

New Children's Wing is fruit of labor by many

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOEETTER

The Children's Wing stands as an obvious monument to what the annual auction and continual community support can do for the Back Mountain Memorial Library. This year marks its first appearance at the auction.

With more room for books, a separate area for story hour and computers, the new wing provides Back Mountain children with a spacious place they can call their own.

Marilyn Rudolph, children's librarian, is excited about all the opportunities the addition provides. "It's a more adequate study area. The atmosphere is more conducive to the enjoyment of looking at books and reading in this library," she said.

Rudolph said new space is loved by everyone, young and old. "The response has been wonderful. Everyone is pleased. It's bright, cheery and cool in here. Plus, there is a great deal more room," she said. "The children love their special chairs (which were given to the library by local grandmothers)."

The room was dedicated to Rudolph, who has been with the library for 29 years, beginning when it was in its original building on Main Street.

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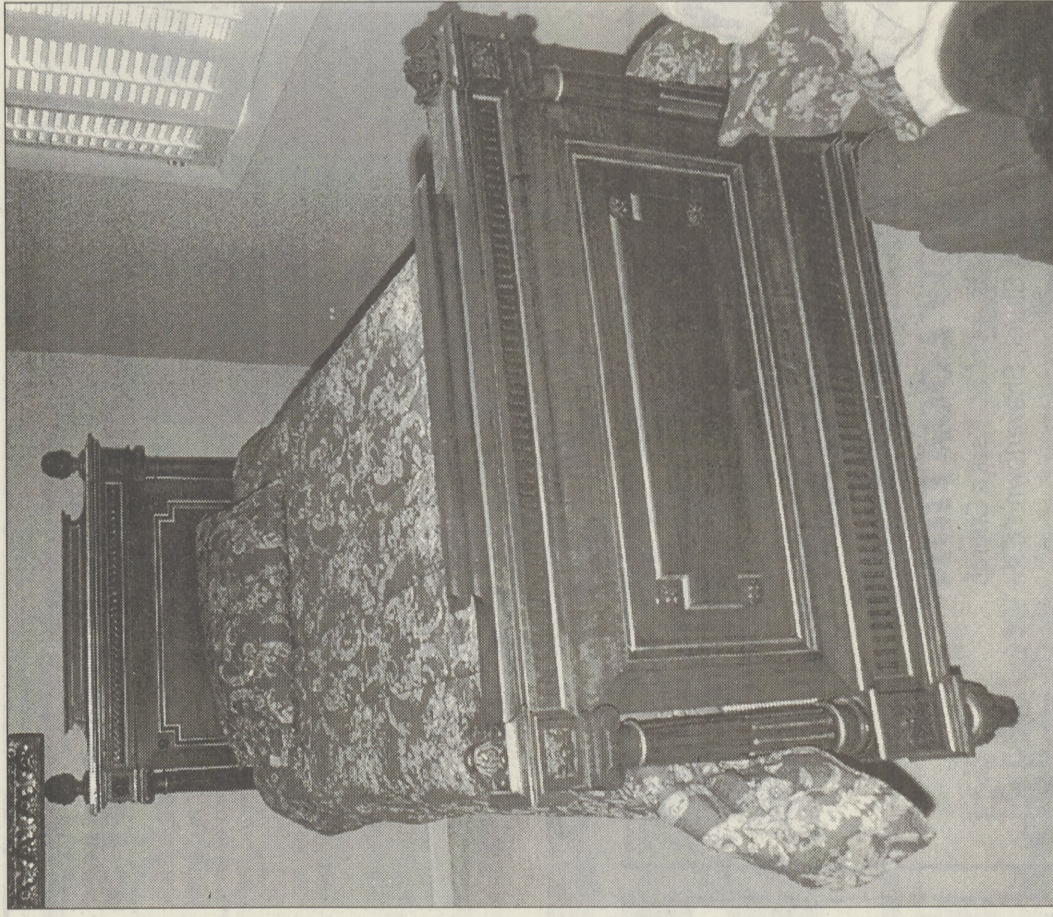
Marilyn Rudolph
Children's librarian

"This is one of the most thrilling things that has happened in my career with the Back Mountain library. I hoped and wished for this for many years," Rudolph said. "Many families with little children have moved here. They deserve and should have a library room that's conducive to reading."

Now that books are easier to find, computer programs are too. With five new terminals complete with programs for pre-school through sixth grade, the library is staying up with technology in education.

"The programs will be literature based and help the children learn to read," said Rudolph. Encyclopedias and non-fiction programs will also be available.

"The computers are very popular. One little girl went away weeping because she couldn't play and had to leave," said Rudolph.



Large furniture pieces like this ornate bed can go for high or low prices, depending on who is bidding.

New antiques chairperson rises to the challenge

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOEETTER

Although filling Ernie Ashbridge's shoes is not an easy task, Karen Boback of Harveys Lake is certainly holding her own as the new antiques chairperson. With her mentor's blessing, Boback is making some changes.

This year, not only will there be a variety of beautiful antiques from different eras, but also collectibles and curiosities. Boback chose to broaden the scope of the booth because it does include items that, although not antique, may be just as collectible and unique. "It's such a major challenge. I'm trying to accumulate articles that the public will want to bid on," she said. "If I have a question or concern he (Ashbridge) is just a phone call away. I consider him a mentor and a friend."

Boback spends 15 to 20 hours a week at estate sales, auctions and flea markets looking for and purchasing items that will please the eye and help the library.

Such items include a Hooster cabinet, jelly cupboards, china cabinets, two Wedgewood lamps with shades painted by local artist Helen Lamb, and a Royal Doulton mug.

A necessary skill is purchasing items that a range of people will like. Although Boback has been collecting antiques for 25 years, she most enjoys Victorian era items and may not know what are desirable pieces for other eras. So, she consults people who collect other antique items, such as primitives or art deco.

"It's everything I thought it would be, plus more."

Karen Boback
Antiques chairperson



Karen Boback, surrounded by the items she has chosen for the auction.

New antiques chairperson rises to the challenge

This year, in addition to the traditional large pieces of furniture, there will be a good number of "smalls." "Smalls" include items such as magazine racks or small tables. The barn is bursting with everything from bedroom sets to tiny trinkets.

Boback has been on the library's board for seven years and co-chaired the antique booth with three other women in 1993. She has been visiting the library since high school when her family moved to the Back Mountain from Scranton. "This is a way to give back," she said.

It's not an easy job. Working late nights hauling heavy furniture across the storage room and trying to organize items to go over the block can take a lot out of you.

"It's everything I thought it would be, plus more," she said, as she made some final adjustments to the room. "I'm elated with the feedback from the community I've gotten. It's truly been a pleasure to work with all the people in the community."

She mentions Drew Novak, a new volunteer, for rewiring, repairing and refinishing many of the items. Maryann Daily, of the Nearly Old booth, also lent her talents to Boback. "I gave her an item I picked up for \$1 and she made it an attractive accent piece to go over the block," explained Boback, who confided that she has a lot of helpful friends.


You can expect to see Boback and the rest of the volunteers at the auction. "I'll be out there bidding too," said Boback, with a laugh.



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