May 10

You won't want to miss this extra-special *Savor the Story* — a journey through the vineyards of America!

We expect this event to sell out early as we will be presenting Rhode Island's own Senator Jack Reed with PPL's highest honor — *The Enlightenment Award* — and announcing that we will be recognizing Senator Reed's longtime support of and advocacy for public libraries by formally naming PPL's new Information Commons the **Reed Information Commons**.

SAVOR the Story

PPL invites you to celebrate this announcement and be among the first to join the *Reed Commons Founders Circle* — a special group helping to make the Reed Information Commons a reality. We can't imagine a more fitting tribute to Senator Reed, who has dedicated himself throughout his career to the betterment and growth of not only our state's but our entire nation's libraries, and we hope you will agree!



For sponsorship opportunities or to reserve your tickets early, which we recommend, please contact

Erica Busillo Adams at ebusilloadams@provlib.org or (732)-742-7757.



PPL Alum Spotlight

Thanks to your generosity as a Conservator, individuals from all walks of life have experiences at PPL that exemplify the difference the Library makes in our community. We are thrilled to share these stories of success and achievement and to demonstrate the incredible impact you are making as a member of the Conservator Society. You make these alum stories possible!

Taylor Polites — Finding History and Community

I come to research in PPL's special collections and reference areas on a regular basis. I have found not only history but community. I have also made many friends and connections through my time and investigations at PPL. The library is an important heart of this community — reminding us of where we have been and who we are. I have discovered worlds and been able to share those worlds with others. When I talk about the projects and discoveries I have made at and through PPL with others, I love to see that moment when their eyes go wide and their mouths open — they are struck with wonderment at the past — and so am I!



"The friendships I've made with the collections staff at PPL are some of my most valued relationships." — Taylor Polites

Kate Wells (Rhode Island Collections Curator) has become a dear friend and has from the beginning been a welcoming, professional, insightful resource to navigate PPL's collections. Jordan Goffin (Head Collections Curator) has been equally welcoming and supportive with his insight and friendship — and he

offered me the opportunity to create a historical booklet on the Providence Armory that has become an entry point for me into all sorts of research and storytelling. I am profoundly grateful to these two and many others at PPL.

PPL's 2019 Creative Fellow will be working in the field of creative writing!

We are pleased to introduce **Laura Brown-Lavoie**, a farmer and a poet, as our 2019 Creative Fellow. We love that her writing is vibrant, gutsy, and deeply rooted in place. As someone who grows food in a formerly vacant city lot, she has a unique perspective on pre- and post-industrial ecology, as well as the literal and figurative archaeology involved in research, writing, uncovering history, and creating new work (and new vegetables).

Laura is doing research in Special Collections in preparation for her presentation during this year's Exhibition & Programs Series.

Meet our Technology & Information Services Director Beatrice Pulliam

Beatrice Pulliam joined PPL as our Technology Director in 2014 and became our Director of Technology & Information Services in 2015. She came to us from the Providence College Library where she was Head of Technology and Access for six years. Beatrice completed her MS in Library and Information Science at Simmons College in Boston. She has led the integration of our Reference and Circulation departments into Information Services and is also the coordinator of the Statewide Reference Resource Center of Rhode Island (SRRC).



Beatrice also leads our digitization and online initiatives, including the expansion of **ProvlibDigital.org**, our digital repository, hosting local, cultural heritage collections, as well as our recent **provlib.org** redesign. In addition to working with PPL's Information Services team and other staff to reimagine improved services and programs in our new service and program spaces, Beatrice oversees the upgrade of PPL's networking and data infrastructure. She and her team also offer workshops on computer basics, business, using online resources, and other topics. Contact Beatrice at beatrice@provlib.org or 455-8101.

Development News...

Introducing PPL Friends

PPL's Development office recently initiated a Friends Committee and a guiding Steering Committee, made up of PPL users and community members and PPL staff. The PPL Friends Committee is a group of volunteers dedicated to supporting the Library's work and mission through community ambassadorship/outreach, volunteer recruitment, signature events, and fundraising support.

Kick-off Benefit Planned

To introduce the PPL Friends to the greater Providence community, we've planned a kick-off benefit at Flatbread Company on Thayer St. **On Tuesday, April 9 from 6 - 9 pm**, Flatbread will be donating a portion of their sales to PPL, and current Friends will be sharing their library stories in addition to encouraging attendees to get involved. We're thrilled at the opportunity to share PPL's work with our community and we hope you will join us! To learn more about joining the Friends Committee, contact Kilian Webster at kwebster@provlib.org or 401-455-8071.

Welcome New & Returning Conservators!

Welcome to our newest Conservators Sally McDonald Willis & Ron Willis, Mary Cronin & Scott Guthrey and Dr. & Mrs. Sundaresan Sambandam! And, welcome back Gloria Hall!