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New Historic Fiction Highlights True-Life Mystery of Rare Gargoyle in Kalamazoo

KALAMAZOO (MICH.)—One dark and rainy evening in 1961, a thief climbed onto the historic Ladies’ Library Association building in downtown Kalamazoo and removed their prized possession. The stolen gargoyle had been a gift from England given to the first women’s club in 1904. A year later, the gargoyle was returned by an anonymous samaritan...or did the thief have a change of heart?

In, *The Missing Gargoyle of the Ladies’ Library*, author Lois Richmond shares of what may have happened during the year the gargoyle mysteriously disappeared. This entertaining historic fiction has been written for those of all ages to enjoy. Artist Denise Lisiecki of the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, created original art that brings the story of what may have happened, to life.

Richmond, former president of the Ladies’ Library Association (2012-14) was inspired by the story of the theft of the gargoyle during her term in office at the association which also is the third oldest women’s club in the United States. The organization, located at 333 S. Park St. in downtown Kalamazoo, was formed in 1844 as a book club disguised as a sewing club. It was officially established in 1852, and made history in 1879, when the members purchased and designed the first building in Michigan established by a women’s organization.

“I have always been fascinated with the story of the gargoyle and it’s mysterious return,” Richmond said. “I’m amazed at how many people never heard of gargoyles and didn’t know that the Ladies’ Library may have the only one on a building in Kalamazoo. This is a story all ages will enjoy.”

Richmond, a native of Richland, Michigan, retired as assistant director of nursing administration at Bronson Hospital. She and her husband, James, have been instrumental in preserving history and contributing to education. In 2011, the couple donated \$1 million to the Comstock Public School Foundation to create a scholarship fund for graduates of Comstock High School. In 2006, the couple provided \$2.5 million of the \$12 million in donations to create the James W. and Lois I. Richmond Center for Visual Arts on the campus of Western Michigan University. The couple have been instrumental in various community preservation efforts including the recent campaign to add an addition onto the Ladies’ Library Association.

Richmond will hold her first book signing from 3-6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 8, at the Ladies’ Library, 333 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. Her books are currently available at Amazon.com, and locally at the Michigan News Agency and Kalamazoo. Institute of the Arts.

For more information or to interview Lois Richmond, contact the author at: 269-343-2866 or email: Richmondjl@aol.com.