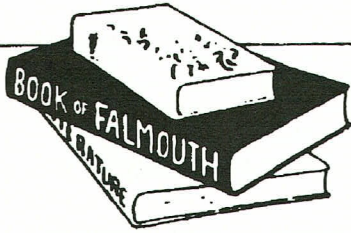


FFPL



Friends of the Falmouth Public Library

# Newsletter

Spring 2009

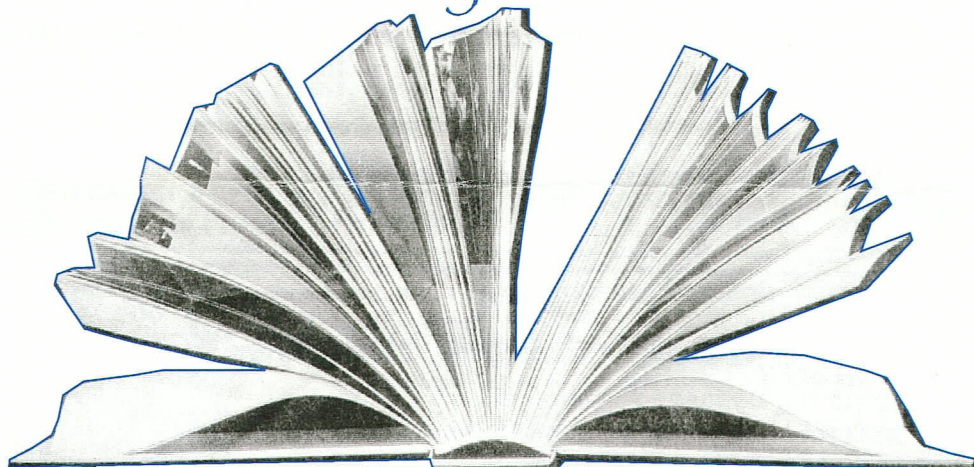
President: Robert O'Toole • Editor: Marilyn Sanborn



## Joy of Learning Presents 5 New Courses for Spring 2009



Abraham Lincoln • Movies • The Mideast  
Short Story Writers • The Presidency



**INTRODUCTION to POETRY** | Robert Pinsky

**Austin & Mabel** | POLLY LONGWORTH

**HER HUSBAND** | Diane Middlebrook  
Hughes and Plath - A Marriage

**BIRTHDAY LETTERS** | Ted Hughes

**ARIEL** | SYLVIA PLATH

The Collected Works of *Sylvia Plath*

**BITTER FAME** | Anne Stevenson

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Amendment

Help Wanted  
and  
Much More



# Joy of Learning

## Schedule of Courses for Spring 2009

The Friends of the Falmouth Public Library will offer five new courses which will begin Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009. Classes will meet one hour per week for four weeks. The classes are free and open to the public.

### COURSES

**Tuesdays: 10:00 am-11:15 am - April 7, 14, 21, 28**

#### ***Abraham Lincoln: A Bicentennial Appraisal***

This course will examine Lincoln's rise from poverty and obscurity to the highest office in the land. Both great leader and imperfect human being, Lincoln weathered personal and political troubles to become America's most revered president. We will look at how, despite frequent bouts of depression and self-doubt, this inexperienced and ill-prepared man grew into a chief executive of extraordinary political acumen and moral greatness.

Michael McNaught, BA and MA Oxford University,

(Military History and the Theory of War), MA Columbia University (History)

**Tuesdays: 11:30 am - 12:30 pm - April 7, 14, 21, 28**

#### ***Movies! Movies! Movies!***

Part film clips, part discussion about the elements that make a movie memorable. A repeat of **Movies One!** for those fans who missed it.

Fred Gitlitz BA Colgate MA, Columbia University

**Wednesdays: 10:00 am - 11:00am - April 1, 8, 15, 22**

#### ***The 60 Year Inferno***

**Back by popular demand!** This course traces the history of this turbulent area (Israel, Palestine, Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq and Iran.) for the past 60 years. NEW: Discussion of recent war in Gaza and video from occupied West Gaza.

Fred Gitlitz B A Colgate MA Columbia University

**Wednesdays: Noon -1:30 pm - April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 and May 1st**

#### ***Life In Literature***

Six short stories by 20th and 21st century writers dealing with social, political, moral and gender issues. Authors include Pearl Buck, Alice Monroe, Charlotte Gilman, Doris Lessing, Susan Glaspell and Peter Taylor.

Robert Szulkin, Professor Emeritus Brandeis, MA, Harvard University, PhD, Harvard University

(Please Note: This class is limited to 20 participants)

**Fridays: Noon - 1:00 pm - April 3, 10, 17, 24**

#### ***Scorecard on the American Presidency***

All forty-three presidents, the good, the bad and the ugly; how do they rate? Discussion will be invited. Do you agree with the experts? Who do you think were the best and the worst U. S. presidents?

Ned Nolan A.B (History Cornell MBA Columbia University

**All classes are held at the main library. Registration forms are available to the public at the circulation desk at the Main Library and at the branches as well.**

CUT OUT HERE

**TO REGISTER:** Send your selections with your name, address and phone number to:  
Joy of Learning, Post Office Box 480, Falmouth, Massachusetts 02541  
Please keep course descriptions as your record.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to enroll in the following course (or courses): \_\_\_\_\_

(1) Abraham Lincoln

(4) Short Story Writers

(2) Movies!

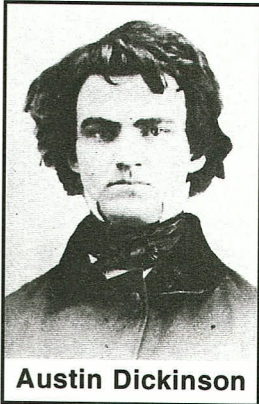
(5) The Presidency

(3) 60 Year Inferno

# BOOK REVIEWS

## Austin and Mabel by Polly Longworth

Remember how we were always told that the Victorians were very proper people? Well, forget it. What went on behind closed doors was fully as erotic and often as clandestine as affairs of today.



Austin Dickinson

Let's go back to Amherst, Massachusetts in 18 and meet Austin Dickinson, the strikingly handsome, aristocratic treasurer of Amherst College, the leading citizen of the town and the brother of Emily and Lavinia Dickinson who lived next door to him. He was happily married with three children and there was nothing to suggest that he might not remain that way. That was before he met Mabel.



Mabel Todd

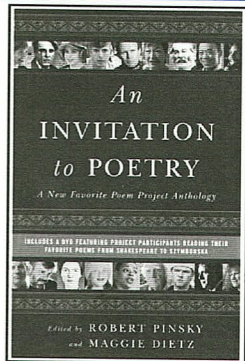
Mabel Todd, who moved into Amherst with her astronomer husband, was pretty, petite, outgoing, an accomplished pianist and a trained soprano. She soon met the Dickinsons and became a part of the musicals given by Austin's wife Susan. The sparks evidently flew when Austin and Mabel

met, and it was not long before all of Amherst rocked with the news of their liaisons. However, being proper people, they looked the other way, reluctant to admit that such a thing was going on under their noses. An added piece of spicy intrigue is where the lovers held their trysts. It was in the closed off dining room of the Dickinson sisters who were willing to help out their big brother.

Be prepared for a lot of gushing in Mabel and Austin's love letters. They take up half the book.

If you haven't been already, you must take a trip to Amherst, about a two and a half hour drive, and take the hour and a half tour of both houses. Austin's was going through extensive renovations last year, but you could still see parts of it. The docent we had was one of those passionately dedicated people and she took great pride in making the whole story come alive. My companion who had been bored with the whole idea, never missed a word she said. Be sure to check but I believe both houses open to the public some time in April and remain open until Thanksgiving. It is an experience you won't forget.

~ M. Sanborn



## Reading in between the Lines

### Invitation to Poetry by R. Pinsky & M. Dietz

In honor of Poetry Month I checked out **Invitation To Poetry** by Robert Pinsky and Maggie Dietz. It is the selection of the What's Falmouth Reading Committee and it includes the work of 200 poets.

Truth be told I never was fond of poetry with the exception of Emily Dickinson whom I admire. This anthology does include two selections of Dickinson's, but it was time to explore other poets. I found other familiar names including Adrienne Rich, Ezra Pound, Anne Sexton and Margaret Atwood.

I liked Conrad Alken's **Discordant** written in memory of his mother. I found Yehuda Amichai's **Inside the Apple** to be filled with fascinating imagery and description. His poetry would make a good topic for discussion.

Another poem my finger stopped at was **Men At Forty** by Donald Justice. I forwarded it to a 40 year old friend in hope of getting his opinion, but have not received an answer as yet. Perhaps it was a sensitive subject or he chose to ignore it altogether.

People who live in a fantasy world may not want to read William Wordsworth's famous sonnet **The World Is Too Much With Us Late And Soon**. The first line says it all.

A romantic and touching poem by Percy Bysshe Shelley is **Love's Philosophy**. A note at the top of the poem tells how a woman included this poem in her wedding ceremony, her husband reading the first half and she the bottom half.

I also found Sir Walter Scott's poem **Helvellyn** a definite eye catcher.

I liked the lines written above the poems by people who particularly enjoyed the poem and explained why.

~ Jill Orluski

# BOOK REVIEWS

AND HERE'S A COUPLE OF CHICKLITS! (If a "Chicklick" is a movie for young girls, then why not a "Chicklit" for a book for young women?)



Plum Sykes & Friend

## Bergdorf Blondes by Plum Sykes and Belle in the Big Apple by Brooke Parkhurst

(A NOVEL WITH RECIPES)

These two novels are good examples of the frilly frothy books that are popular with a certain type of young woman. I used to like them myself when I was a teenager. Young girl imagines herself out of the small town and on her own in the big city, in this case New York. She heads for Manhattan to seek a career in television or the theater or maybe the fashion world. Plum (a nickname), is presently a fashion editor at Vogue in real life and Brooke Parkhurst hosts a cooking show for ABC. She even includes 30 recipes in her novel. Not bad.



Brooke Parkhurst

Their books are largely autobiographical and I found them almost like diaries as they stuck so close to the day to day events in the protagonist/author's lives. Both women have mentors to help them through the learning stages. Plum's heroine even boasts a particularly idiotic one from the famous Bergdorf family. I tired very quickly of their antics which are foolish by almost anybody's standards but how can I argue with their success. Plum sold Bergdorf Blondes to a publisher for \$600,000 and it has sold over a million copies. I am sure she will have another one out soon. If there is a market for it, who am I to criticize? You can find her every month in Vogue with some little tidbit of fashion news including a picture of her perhaps on her family's estate in England trying to decide where she can get a three piece suit custom made in time for a big weekend. I don't know what the women do. They don't cook or garden in three piece suits. From what I could gather, they must stand around and eye each other's clothes while the men do some kind of hunting. You know the English.

You have to have fancy credentials if you aspire to run with Gwenneth Paltrow who seems to be the queen of the fashion world in the Big Apple, and Plum appears to have made the grade. I don't think Gwen has published any books although she does have a website and a TV travel program.

Both authors have been accused of being copy cats of Candace Bushnell's Sex in the City, and of course they are, but I imagine they both have a good laugh all the way to the bank. Or would it be safer for them to put it under the mattress in these days?  
~ M. Sanborn

## ALERT!

Joy of Learning is looking for instructors in:

Hawthorne • Kipling  
Shakespeare • Geology  
and Music

Please call 540-1825 if you are interested.

## NOTICE OF INTENT TO CHANGE THE BY-LAWS

The following is an intent to change the by-laws at the annual meeting. A vote of two thirds of members present and voting is required to approve.

### PROPOSED AMENDMENT: THE BY-LAWS

No person shall be qualified to serve as President for more than three terms successively. All other officers are allowed to continue in office with the approval of the board.



Friends of the Falmouth Public Library

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Joy of Learning

New Courses starting April 1, 2009

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