

Vermillion to Host Shakespeare’s First Folio Tour

By Amber Margheim
For the Plain Talk

Who has not heard “Out, damned spot,” “To Sleep, perchance to dream,” or “Double, double, toil and trouble; Fire burn, and cauldron bubble?”

These quotes from Shakespeare’s play Macbeth, and countless other lines are woven throughout the tapestry of American culture.

One can even find them in children’s cartoons parroting Shakespeare’s great works to the youngest of generations.

Now Vermillion will be take its place in Shakespeare history by hosting the 2016 tour of “First Folio! The Book that Gave Us Shakespeare”.

On Feb 26, the National Music Museum announced its selection by the Folger Shakespeare Library as the one location in the South Dakota to host and house

this rare collection of Shakespeare’s works while it is on tour.

The Shakespeare First Folio is the first collected edition of Shakespeare’s plays.

Thanks to the Folger Shakespeare Library, this world-famous book will be touring all 50 states in 2016, spending four weeks in one lucky community in each state.

This particular copy of the Folio dates from the 1623 printing and is one of only 233 copies still known to exist. While here, the First Folio will be displayed inside the National Music Museum, which according to NMM spokesperson Patricia Bornhofen is not only able to provide the right ambient conditions for such a delicate artifact but also an appropriate historical context.

“The Folio will be in good care and good company at the museum,” says Bornhofen. “Many of

our equally priceless musical instruments are from Shakespeare’s era.”

While the Folio will be housed at the NMM, its arrival in Vermillion was spear headed by University of South Dakota English professor Dr. Darlene Farabee, who worked with the NMM and other passionate individuals from the USD and the Vermillion community via a committee.

Farabee and the committee began the lengthy application process to host the exhibition in July 2014.

The committee submitted the application in October and received the good news a few weeks ago.

Farabee, was “absolutely delighted” upon hearing the news and learned of the town’s honor prior to the official press release.

“I was notified and I shared that immediately with Cleveland Johnson, Director of the National

Music Museum. The notification came from the Folger Shakespeare Library,” Farabee said. “The Folger asked that we wait to put out notice until after the national press release.

“My email inbox was flooded with congratulatory emails, ecstatic about the news that our application had been successful”.

Farabee points out that the 1623 printing of the First Folio is not just any old collection of Shakespeare’s work.

Unlike many books of that time period, the Folio is a very physically large sized book, similar to a historical church Bible or a book of maps.

“It was the size of important books of that time,” Farabee said.

The choice of the formatting of the First Folio to make it so large denoted how important and instrumental

Shakespeare was to his contemporaries.

“This was an incredibly expensive format” to produce says Farabee.

While Shakespeare never saw the First Folio, having died in 1616, the tour of the First Folio marks the 400th anniversary of his death. Of equal importance is the contents of the First Folio.

The First Folio is the first collected works of Shakespeare. Plays such as Macbeth, The Tempest and Julius Caesar would have been lost to history if not for this book.

Farabee is very excited about the programming connecting the First Folio to Shakespeare in South Dakota.

“Being chosen to be a host sight is a wonderful win for University of South Dakota, the National Music Museum, and Vermillion. But being chosen as a host site is just the beginning of it—being chosen as a site

opens up the door for us to do some fabulous programming around the exhibit,” Farabee said. “There are many entities that we hope will be very involved in the programing, at the University as well as in the community such as the area public schools, the SD Public Broadcasting, the City of Vermillion as well as the Edith B. Siegrist Vermillion Public Library.”

“The First Folio will be a new draw to Vermillion, benefitting the whole community, both culturally and financially,” Bornhofen says. “Many art, history and culture lovers from elsewhere will turn off I-29 or travel out of their way to see this historic book in person. And Vermillion residents will have a new reason to brag (and to re-visit the museum themselves).”

For an extended version of this story visit www.plaintalk.net

■ DEBATE

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encouraged to develop argumentation based upon a values perspective.

“It’s probably one of the most rewarding activities to do,” Moen said. “To see all the work pay off was just fantastic. It’s also a great educational experience. I’ve learned more about research, philosophy, public speaking, and logical analysis all just from debate.

“Thinking on your feet, those types of skills, have been very valuable.”

The team building from scratch again

First-year coach Joseph De La Rosa a third-year law student, graduate assistant, and Masters’ degree candidate in history signed on when the debate coach at the University of South Dakota told him about the opening at the high school.

Historically coaches for the Vermillion High debate team would be students at USD and would ultimately leave upon graduation.

“The season had already started and they hadn’t found a coach,” De La Rosa said. “This past year their coach had moved back to Sioux Falls and when I heard they were struggling to find a coach, I had a lot going on I still thought I would be able to pitch in and help. I was able to recruit an assistant coach who would be able to help and I brought in Josh Jorgenson. So then I got the team signed up in some events.”

The Vermillion team had a fluid nature to things this season as Moen was the only permanent fixture among a rotating roster door as debaters came and went and came back again. Combine that with athletic sports, show choir, dancing, and other activities that draw attention, it was hard

to keep the debate roster fixed.

Other debate team members that joined Moen and Miller at state were Annaliese Taggart, Adam Jensen, Kaleb Blue, Joe Miller, Sowmya Ragothaman, and Erika Miller, but it was the junior Lincoln-Douglas champion that was there from day one.

“Erika is the one person who has been dedicated and practiced regularly and never missed a tournament that we’ve done,” De La Rosa said. “We would have preferred to have as many students as possible because that makes the program more competitive.

“We had such a small team so we weren’t really in contention for any overall team award.”

Moen said that a lot changed when a nice cadre of involved seniors off of last year’s team graduated.

“I am used to having a

much larger team than we have currently,” Moen said. “We all saw this coming that we weren’t going to have much of a team so I decided that I really needed to compete as hard as I could this year and go to all the competitions this year and it really paid off. I am really glad that (Joseph and Josh) came along due to the fact I wouldn’t have made it as a far as I did. Not really having anyone to do research when we used to divvy up research between four us and now it was me doing all the research.

“Last year it was definitely more of a social event...this year it was more about me applying my own debate style and applying what I’ve learned over the years. Most of my motivation was also to do well and to keep the program alive.”

De La Rosa knows how big a role Moen played for the debate program this

year. “Erika was the captain of the team and at times she seemed like the captain of the life raft,” De La Rosa said. “She kind of motivated Joe and I. She was able to recruit and we will have some young people that are excited to be back next year. She was also innovative with some new approaches that coaches said they hadn’t seen before.”

Why Debate at All?

Moen would put hours of work into her craft, especially before major competitions and she saw the fruits of her labor pay her back tenfold.

Moen even admits she saw the team debater she had become when some of the habits formed with the team started to bleed over into her daily life.

“I know I am going into debate word when I start using words like ‘essentially’ or ‘basically,’” Moen said. “That I’m like

‘it sounds like I am in a debate round.’ It comes so subtle that I don’t even notice it most of the time.”

It definitely takes a lot of work and a certain level of patience.

“Once you starting practicing daily, hitting the research, the format, the procedure, the policy...people want it to be easy,” De La Rosa said. “As more time passes, the more work you have to do. The more research you do, the more effective you were able to be.

“Sometimes you have to work hard and sometimes you have to work harder.”

Also one must have a level of integrity and savvy that portends an ability to convince the judges that the debater is the real deal in a particular discussion.

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