

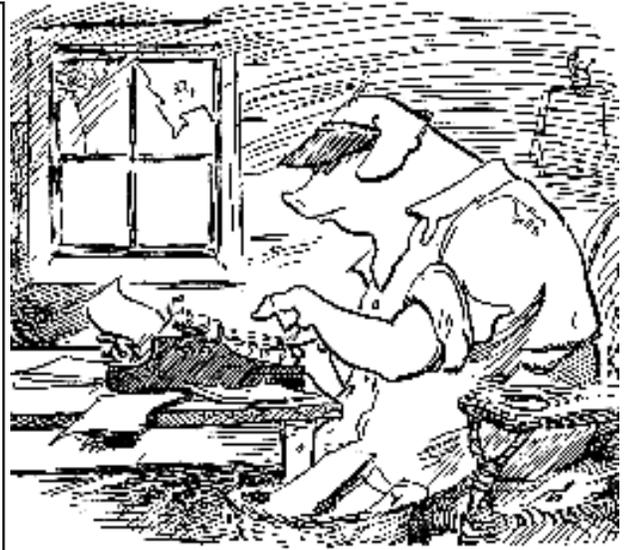
THE BEAN HOME NEWSLETTER

Dedicated to the memory of our friend, Walter R. Brooks

Vol. 25, No. 3

Summer 2018

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Who says pigs can't fly?

Freddy's Headed for Rochester! And Seneca Falls!



Rochester skyline photo courtesy of Patty Ulrich Singer

"I guess I don't ever want to fly," said Freddy aboard a runaway bike in *Freddy the Politician* (1939). But by *Perilous Adventure* (1942) he was ballooning, by *Pilot* (1952) he was flying his own plane, and not long after that he graduated to space ships and flying saucers!

This fall, the pig will set a course for two upstate New York locations.

From mid-September to mid-October, he'll be featured in an exhibit in the Children's Center at the Rochester (NY) Central Library, 115 South Avenue. The exhibit will introduce Freddy and his Bean barnyard friends, explain the city's connections to author Walter R.

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Freddy to Rochester, Seneca Falls

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Brooks and mentions in the Freddy books themselves, spread the word about Friends of Freddy and feature various bits of Freddyabilia.

On Saturday, October 6 at 1 pm, Michael Cart – literally the man who wrote the book on Walter R. Brooks (*Talking Animals and Others*, The Overlook Press, 2009) – will do a presentation called “Freddy Goes to Rochester” about Brooks, who lived at two Rochester addresses and attended University of Rochester. The talk will be held at the Kusler-Cox Auditorium on the 3rd Floor of the Rundel Memorial Building, 115 South Avenue. (*Note: the library and the Rundel have the same street address but are located across the street from each other and connected by a tunnel.*)

The next day – Sunday, October 7 – members of the Friends of Freddy will gather at The Gould Hotel in Seneca Falls for their convention, taking advantage of the Columbus Day holiday with events scheduled for most of Sunday, all of Monday and a business meeting on Tuesday morning. (We guarantee you’ll have a better time with us than you’d have at school or the office if you rushed back.)

Among preliminary program highlights:

- Why A Sunbonnet and Curls? (A look at Freddy’s sartorial choices)
- An Appreciation of Jinx (Does the sidekick live up to his name?)
- Suffragettes and Mrs. Bean (Ideal for the site of the first Women’s Convention)
- The Great *Dragon* Debate (Debating the merits of the final book in the series)
- Just Blame Canada: A Senate Inquiry into Canuck-Bashing in the Freddy Books (Eh?)
- *Freddy Goes Camping* (Brought to life with amazing special effects!)
- What Sorts of Kids Like Freddy Books? (Beyond a bunch of big kids, that is)
- Females In Freddy’s World (Including Mrs. Wiggins, President of the First Animal Republic)
- The Haudensaunee of Central NY and Talking Animals (Local Native Americans and friends)
- Bean Barnyard Boo-Boos and Faded Phaetons (Odd stuff from the texts)

- The Uncollectable Poems of Freddy the Pig (Lots of terrible rhymes, at least if we have the times)
- plus a banquet, a business meeting and more!

For more information, see <http://freddythepig.com/2018-freddy-convention-2>. And if you’d like to book a room at The Gould, call 877-788-4010. Room rates include a continental breakfast. The convention itself is free to members but banquet tickets will be sold separately (and will probably run between \$30-35). — R. C.

Hats off to Rochester member John Rhoades for getting the ball rolling for the talk and exhibit! ☺

The *Bean Home Newsletter* is published quarterly by the Friends of Freddy, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation and perpetuation of the writings of Walter R. Brooks and his literary alter ego, Freddy the Pig. Print memberships are \$25 for two years or \$45 for four. Electronic memberships are \$9.50 for two years or \$18 for four. (US funds only, please.) Overseas members please add \$12 additional for airmail delivery. Please make your check or money order payable to Friends of Freddy and send it to the official address given below.

Address changes may be sent to either the email or postal FoF address.

Newsletter submissions should be sent to Michael Cart at the address below.

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From the Editor

Brooks and Rochester

by Michael Cart



Our friend Walter R. Brooks was a peripatetic sort. Born in Rome, New York, on January 9, 1886, he attended local schools until, at age fifteen, he was sent to a military prep school, the Mohegan Lake Academy, in Peekskill, New York. He went on to attend medical school in New York City, worked in Utica, lived in Washington, DC, and then moved to Manhattan's Greenwich Village, where he lived until 1948, when he relocated to Roxbury, New York, a charming village in the Catskills. Let's see: Rome, Peekskill, New York City, Washington, D. C. Greenwich Village, Roxbury -- what am I forgetting? Oh, **Rochester**, of course. His connection to America's first boomtown (see Wikipedia) began before he was born when his maternal grandfather Samuel B. Stevens' older brother by seven years, John C. Stevens, emigrated from Boston to Rochester, where he settled in the early 1820s. He – and his family – lived there until his death in 1886, the year of Walter's birth. Speaking of Walter, it's important to know, in this connection, that he and his older sister Elsie were orphans of sorts. Their father died when Walter was only four and his sister, twelve. Their mother died in 1901 when Walter was 15 and Elsie, 23. A month after their mother's death, Elsie was married. That secured her future but what was to become of her brother, the newly parentless boy? The answer was not long in coming: he would be sent to boarding school, the Mohegan Lake Academy (see above) but when he graduated from there in 1904, the same question posed itself. What to do with him now? This time the answer was straightforward: no more military school; instead, he would move to Rochester to live with Elsie and her husband, Dr. William Perrin. Elsie's marriage to a Rochester resident is evidence that the Brooks Family were no strangers to that city, often visiting John C.'s family. It was also in Rochester that Walter met his lifelong friend Frances Rufus Bellamy around 1903. But to return to Dr. Perrin: he was a distinguished homeopathic doctor, who was on the faculty of the University of Rochester. He went on to become – from 1921-1941 -- Director of the Genesee Hospital (formerly the Rochester Homeopathic Hospital where he had interned). He would later serve as a consultant to both this hospital and the University of Rochester Medical School.

Walter was now 18 and had spent many of his holiday breaks from school in Rochester, so he was doubly familiar with the city

when he moved there. He was also only too familiar as well with his brother-in-law with whom he had, shall we say, a rocky relationship. The genesis of this may have been a 1903 letter from Perrin: "Hell of a letter from Will," Walter wrote in his journal. "Long lecture." The situation wasn't helped by another letter Perrin sent in 1904, this one to Walter's Aunt Rhoda complaining about Walter's misbehavior at school. (Walter sheepishly admitted that he had "raised hell" while there.) Acidly calling Perrin "Brother Bill," thereafter, Walter enjoyed exasperating the man. When he was 15, for example, he wrote in his journal, "I smoke in the house now. Great fun to watch Will sometimes." Later he would enjoy trying to spoil Dr. Perrin's billiard games, moving suddenly when the doctor was lining up his shots. Some years after that Walter would paint a satirical watercolor portrait of Dr. Perrin on horseback. He irrepressibly titled it "La Perrine Goeth Down to Ye Black Water" and signed it "Watteau Brooks."

Whatever the nature of their relationship, the older man (by ten years) acted in loco parentis and determined that Walter, who wanted to go to Hobart College in New York's Finger Lakes region, should, instead, attend the University of Rochester. After two years there, it was declared by the good doctor that Walter should follow in his footsteps and accordingly sent him to New York City to attend the New York Homeopathic Medical College. Walter lasted there for two years and then, exacting his, as it were, revenge, he dropped out, turned his back on medicine, and returned to Rochester to marry Anne Shepard. Many years later Walter would write, "My family" (Dr. Perrin) "had somehow taken it for granted I should become a doctor, but I was interested in a lot of other things, too. Maybe I

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Walter R. Brooks signing Freddy books c. 1948.

Brooks and Rochester

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would have kept on with medicine but I was particularly interested in a girl in Rochester, which was a long way from New York. So I abandoned medicine and Anne Shepard and I were married the next year” (on January 22, 1909).

Anne Mary Shepard had been born in Rochester on December 30, 1885. Her parents were Alice Judson and Frank E. Shepard, who had worked as a clerk, cashier, and salesman until he went to work for the Rochester Lead Works in 1892. As for Anne, at the time of her marriage, she was working as a teacher (“a very strict one,” Walter’s second wife Dorothy recalled).

The newlyweds were, respectively, 23 years of age (Walter) and 24 (Anne) when they settled at 303 Kenwood Avenue in Rochester where they lived for a year before Walter took a job at an advertising agency in Utica. The job lasted for only a year when Walter and Anne moved back to Rochester where they then lived at 76 Rugby Avenue. It was now 1911 and the two would continue to live in Rochester until 1918 when Walter went to work for the American Red Cross and the couple moved to Washington, D.C.

It was in Rochester, however, that Walter became a writer publishing his first work, “Haunted,” a sonnet, in 1915 in the celebrated literary magazine *The Century*. Later that same year he published his first short story, “Harden’s Chance,” in *Forum* magazine. His second, also written in Rochester was “The Elopement,” published in 1916 in a pulp magazine called *Breezy Stories*. Interestingly, it was a collaborative effort with his friend Bellamy. The two adopted the pseudonym Aeneas B. Hooker for their first collaboration. Several more would follow but by then Walter had abandoned Rochester for his new career in Washington, D. C.

Gone but not forgotten, for Rochester would appear some ten times in Walter’s famous series of Freddy the Pig books. For the record, they are:

Freddy Goes to Florida, in which a character’s daughter lives in Rochester (one mention)

Freddy and the Perilous Adventure, in which Freddy pilots a hot air balloon over the city (one mention)

Freddy and the Popynjay, in which the milliner Miss Peebles tells Freddy, “I’ve sold twenty hats this morning and I’ve had phone orders from as far away as Rochester.” (one mention)

Freddy and the Baseball Team from Mars, in which the evil Mr. Anderson plots a jewel theft in Rochester (6 mentions)

Freddy and the Flying Saucer Plans, in which Mr. Bean’s Uncle Ben, fleeing spies, drives through Rochester (one mention)

Though not mentioned in Walter’s writings, he would continue to have a personal connection with Rochester for the rest of his life. Though his sister, Elsie, died in 1948, Brother Bill survived for another ten years, ironically dying in 1958, the same year as Walter.

It’s appropriate, therefore, that Walter’s creation, Freddy the pig, should come to Rochester in the form of an exhibit at the Public Library and a lecture by Brooks’s biographer and former Friends of Freddy President Michael Cart. The free, public lecture will take place on Saturday, October 6th in the Rundel Memorial Building, 115 South Avenue.

See you there! 🐷

In Memoriam: Pete Halpern



Peter (Pete) Halpern, a longtime Friend of Freddy, passed away on June 12th at the age of 83. He was the husband of Diana (Collins) Halpern, Walter’s stepdaughter, thus becoming Walter’s step-son-in-law. Pete and Diana were regular guests at Freddycons for many years.

Pete was born on April 17, 1935 in Kingston, New York. He attended the Carson Long Military Institute and graduated from Margaretville (New York) Central High School in 1953. He and Diana were married on September 1, 1956 and moved to New Mexico in 1976.

Pete shared many stories about Walter over the years. One that sticks in mind has to do with Walter’s notorious frugality. According to Pete, Walter kept the thermostat so low in the wintertime that he fashioned a cloak (Pete called it “a monk’s robe”) from a blanket and wore it around the house to keep warm. (In the same vein, Walter’s widow Dorothy once recalled that Walter insisted she darn the darns on his socks!).

A history buff, Pete was also a crossword puzzle addict and sports fan.

He is missed. 🐷

The Formation of the First Animal Republic

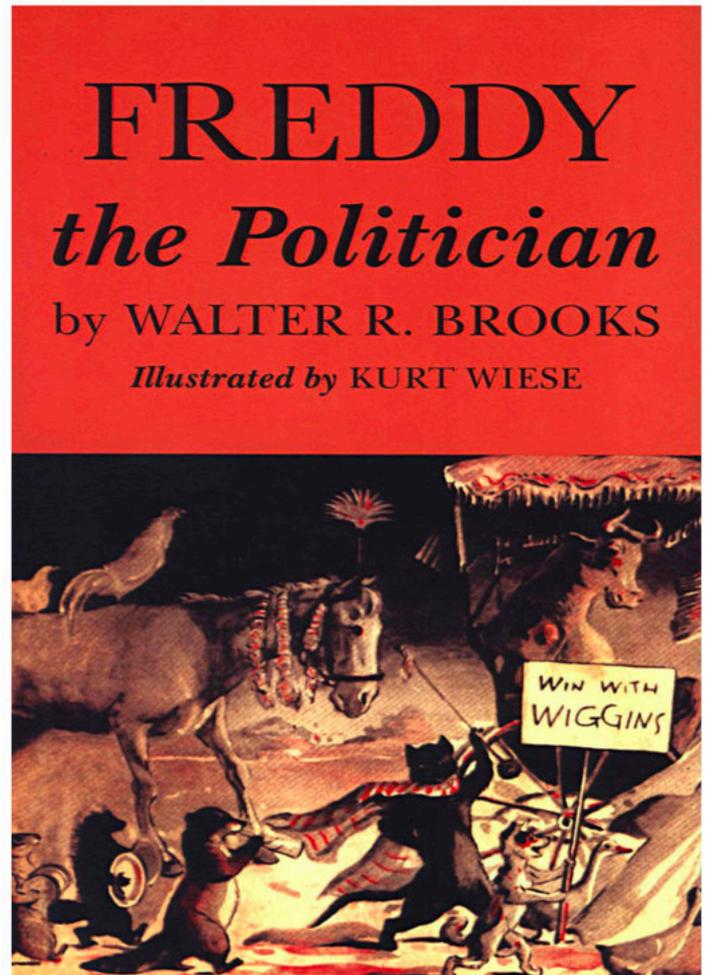
by Alice Tracy

Because Seneca Falls was the site of the first women's rights convention, it seems fitting that leading up to our fall convention there, we discuss Mrs. Wiggins' election as president of the First Animal Republic. Originally titled *Wiggins for President*, Michael Cart has called the book now known as *Freddy the Politician*, "probably the quintessential Freddy book, for its humor, theme and characterizations." In this book, published in 1939, the animals learn some important lessons about friendship and what it means to be a responsible citizen when they find their newly formed republic threatened by totalitarian forces.

The challenge to their way of life begins, symbolically, with the Bean farmhouse being buffeted by a terrible storm. Jinx, Robert, Georgie and the mice are gathered around the kitchen stove when the wind causes a shutter to bang against the house. Mr. Bean comes down stairs and fixes the shutter, but as he leaves the kitchen he says, "My gracious, if I can't count on you to see to a little thing like that, how could I go off to Europe all summer like Mrs. Bean wants me to, and leave you in charge of the farm?"

The animals, talking in the kitchen, recognize that Mr. Bean is right. They are all too willing to let someone else be responsible for banging shutters and all kinds of other responsibilities. They determine the farm needs to have one animal in charge of making certain the work gets done—in short, the farm needs a president! The question then becomes, how to hold an election. And the very next question is what to do about money, because farmers need to know how to handle money. Politics and money, it seems, are inextricably linked, even on the farm.

The answers arrive almost immediately. The storm picks up strength and forces the front door open and John Quincy Adams, woodpecker, is blown into the room. In the morning, the animals learn that the storm has brought John Quincy all the way from Washington, D.C. where he lives in a sycamore on the White House lawn. Notably, when Mrs. Bean sees him, she shoos the animals outside, saying, ". . . my kitchen's no place for a woodpecker." Unfortunately, the animals lack Mrs. Bean's instinct for identifying a troublemaker. Instead, they find his background and his claims of experience so impressive, within days they make John Quincy Adams, this complete outsider, president of the First Animal Bank.



Of course, the animals might be excused for thinking that the bank would remain under their control since Jinx is Treasurer and Freddy Secretary, but the situation rapidly deteriorates. Jinx would rather chase butterflies than sit in the bank all day, and Freddy has trouble making it to work on time. The one morning he does, he comes on his bicycle, and forgetting how to brake, has picked up so much speed that he crashes into the side of the bank and sails through the open window, barely missing John Quincy, his father, Grover, and son, X, who have arrived from Washington. The woodpeckers, not surprisingly, look down their very long noses, er, beaks, at him.

Are the woodpeckers motivated by concern over the carefree approach of the Bean animals? Do they want to ensure that the farm is well-run while Mr. and Mrs. Bean are away? Or do they have a more nefarious motive? Mr. Bean tells the animals they must take the "Adams" in John Quincy's name off the sign for the bank because it will appear to others that he is "pretending to be the president." Could that be a clue? Is it power the woodpeckers are after? Perhaps John Quincy does want to be president! Or, taking the long view like the president he is named after, to be the son of the president and then the president. And why did Brooks choose woodpeckers for the role of interlopers? Certainly, their long beaks and incessant drilling into wood suggest the ability to destroy those symbols of the Bean Farm: the house and the barn. Freddy and most of the other

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Formation of the First Animal Republic

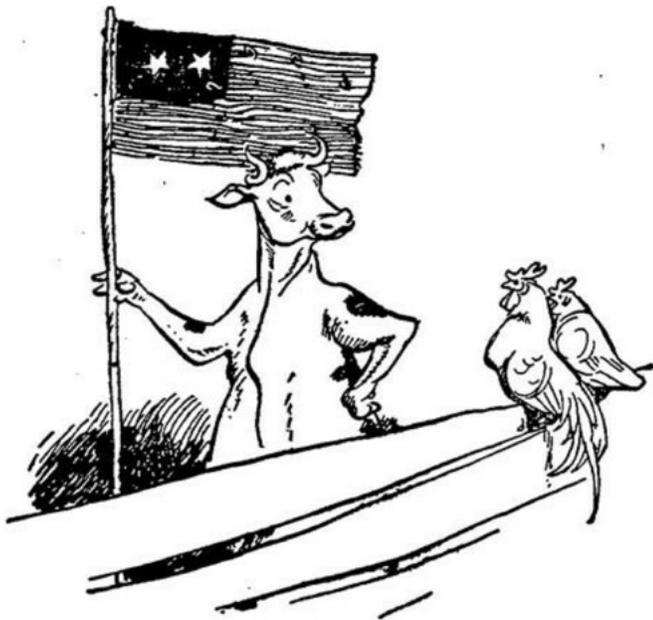
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animals, though, are happy to have these industrious visitors do the tedious work of the bank. With the exception of John, the fox, they think the woodpeckers are “all right.”

Without any checks on their behavior, the woodpeckers move rapidly to fill the vacuum left by the animals’ casual approach to their responsibilities. Once Jinx has resigned, they only need to rid themselves of Freddy in order to have total control over the bank. And it seems they have learned from the power brokers of Washington, D.C., because they manage to exclude Freddy through a parliamentary trick. They pass a rule that all board meetings will be held in the vault; and only after he votes for it, does Freddy realize he cannot fit in the tunnel leading to the vault. To compensate, the woodpeckers make him 16th vice president.

Freddy still remains largely unconcerned about John Quincy and his father, Grover. He decides not to worry about the bank, and turns his attention to the election. Here is where the animals make their other key mistake. They are so taken with the notion of holding an election, they don’t concern themselves at all with the fundamentals of democracy. They skip over the establishment of a constitution, and are then forced to allow everyone to vote, even the rats (who make a sudden reappearance on the farm after having been banished in *Freddy the Detective*).

Well, not quite everyone gets to vote. It is the “First Animal Republic,” but are all animals created equal? When Hank asks, “What about bugs?” Robert replies, “We can’t give bugs the vote. Ants and beetles and butterflies and — why, there’s millions of ‘em. It would take five years to count the votes.” “Yes, and suppose they all stuck together and voted alike,” said Emma, “Dear me, suppose we had one of those dreadful centipedes for president.” “That’s so,” said Freddy. “Bugs are out. Besides, this isn’t a bug republic. It’s a government of animals, by animals, and for animals. And birds of course,” he added with a nod to Charles. Bugs, apparently, have no political ambitions and none of them, not even the centipede, protests this decision. So the election comes down to two parties: animals and birds; but in the end, it comes down to friends vs. outsiders.



When everyone meets in the barn to nominate their candidates, John Quincy nominates his father. He says Grover, like many others on the farm, has “honesty, brains and the willingness to work,” but he also has experience. When Old Whibley mocks the woodpeckers, Simon stands up and says, “I gather from certain remarks that have been passed, that there is some objection to this candidate because he is a bird. Though I am an animal myself, this kind of jealousy seems to me petty and foolish. If a bird will make a better president, then I say, elect a bird. But, ladies and gentlemen, I suspect that we have not heard all the nominations yet. I have good reason to believe that a certain group of animals have come to this meeting secretly prepared to nominate a candidate, whom they have already elected in their own minds. I say nothing of the secrecy with which they have plotted to grasp the reins of government.”

Simon’s charge of secrecy sounds damning, because the animals did meet separately to determine the best candidate once they realized that the birds would mount an opposition, but Jinx jumps up and takes command. “Simon is right,” he shouted, “He’s a thief and a robber, as you all know, but he’s right for once. We have selected a candidate and we are sure that the candidate will be elected. Our red-headed, bug-eating friend has told you that experience is what we want. For once, he’s right too. That is what we want. But what kind of experience? . . . the kind of experience we want is not experience in running a big nation, but experience in running a farm. And another point: we want someone we know — not a stranger. I nominate Mrs. Wiggins.”

Freddy tells himself that the election will be a “walk-over for Wiggins’ and that “Grover hasn’t a chance, not even if the chickens all go over to him.,” but he has not reckoned on Grover’s experience as a politician. Grover may not know how to run a farm, but he knows a lot about winning elections. He begins with some very lofty promises. He promises Henrietta a revolving door in the chicken house, even though that is an expense that Mr. Bean will have to approve, and he promise the rabbits a large vegetable garden of their own and the “unrestricted right of entry” to Mr. Bean’s garden, whatever that

might mean. He appears to have struck a deal with the rats as well, and when it is clear the election will be a tight race, Grover brings in scores of other birds who build nests in the woods and can claim to be farm residents. Finally, when the animals hold a night time parade with Mrs. Wiggins in the phaeton, lit by fireflies, Grover orders the birds to eat up all the fireflies and the parade ends suddenly.

Together, John Quincy, Grover and Simon make a formidable set of enemies. Without giving away any spoilers, let's just say that a certain young rabbit, with more interest in fun than in serious responsibilities, is persuaded to throw his hat in the race to nearly disastrous consequences. When Grover realizes the game is up, and that he can't win even a rigged election, he seizes control of Bertram, the clockwork twin and begins his fascist regime. Flanked by two herons with beaks even longer and more formidable than his own, he heads up an army and one-by-one annexes nearby farms. The animals form a secret resistance to this bird who claims to be the "duly elected" president, but they can do nothing until Freddy devises a plan to trick Grover into leaving Bertram. With the rats imprisoned

and the birds banished, Mrs. Wiggins takes her rightful place as the head of state for the First Animal Republic.

John Quincy and X make one last appearance, begging Freddy, who is again president of the bank, to be allowed, explaining that they will do his work for him. Freddy hesitates, but then — his lesson learned — he crosses out their names on the bank's sign because he knows that Mr. Bean expects him to be responsible.

We can learn other lessons from *Freddy the Politician* as well:

- 1) Women can make perfectly fine presidents, especially if they know when to laugh.
- 2) Don't be beguiled by a politician's rhetoric or empty promises.
- 3) Vote for those with common sense instead. Think about it. You'll know the difference.
- 4) Every vote counts, so get out there and vote!

Alice Tracy is the web editor and a past president of the Friends of Freddy. ♡

Not the Only Pig Pilot

by Kevin W. Parker

My local theater showed Studio Ghibli movies (Japanese animation such as *Princess Mononoke*, *Spirited Away*, and *My Neighbor Totoro*) once a month during the second half of 2017. I caught them when I could, but when I found out *Porco Rosso* ("Crimson Pig") featured a pig pilot as the main character, I figured it was a must-see.

Now, while it was an entertaining movie in its own right, there wasn't a whole lot of resemblance to our Freddy. *Porco Rosso* instead is a former World War I ace fighter pilot with an island hideout where he lives with his high-powered but temperamental seaplane. Like Freddy, he takes to the air to fight the bad guys, but unlike him he only does it when he's confident he'll be rewarded for it. In fact, in the opening sequence, he makes a point of fighting off the pirates and rescuing most of the treasure they've captured but leaving them with enough so they can repair their planes—possibly because if they can't, then Porco can't collect any more rewards.

Also, Porco wasn't always a pig. In a flashback sequence later in the film, we learn that he was in a nasty firefight along with his squadron. In a touching sequence, after the battle he finds himself above the clouds with a white band above him. As he tries to figure out what's going on, he sees his fellow flyers fly up past him toward the band, one by one. He calls out to them, but they don't respond. Looking more closely, he realizes that the band is made up of all the planes and pilots shot down by both sides. He blacks out and awakes flying just above the sea, now turned into a pig, the punishment, he figures, for not going down with the rest of his squadron.

The plot includes several fights with the pirates and their ally, an obnoxious American ace named Curtis who tries to hit on Porco's close friend Gina, a beautiful woman who runs an island resort and is one of the few people to have known our hero in his pre-porcine days. There's a subplot where Porco takes his plane to Milan to be repaired, only to have to deal with a feisty girl aerospace mechanic named Fio, who not only repairs his plane but insists on accompanying him in it back into the danger he faces. (She's the only one left at the Piccolo family firm who can help—all the boys have had to find work elsewhere due to the Great Depression.)



It's a fun story with strong female characters in Gina and Fio. The ending is perhaps a bit of a let-down, though: there's a strong hint that if Porco does the right thing, he'll be restored to human form, but we never know for sure if that happens. And there's a definite Chekovian pistol on the wall set up partway through that never does get fired. But it's well worth catching if you get the chance. ♡

President's Corner



UNCLE FREDDY WANTS YOU!

by *Randy Cepuch*

There's a lot that goes into making the Bean farm run smoothly – waking everyone up at the crack of dawn, getting the *Bean Home News* out regularly, investigating Ignormuses, keeping Simon at bay, making sure there's enough pie for breakfast, and so on.

It's similar for the Friends of Freddy, where our tasks include:

- preserving the works of author Walter R. Brooks and illustrator Kurt Wiese
- quarterly production and mailing of *The Bean Home Newsletter*
- keeping membership rosters plus ascertaining member needs and recruiting new members
- updating the website (and the forthcoming Wiki resource for All Things Freddy)
- posting to our Facebook Group and other social media sites (Instagram, Twitter, etc.)
- planning our conventions (dealing with venues, organizing programs)
- counting the acorns in our treasury
- seeking press coverage for Our Pig
- storing and distributing copies of Freddy books
- filing our annual tax forms and maintaining our tax-exempt status
- storing and replenishing our stash of T-shirts and the like, plus selling them at conventions
- creating presentations for our gatherings and publications
- recording our group's history
- staying in touch with Freddy's publisher and other rights holders
- reaching out to similar organizations to see what we can learn from them
- encouraging/organizing Freddy exhibits in libraries, museums, galleries
- constantly looking for (and finding!) new things in a series of old books
- greeting new Freddy fans and welcoming back those who've been away for decades

- considering which of the books are the best introductions for today's readers
- making sure there's enough pie for breakfast

Most of those things are being done (sometimes just barely) by a small group of Friends – the usual suspects.

Some have worn enough Friends of Freddy hats (occasionally featuring live Popinjays) over the years that they're ready to move on to leisurely grazing in the North 40.

All of which means there are OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU TO SHAPE THE FUTURE – some more urgent than others, some in the form of apprenticeships and some that we probably haven't even noticed yet (feel free to point 'em out!).

If there's something you can and would like to do to help the world's foremost organization devoted to promoting Centerboro values, please send me (randycepuch@gmail.com) or any of the current officers (listed on page 2) a private note.

By the way, doing little things for your Friends is not only much appreciated, but it can, in time, lead to Bigger Things.

Heck, 15 years or so ago I was just an assistant in the FoF mailroom but for the past two years I've been taking meetings with Martians and zooming around in Phaeton One – usually going to and from the mailroom, but still. Now my term's nearly through, and I'm looking forward to doing a lot of napping (er, THINKING!). ☺



Pigging Out on Sherlock Holmes

by Chris Redmond

Reprinted with permission from the *Sherlockian* blog and podcast “I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere”. See <http://www.ihearofsherlock.com/2018/06/pigging-out-on-sherlock-holmes.html#W29E4dh7HMV>

“It’s surely time that I disappeared into that little farm of my dreams.” [CROO]

It was upon the second weekend of November of last year that I found myself in the venerable though comfortable quarters of the Gananoque Inn, a few minutes’ drive from the American border, settling in to talk about... pigs.

There were about 18 of us, members of the Friends of Freddy, from both sides of the border, demographically and temperamentally a lot like Sherlockians, and quite prepared to spend a day and a half chatting about Freddy (the pig), Jinx (the cat), and the other anthropomorphic animals who figure in 26 books written by Walter R. Brooks between 1927 and 1958. There was a time when ten-year-olds stormed public libraries every Saturday morning looking for the Freddy books, and they’re now considered excellent reading-aloud material. The Friends of Freddy are mostly of an age to remember reading the books when we were children, and seek to promote them to new generations.

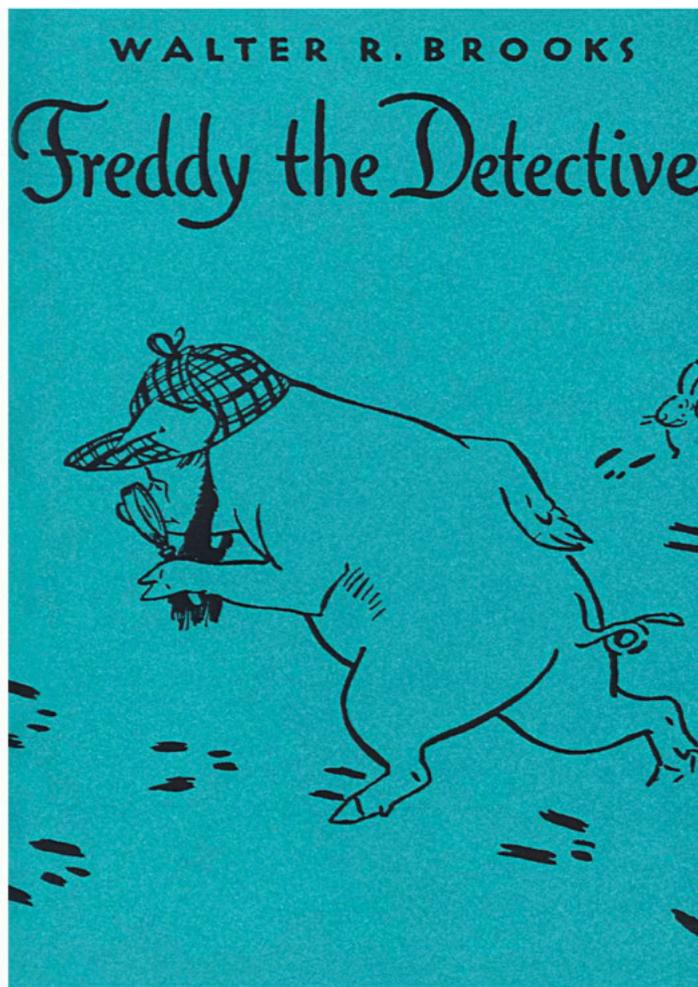
I found myself on the convention’s program to give a half-hour talk under the title “Two Great Detectives: Freddy and Sherlock Holmes.” Mostly I was sharing a few thoughts about one of the 26 books, *Freddy the Detective*, which I consider to be the best of the series. I’m not sure, after all these years, whether I first liked *Detective* because of my enthusiasm for Sherlock Holmes, or whether I got interested in Sherlock Holmes because of *Detective*.

As the story begins, Freddy the pig is shadowing his fellow animals on the Bean farm. “I got the idea,” he says, “from a book I found in the barn, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. It’s the best book I’ve come across in a long time, and you’ll admit I know something about literature.”

He finds himself working to solve a real mystery when the toy train belonging to the human boy on the farm disappears. He unearths clues, including green paint scratches and grey hairs, and eventually brings the crime home to the perpetrators, old Simon the rat (Freddy’s Moriarty) and his criminous family. It takes a while, though: “Even Sherlock Holmes couldn’t do everything in a minute,” Freddy tells Jinx defensively. There are, of course, complications and subplots, including the appearance of a “city detective,” provocatively named Montague Boner.

Freddy the Detective was published by Knopf in 1932. It was the third book in the Freddy series, but the first to set what became a pattern in the ensuing two decades with *Freddy the Magician*, *Freddy Goes Camping*, *Freddy the Pilot*, and so on. There have been a number of subsequent editions of *Detective*, and it is now in print from Overlook Press.

As I did a little research to prepare my talk for the Friends of Freddy, I realized that *Detective*’s appearance in 1932 was no coincidence. The death of Arthur Conan Doyle in 1930 had led to publication of Doubleday’s two-volume *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* and a burst of new interest in Sherlock Holmes. William Gillette was winding up his final “farewell tour” as Holmes, which had begun in 1929. *Sherlock Holmes*’



Fatal Hour, starring Arthur Wontner, had been released in 1931, and *The Speckled Band* with Raymond Massey followed. In Britain, three books of general Holmesiana had appeared by 1932, including T. S. Blakeney’s immortal *Sherlock Holmes: Fact or Fiction?*

In fact, 1932 was the peak of the third “Sherlock Holmes boom”, after 1892 and 1902, and in that context, it’s no real surprise that Brooks seized on a prominent figure in popular culture to give his pig book extra appeal. It is by no means a traditional pastiche, but it can easily be classified under the umbrella of fanfiction — Farmlock?

As for Walter R. Brooks, he continued writing until his death in 1958: not just the Freddy books, but scores of short stories for the adult market, published in the *Saturday Evening Post* and many other magazines, as well as one novel, *Ernestine Takes Over*. His best-known legacy, apart from Freddy, is the talking horse Mister Ed, the central character in a dozen short stories that led to a television comedy series in the 1960s.

Chris Redmond has been a member of the Friends of Freddy since before 1988, when I started keeping track of when people joined. He was inducted into the premier American Sherlockian organization, the Baker Street Irregulars, as “Billy” at the age of 16, and is also a member of the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes and the Bootmakers of Toronto. 🐷

From Our Canadian Correspondent

American Influences On Canada

by David Haas



This is a written version of a talk the author gave at the 2017 mini-convention in Gananoque, Ontario.

The United States of America and its colonial predecessors have had a profound and ongoing impact on its northern neighbour, becoming a pervasive presence in the daily life of Canadians. Nearly fifty years ago Canada's Prime Minister told the Washington Press Club: "Living next to you is in some ways like sleeping with an elephant. No matter how friendly and even-tempered is the beast, if I can call it that, one is affected by every twitch and grunt." The comment remains well known in Canada.

American influence has been exercised in a variety of ways: military force, mass immigration, political example, and cultural impact.

1 – MILITARY FORCE

The first influence, in the colonial, revolutionary, and immediate post-revolutionary eras, was through war. American troops* serving as formed units in conflicts during Colonial times were instrumental in Britain taking over two French colonies which later formed the geographic basis for modern Canada. Later, during the Revolution and again in 1812, American troops invaded Canada, and border tensions continued for decades after.

The Colonial Expansion Race: Europe encountered the New World in 1492. A period of colonial expansion followed. In the



Colonel George Washington of the Virginia Regiment during the Seven Years War, a unit of Provincial Troops during that conflict.

1500s the French and English conducted explorations of the New World, and made a few attempts at settlement which did not last. But beginning in the early 1600s, both England and France began to establish enduring colonial settlements in land they claimed. The wishes of the existing indigenous populations received scant regard.

Militia & Provincial Troops: Hostile interaction with the natives led to the early establishment of colony Militias. Continued frays with the natives as well as difficulties with other colonies and with the French

brought on use of Provincial Troops. This was a collective term for troops who did not belong to a single army but to units raised on a colony-by-colony basis. They were full-time soldiers serving for a specified time or campaign. Provincial Troops were first organized around 1670, but became particularly important in 1689 with the first of six European conflicts to involve fighting in North America. The last was the Seven Years War ending in 1763. It was mostly Provincial Troops, not Militias as is often stated, who served in these wars.

Conquest of Nova Scotia: The first significant American influence came about in 1710 when American troops, supported by the Royal Navy, captured the capital of French Acadia, Port-Royal, on the Bay of Fundy. Acadia, and in particular Port-Royal, had seen much fighting over the years since the site was settled by the French in 1605. But previous actions had always resulted in French authority being re-established. That changed after the conquest of 1710.

Acadia was renamed Nova Scotia, after a previous British attempt at settlement there. Port-Royal was renamed Annapolis Royal, after Britain's Queen Anne. Nova Scotia remained a British colony until it became a province of Canada in the Canadian Confederation of 1867. Annapolis Royal is now a small town of under 500 people, one of whom is Friends of Freddy member Connie Arnold.

Ongoing Instabilities: The Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 confirmed French possession of what is now the Canadian province of Prince Edward Island, and also Cape Breton Island at the north of Nova Scotia. Vagueness in the treaty's definition of Acadia left France in effective possession of what is now the province of New Brunswick. The treaty also gave Newfoundland to Britain, though the French retained some fishing rights along the northern shore. The French then decided to relocate the centre of their profitable cod fishing operation to Cape Breton Island, and began erecting fortifications to protect their presence in North America. Two became particularly significant.



By 1740 the mighty Fortress Louisbourg became key to defending French possessions in North America. Artillery batteries along the harbour front and on the north-west shore dominated the bay, while a battery on an island to the east-north-east controlled entry into the bay through a half mile wide strait.

*While the United States of America did not exist at this point, the term "American troops" is used here to refer to companies of soldiers from colonies that would eventually become part of the United States.

Fortress Louisbourg: The first was on an ice free bay on the east side of Cape Breton Island. Originally just a fishing village in a well protected harbour, the site soon became an anchorage for French navy ships seeking to defend the fishing vessels, and also to prevent any sea borne attempt by the British to advance down the St. Lawrence River towards Quebec. Then in 1720 construction began on what was to be Fortress Louisbourg – the greatest European style fortification outside of Europe. The fortress took twenty years to complete. Just in time for a new war breaking out in 1740.

But powerful as Louisbourg was, it had vulnerabilities. If invading ships could get into the open bay south-west of the fortress, and if troops put ashore there went on to defeat any French troops sent out to prevent a landing, artillery could be drawn overland into the hills overlooking the fortification. This weakness in the defensive concept was spotted by New Englanders being held in Louisbourg after a French raid on a British colony outpost. On returning to Massachusetts they took their observations to the Governor, who also had reports from merchants trading into the fortified town. The Governor lined up infantry and artillery support from other colonies, and arranged naval backing from the British. The American attack took place in 1745 and Louisbourg surrendered after a month and a half siege.

Three years later the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle returned the fortress to the French. The Americans were furious, but in 1748 Fortress Louisbourg was back in business as a bastion of French power.



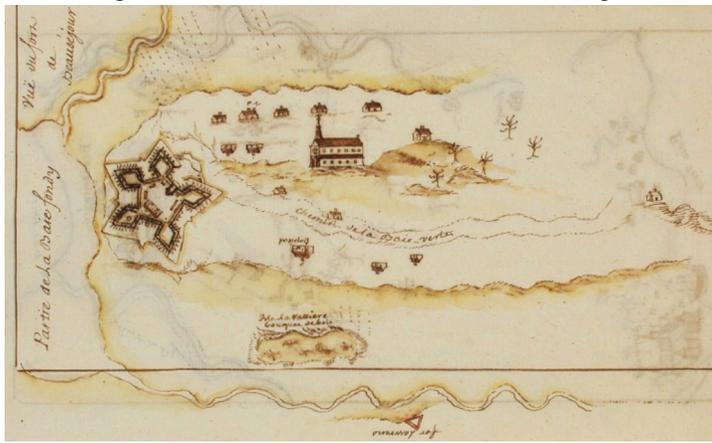
The British capture Louisbourg in 1768.

and British Army. Americans were present only in small numbers – four Ranger Companies, and also any serving in the two battalions of the 60th (Royal American) Regiment of Foot, which additionally included volunteers from Europe.

The British Army ensured that if Louisbourg was again traded back to the French, it would be useless – they razed the fortress to the ground. Starting in 1962 a restoration effort has been underway as a project of Parks Canada.

Battle of Quebec: The British used Louisbourg as the staging area for a massive attack on Quebec City. General Wolfe died the victor in the resulting 1759 battle on the Plains of Abraham outside the city walls. The only Americans present were those serving in the two battalions of the 60th (Royal American) Regiment of Foot.

But contrary to popular belief, the victory at Quebec was not the end of the fighting. The French battled on.



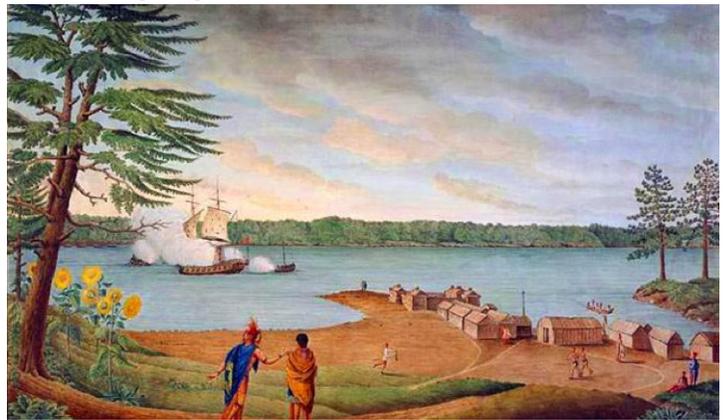
The plan for Fort Beauséjour. The star shape was popular for forts at that time. The ramparts at Beauséjour were earthwork not stone.

Fort Beauséjour: The second significant French fortification was on the isthmus connecting British held Nova Scotia with French held New Brunswick. Construction began in 1751. The installation was far less potent militarily than Louisbourg, being just a position for between one and two hundred men – but located strategically at the top of the Bay of Fundy.

Defensive preparations at the fort had not been completed when hostilities broke out in 1754 in North America in advance of the Seven Years War. They were still not complete in June of 1755, when a force of mostly American troops landed and besieged the fort. The French surrendered after four days of shelling. Fort Beauséjour was renamed Fort Cumberland.

Fortress Louisbourg falls again: Next it was Louisbourg's turn again. An initial foray by the British in 1757 was forestalled by the French Navy. For a renewed effort in 1758 the Royal Navy initiated attacks which prevented further intervention by the French fleet.

The 1758 capture of Louisbourg involved mostly the Royal Navy



The scene of part of the fighting in the Battle of the Thousand Islands was painted by Thomas Davies, a British Army officer, artist, and naturalist who was present as a combatant.

Battle of the Thousand Islands: American troops had been active throughout the Seven Years War, and earlier they had been instrumental in taking Fort Frontenac, at Kingston, in 1788. From there more American soldiers moved down river in 1760 for the Battle of the Thousand Islands, just across from Ogdensburg, which became the final battle victory over the French. Soon after, Montreal capitulated without a fight.

Britain Ascendant: In formally ending the war the Treaty of Paris in 1763 confirmed British sovereignty over formerly French territory in North America. The territorial basis for modern Canada was now in British hands – thanks largely to American troops from 1710 to 1760.

To be continued. Next, The American Revolution. 🍷

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WHO WE ARE

The Friends of Freddy are just crazy about a pig, Freddy by name, the fictional talking animal hero of a series of 26 children's books bearing his name and written by the late Walter R. Brooks from 1927 to 1958.

Freddy, that pig of many parts, has always had his friends, of course, but it wasn't until 1984 that they became an official organization with a capital "F"; i.e., The Friends of Freddy. Here's how it happened, according to Toronto playwright Dave Carley, founder of the Friends: In 1983 he wrote to Dorothy Brooks, Walter's widow, telling her how much he loved the books and asking if she had heard from other fans. In reply she sent him a clutch of letters; he contacted some of the senders; enthusiasts started a newsletter and, on October 3rd, 1986, a faithful few gathered in Roxbury, New York, for an inaugural Con and the organization was off and running.

From the beginning one of the Friends' stated goals has been to spread Freddy and Walter R. Brooks's names throughout the known universe and they've made a good start on that, placing Freddy books in an eye-popping total of more than 120 countries around the world, ranging from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe to – though not a country but a continent – Antarctica! Closer to home, the Friends have distributed 225 Freddy books to more than 100 Little Free Libraries in 15 states.



Freddy is everywhere!

And so are his Friends. An international organization with some 300 members – both children and adults – located throughout the United States, Canada and the UK, they're a clannish lot, holding a Con every year; in even numbered years the gatherings take place in the fall in central or upstate New York, including Walter's home town of Rome; not to mention Roxbury, the Catskills village where he spent the last ten years of his life, and also his Grandfather Brooks' home town of Hamilton. The odd numbered years are a more peripatetic lot, Cons having been convened from New Jersey to California to Canada and at various times of the year. But if you don't travel, don't despair; you can visit the Friends at their Facebook page or follow them on Twitter.

It's not all fun and games for the Friends, though. This 501c3 organization of volunteers also has a more serious purpose, sponsoring a book donation program to needy schools and libraries, children's hospitals and homeless shelters and introducing Freddy to a whole new generation of readers.

You can read more about this devoted band of fans in the Bean Home Newsletter, the Friends' quarterly publication. A subscription is a benefit of membership.

So join us. It's a terrible cliché that would have Freddy wincing but it's true: you'll be glad you did. 🐷