

Trip to the Osler Library

In mid-November, thirteen MAUT retirees (and 2 guests) were privileged to have a guided tour of the Osler Library. The library dates from 1929 and was established to house the private collection of Sir William Osler. Initially consisting of 8000 volumes (Osler was a prodigious collector and reader!), it has now grown to some 100,000, many of them rare and extremely valuable. Our guide, head librarian Dr. Mary Hague-Yearl, had prepared for our visit some of the most interesting examples, which we were allowed to examine in detail. The library itself is an architectural gem and is reputed to contain, behind one of its oak panels, the cremated remains of Sir William himself. Our visit to this unique McGill treasure underlined his invaluable contribution to medicine supported by his love of books. “Books have been my delight for thirty years” he once said, “... To study the phenomenon of disease without books is to sail an uncharted sea, while to study books without patients is not to go to sea at all.” After the tour, a few of us met for lunch at the Faculty Club. Thanks go to Dr Marie Béland for organizing this extremely informative tour. John Wolforth