

Media release

Ottawa school fundraiser discovers rare books

Volunteers at Rockcliffe Park Public School Book Fair find 232-year-old edition of Paradise Lost among other finds

November 4, 2015, Ottawa, Canada—The Rockcliffe Park Public School (RPPS) Book Fair collects more than 50,000 books donated throughout the year. This past week, scores of dedicated volunteers have been doggedly unpacking, sorting, shelving and pricing these gently used titles in preparation for the annual three-day sale. Every year holds some curiosities, but 2015's crop has turned out to be particularly—potentially—rich for the school's biggest fundraiser.

Volunteers discovered not one but three truly antique titles last week, including a volume of Persian poetry published in 1883, and a lovely French treatise on the subject of tulips from 1765. The third is an astonishing edition of John Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost* printed in 1783.

"A new Edition, carefully corrected."

Volunteer Ian MacKay conducted preliminary research about the Milton tome. From the book's title page—which describes the contents as "A new Edition, carefully corrected." — MacKay learned that the book was printed by Gottlob Richter in Altenburg (in what is now central Germany). The classic of blank verse, originally published in 1667, is thought to be Richter's first foray into printing English literature.

"The book is in good shape," says MacKay, "with some staining and offsetting, which is to be expected for a 232-year-old book. We also found a single turquoise ribbon between pages 10 and 11." (See photos attached below.)

The Book Fair committee is seeking advice from rare book experts but has not yet commented on what the titles may be worth. Book Fair officials have found secure storage for the volumes until they can be properly assessed—with luck, before the sale begins Friday, November 6.

Viewing by donation

Prospective bidders can contact RPPS Book Fair representatives to register their interest and arrange a viewing. In order to encourage only serious inquiries for purchase, viewings will be by donation. The donations made by the winning bidders will be subtracted from the eventual purchase price.

--- ENDS ---

About RPPS Book Fair

Book Fair was started in 1961 to promote the love of reading in children and to raise funds for the Rockcliffe Park Public School library. It's grown into a beloved community celebration, drawing thousands of visitors who purchase tens of thousands of books each year.

Proceeds from Book Fair go to support the literacy program and other initiatives at Rockcliffe Park Public School. Book Fair also provides annual grants to other Ottawa area schools to support their literacy programs. www.rockcliffeparkbookfair.com @RPPSBookFair

RPPS Book Fair 2015 hours of operation

Friday, November 6 – 10am–9PM

Saturday, November 7 – 10am–6pm

Sunday, November 8 – 11am–5pm

Talk to us

Contact Adrienne Blair, Communications Coordinator, RPPS Book Fair: adrienne@adrienneblair.ca or 613.796.7558



MILTON
PARADISE
LOST.

PARADISE LOST

A P O E M,

IN TWELVE BOOKS

WRITTEN BY

JOHN MILTON.

A new Edition, carefully corrected.

Τον πέρι Μῶσ' ἐφίλησε, δίδε δ' ἀγαθόν τε, κακόν τε,
Ὀφθαλμῶν μὲν ἄμερσε, δίδε δ' ἠόσταν αἰοθήν.

HOMER Odyss. Θ.



AL TENBURGH,
printed and sold by RICHTER,
1783.