

More Spring Programs

From a Child's Point of View

On Tuesday, May 7 at 7:30 p.m., writer Dvora Jonas will present *From a Child's Point of View: Surreal Tales of Life and Love*. During the program, Jonas will read aloud several short stories and then will use the stories to spark audience discussion about life values.

Jonas started writing stories 12 years ago. The stories would wake her up at night and insist on being written down, so she became a writer in order to get a good night's sleep!

Jonas, the daughter of eastern European Jewish immigrants, spent a year in Israel and 13 years in a Buddhist monastery in San Francisco. After working in a number of fields, she settled on pre-school teaching and writing as a way to pass on such wisdom as she has acquired in her life journey.

This program is free, open to everyone, and is particularly recommended for inter-generational audiences. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Medford Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Gold of Ancient Afghanistan

A Slide Lecture by Dr. Elena Neva

Tuesday, April 23

6:30 p.m.

A fascinating look at some of the more than the 20,000 artifacts uncovered in 1978 at Tillya Tepe in the plains of Northern Afghanistan.

Don't miss it!

Susanna Rowson

On Thursday, May 16 at 7:00 p.m., the Friends of the Medford Public Library will present actress Jessa Piaia in performance as *Susanna Rowson: A Federal Era Woman*.



Susanna Haswell Rowson (1764-1824) was an educator and best-selling writer in the early decades of the 19th century. In 1797 she founded the Academy for Young Ladies in downtown Boston, and in 1800 moved the school to Medford, where the Academy students included the daughters of many notable Medford families.

Rowson was born in 1764 in Portsmouth, England, and came to America at the age of 5. During the Revolutionary War, the family was placed under house arrest and then deported to England. Following their return, Rowson began to write autobiographical novels, and, after her marriage to actor William Rowson, joined him on stage with a British traveling theatre company. In 1795 the pair joined the Federal Street Theater in Boston. When the theatre went bankrupt after the first season, Rowson opened the Academy for Young Ladies which she ran until her death in 1824.

In addition to several education texts, Rowson was the author of a number of novels including *Charlotte Temple (1791)* which was a best-seller for the time, printed in 200 editions. She also wrote a number of plays, several volumes of poetry, composed lyrics for sacred and popular songs and was asked to write the official eulogy for George Washington.

Jessa Piaia, who appeared at the Medford Public Library as Amelia Earhart in January 2001, studied performance at London's Oval House Theatre. She has received acclaim and for using "solid research, compelling writing, artistry to bring off a one-woman show, perhaps the most difficult kind of acting challenge." Piaia uses drama to reveal the accomplishments, struggles, and contributions of women to American history. She performs at educational institutions, museums, libraries, and historical organizations throughout New England.

Although considered "First Lady of Letters" in her day, Rowson is not as well known as some of her Revolutionary Era contemporaries. This performance offers a fascinating look at the life and accomplishments of a remarkable and talented woman. Don't miss it! This program is free, open to everyone, and no pre-registration is required.