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Susan Quinn, Director

December 17, 2014

PRESS RELEASE

What: Friends of the Ocean County Library fundraiser with Jessica Fellowes

When: 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Saturday Jan. 24

Where: Toms River library branch, 101 Washington St., Toms River 08753

CONTACT: Judy Macaluso, 732-349-6200, ext. 5405
jmacaluso@theoceancountylibrary.org

Downton Abbey books author to speak at TR library

TOMS RIVER - It is the most watched PBS drama series in history after more than 26 million people in the US tuned in during the program's eight-week broadcast season in 2014.

And now, local fans of the PBS drama series "Downton Abbey" will have a chance to share in all its Edwardian glory during a Friends of the Ocean County Library fundraising event in January.

The Friends will present Jessica Fellowes, author of the Downton Abbey Companion Books, 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Saturday Jan. 24 in the library's headquarters branch, 101 Washington St., Toms River.

Jessica Fellowes is the niece of Lord Julian Fellowes, creator and writer of "Downton Abbey." She has written three official companion books to the Emmy-award winning show, including her latest, "A Year in the Life of Downton Abbey: Seasonal Celebrations, Traditions and Recipes," that was released October 28, 2014.

The book features behind-the-scenes details, sumptuous on-set photographs, historical recipes, seasonal celebrations and traditions, as well as a review of the characters and plotlines, many of which were inspired by her family, she said.

She will share her insights and the tips she has gleaned from the show during the Jan. 24 presentation.

Tickets for the fundraiser are available at two price levels.

The \$35 general admission will include a presentation and book signing by Jessica Fellowes. The \$75 VIP ticket includes the presentation and book signing as well as an author reception, light refreshments, and priority seating during her presentation.

Copies of all three of her books will be available for sale at the event.

Ticket supplies are limited.

A ticket order form is available at the library's website www.theoceancountylibrary.org. For more information check the Ticket FAQs on the website or telephone any branch.

"Tickets make a great holiday present," said Judy Macaluso, Supervising Librarian and a Liaison to the Friends Steering Committee.

Raffle tickets for baskets prepared by the library Friends will also be sold at the branches and the drawings will be held during the event.

People can also support the event by purchasing a Downton Abbey 2015 Page-a-Day Calendar for \$12. The calendars will be sold at eleven branches (Jackson, Lacey, Little Egg Harbor, Toms River, Upper Shores, Waretown, Berkeley, Long Beach Island, Manchester, and Point Pleasant Borough.)

A complete listing of the day's events will soon be available on the website. Period dress is encouraged for those attending the event but it is not required.

"The Ocean County Library is so very appreciative of all the hard work our branch Friends groups do all year to support us," said Valerie Bell, Assistant Director of Public Services. "For this special fundraiser all of our branch Friends groups have come together to make this event possible."

"Downton Abbey" is viewed by people in more than 200 countries, according to the Yahoo! TV webpage. ITV, which operates the largest commercial family of channels in the UK, has estimated approximately 120 million people around the world have watched the program. ITV, along with Carnival Films, produces the series.

The series is set in the fictional Yorkshire country house Downton Abbey. It follows the lives of the aristocratic Crawley family and their servants during the reign of King George V. The first series episodes opened at the end of the Edwardian era in 1912 with news of the family heir's death aboard the RMS Titanic. The fourth series covers the six-month period between February and August 1922.

The series fifth-US season will premiere on PBS' Masterpiece Sunday January 4, 2015 and filming of the sixth season will begin soon after, according to ITV and Carnival Films.