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# The Leader

(/)  
Monday, October 28, 2019

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## Library cabinet reveals message from builder Bob Boardman



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Bob Boardman built this poetry cabinet for the Port Townsend Public Library in 1991. On the back, he transcribed a poem by James Broughton, a poet and filmmaker who lived in Port Townsend at the end of his life. Broughton died in 1999, Boardman in 2010. Their writings live on. Photo by Nicholas Johnson



Posted Tuesday, July 14, 2015 8:00 pm

### By Robin Dudley of the Leader

Tucked into an alcove in the entryway at the Port Townsend Public Library is a slim cabinet, with tall front legs carved in the shape of a pen, on the left, and a pencil, on the right, with a curving line issuing from its ebony "tip."

It's a poetry display case. There are currently seven poems behind the glass face, lit from within by an unseen electric bulb, letterpress-printed by North Press.

"It's always going to be a venue for local writers and poets. That's what the case was created for," said Keith Darrock, the facility's technical services librarian.

Bob Boardman, a woodworker, musician, writer and nurse, built the case for the library in 1991, on behalf of the Port Townsend Arts Commission. A former Jefferson County resident, Boardman was a Clallam County resident when he died in October 2010 after he was attacked and gored by a mountain goat in Olympic National Park.

When Darrock and volunteer contractor Ian Keith moved the poetry case during the recent library renovation, they discovered some writing on the back – an inscription scrawled in pencil by Boardman.

It reads, "This cabinet was built by Bob Boardman for the Port Townsend Arts Commission to display poetry – It will be installed at the Library tomorrow April 1, 1991 – since this is both spring and a time of intense change for our town I thought I'd put a favorite poem here – a time capsule of sorts."

The poem he transcribed onto the wood is "A Litany for the Trees" by James Broughton, a poet and filmmaker who died in Port Townsend in 1999. This is what Boardman's pencil wrote:

Hearken, all saplings of arboreal bloom  
who aim to grow upright crowned with green.  
Sing this credo to the shriek of the chainsaw.  
Sing this credo to the wind and the rain.  
I believe in and I stand up for  
the knotty roots of nature  
the tangled stems of truth  
the intricate branches of wisdom  
the boundless leaves of time  
the reckless seeds of creation  
and the flowering resurrections of the spring.  
Sing this credo to the shriek of the chainsaw.  
Sing this credo till the day the sap dies.  
- James Broughton"

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