

Island Booknotes 2021

VOLUME 2

ISSUE 1

CELEBRATING A CULTURAL AND LITERARY LEGACY

Featuring

Apollo's Fire 🌿 Carol and Neil Armstrong

Simonetta Balzer 🌿 Jack Blum

Patricía Christakos 🌿 John Cleghorn

Dod Fraser 🌿 Sue Fuller

Alice Gorman 🌿 Davis Hammond

Susan Hanafée 🌿 Candice Shy Hooper

Jacque Hoyt 🌿 Sandy Jacobs

Lindsay Major 🌿 Tom McGuane

Lance Morrow 🌿 Susan Brind Morrow

Lynn Novick 🌿 Jeannette Sorrell

Lesley Stahl 🌿 Lucinda Dixon Sullivan

John Thomas 🌿 Toni Vanover

Daly Walker 🌿 Nancy White

Emerson Wickwire 🌿 Karen Zarse



PUBLISHED BY THE JOHANN FUST LIBRARY FOUNDATION

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Contents

EVENTS See Detailed Program Schedule on Page 4

- 5 Apollo's Fire "Playing with Fire" – Documentary 1/24 and Discussion 1/25
- 7 Daly Walker – *Doctor's Dilemma* 2/1
- 8 Sandy Jacobs – *Tropical Disturbances* and *After the Storm* 3/1
- 9 Susan Hanafée – *Scavenger Tides* and *The End of His Journey* 3/31
- 11 Tom McGuane – Literature in the Courtyard 2/17
- 12 Lynn Novick – Annual Benefit 3/10
- 13 Lesley Stahl – Author's Luncheon 4/7
- 17 Lucinda Sullivan – "Focus on Fiction" Class 3/16 - 4/20
- 20 Lance Morrow – *God and Mammon* 3/22
- 21 Susan Brind Morrow – *The Dawning Moon of the Mind* 3/24

NOTES & LETTERS

- 3 Jacque Hoyt – Foundation President's Letter
- 27 Toni Vanover – A Note from Senior Librarian/Branch Manager

ESSAYS

- 6 Daly Walker – Writing in Senior Years
- 22 Emerson Wickwire – B. G. – Plus Ça Change

BOOK REVIEWS

- 16 Davis Hammond – *The Free World* by Louis Menand
- 18 Lindsay Major – *Napoleon: A Life* by Andrew Roberts
- 24 Dod Fraser – *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë
- 26 Sue Fuller & Karen Zarse – *Fresh Water for Flowers* by Valerie Perrin

POETRY

- 10 Alice Gorman
- 15 Simonetta Balzer
- 15 Nancy White
- 17, 20, 21 John Thomas
- 23 Jack Blum

NEW BOOKS BY ISLAND AUTHORS

- 14 Candice Shy Hooper – *Delivered Under Fire: Absalom Markland and Freedom's Mail*
 - 19 Patricia Christakos – *Sleepover Secrets*
 - 19 Lindsay Major – *Lindsay Hughes Cooper: A Portrait*
 - 25 Carol and Neil Armstrong – *Bok's Giant Leap*
-

A Note from the Johann Fust Library Foundation President

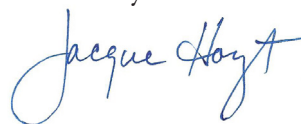
Welcome to the second edition of *Island Booknotes*. During this time of ongoing uncertainty, one thing that stands firm is the Johann Fust Library Foundation's unwavering commitment to our mission. With a vision established more than 70 years ago by our extraordinary founders, Roger and Louise Amory, our Foundation exists today in order "to maintain and preserve the buildings and gardens of the library while providing a literary and cultural center for the residents and visitors of Boca Grande."

While these unsettled times might cause us to occasionally adjust our plans, we have forged ahead with an optimistic and hopeful spirit for the upcoming 2022 Season. In keeping with our literary mission, we are delighted to share with you our latest edition of *Island Booknotes*. It contains a compilation of essays, book reviews and poetry by a talented group of Gasparilla Island authors. You will also find a calendar of exciting literary events for the upcoming season. We hope you will enjoy reading this special annual publication, and within its pages, find something that piques your interest and inspires you to further engage with us.

Due to the construction of our long-awaited elevator, our program schedule begins in January. The elevator will make access to our second-floor space ADA compliant. We are excited about the utilization of the space upstairs for foundation offices, classes, and meetings and can't wait to give you a tour.

Please remember to visit our website regularly www.JFLFBG.org for important information and updates on all things related to the Library Foundation.

Most importantly, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the entire Johann Fust Library Foundation Board, to offer my sincere appreciation and gratitude to you, our wonderful donors, volunteers, and patrons. The ability to fulfill our mission would simply not be possible without your remarkable generosity, loyal support and commitment to our beloved Island gem.



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On the Cover: Wildflower is a bronze statue created by Edward Berge. She was acquired in 1916 from the permanent collection of the Panama Pacific Exposition in San Francisco where it was chosen as the most beloved piece. She was recently restored and can be seen at the fountain in the rear courtyard of the library.

2022 Program Schedule



JANUARY

January 24	Jeannette Sorrell of Apollo's Fire <i>Playing with Fire</i> Documentary	Pg. 5
January 25	Noha Ryder Apollo's Fire Discussion	Pg. 5



FEBRUARY

February 1	Daly Walker <i>The Doctor's Dilemma</i>	Pg. 7
February 17	Tom McGuane Literature in the Courtyard	Pg. 11



MARCH

March 1	Sandy Jacobs <i>Tropical Disturbances and After the Storm</i>	Pg. 8
March 10	Lynn Novick Annual Benefit	Pg. 12
March 16	Lucinda Dixon Sullivan "Focus on Fiction" Class	Pg. 17
March 22	Lance Morrow <i>God and Mammon</i>	Pg. 20
March 24	Susan Brind Morrow <i>The Dawning Moon of the Mind</i> <i>Wolves & Honey</i> and <i>The Names of Things</i>	Pg. 21
March 31	Susan Hanafée <i>Scavenger Tides</i> and <i>The End of His Journey</i>	Pg. 9



APRIL

April 7	Lesley Stahl Author's Luncheon	Pg. 13
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Due to space constraints, and health and safety protocols, all events, including those offered at no charge, will require advanced registration and ticketing. Ticketing information will become available after January 3, 2022.

Part I – "Playing with Fire" Documentary

Jeannette Sorrell and the Mysteries of Conducting

"Playing with Fire" is a documentary directed by Oscar-winning producer and director Allan Miller. Mr. Miller takes us behind the scenes to explore the mysterious art of conducting. The documentary film follows GRAMMY®-winning conductor Jeannette Sorrell— one of today's most interesting conductors and a vivid interpreter of baroque and classical music. Sorrell, told by the Juilliard School and The Cleveland Orchestra that no one will hire a woman conductor, forms her own Baroque orchestra, Apollo's Fire, to immediate acclaim.

The film shows Sorrell working and teaching at the Aspen and Tanglewood Music Festivals and includes rehearsal scenes with two GRAMMY®-winning orchestras – Apollo's Fire and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. The role of the conductor as storyteller emerges as Miller pursues the secrets of a conductor's art.



Part II – "Playing with Fire" Discussion

With Noha Ryder, CFO of Apollo's Fire

Apollo's Fire is named for the classical god of music, healing and the sun. We invite you to watch this inspiring documentary on Monday, January 24th, *Playing with Fire: Jeannette Sorrell and the Mysteries of Conducting*. On Tuesday, January 25th, join us in the library loggia for an informal discussion about the film.

Noha Ryder will join us. Noha has been with Apollo's Fire since January of 2015. She became General Manager and Director of Development in 2016, and is currently the Chief Financial Officer. She holds a bachelor's and Master's of Business Administration from Case Western Reserve University.

PART I
"PLAYING WITH FIRE" DOCUMENTARY
MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2022 AT 4 PM
COMMUNITY CENTER AUDITORIUM

PART II
"PLAYING WITH FIRE" DISCUSSION
TUESDAY, JANUARY 25, 2022 AT 3 PM
LIBRARY LOGGIA

Both programs will be offered at no charge, but tickets will be required.

Ticket information will be available after January 3, 2022





Daly Walker, MD, is retired from a general surgery practice in Indiana. He is a graduate of Indiana University Medical School and served his residency at the University of Wisconsin. A fiction writer, his stories have appeared in numerous literary publications, including The Atlantic. Dr. Walker's work has been short-listed for Best American Short Stories and an O'Henry Award. He was nominated for a Pushcart Prize, and was a finalist for Best Magazine Writing.

His first collection of stories, "Surgeon Stories," has just been republished, and his latest collection of short stories, "The Doctor's Dilemma," is now available. Both books were published by Grand Canyon Press. He now divides his time between Boca Grande, Florida, and Quechee, Vermont, where he teaches a fiction writer's workshop in Dartmouth College's Osher Program.

Stories Matter: The Value of Writing in the Elderly

For the last several years, I have led a fiction writer's workshop in Dartmouth College's Osher continuing education program. For their first class, the students are asked to write a brief biographical essay about an event in their life that has impacted them significantly. For the remainder of the semester, they expand and fictionalize their piece to make it into a short story with conflict, atmosphere, epiphanies, and scenes with dialogue and action. The students in the class are usually elders, including an 82-year-old lawyer, a retired Dartmouth neuroscience professor, and a radiologist at the medical school both in their late 60s, a 70 plus library board chairperson, and an acclaimed former editor and writer for Time Magazine who is 86. (I am an octogenarian who still writes fiction.) Although they are seasoned veterans of life, they are rookie creative writers. It is doubtful their work will ever be published, and their readership will likely be sparse – confined to a few friends and family members. So is there value for these elders to spend what time they have left writing in relative obscurity? Do their stories matter? I believe so. What follows are reasons why.

Haruki Murakami wrote, "as the years have passed, the time has grown longer. The sad truth is that what I could recall in five seconds all too soon needed ten, then thirty, then a full minute - like shadows lengthening at dusk. Someday, I suppose, they will be swallowed up in darkness." More than death, many of us older citizens fear that the lengthening shadows of our ideas and memories, as Murakami suggests, will disappear into a darkness of forgetfulness never to be remembered again. But there are ways to ward off the demon of dementia and one of them is by writing. In scientific studies, the act of writing (and reading) has been shown to preserve cognitive function in the elderly.

Research done at Rush University Medical Center's Alzheimer's Disease Center and published in Neurology revealed that in the subjects of the study, writing later in their lives slowed memory decline by 32 percent compared to people of the same age who engaged in only average mental activity. These findings were confirmed in research done at Alzheimer's Research UK in Great Britain. The head of the study summarized their finding when he wrote, "Whatever is happening in the brain is happening, but the cognitively stimulating activities (such as writing) a person does independently slow down the progression of the disease (Alzheimer's)."

In addition to benefitting the cerebral cortex's cognitive function in the elderly, the emotional role of the limbic system in their brain's temporal lobe is influenced favorably by putting pen to paper. The hormonal highs that come from creative writing, no matter the author's age, include an adrenalin rush of inspiration followed by the feeling of

pleasure that comes after reading what they have written. This euphoria happens because their brains release the neurotransmitter, dopamine. That creative writing leads to hormonal mediated happiness and inspires an "upward spiral" of enthusiasm has been confirmed scientifically in research done at New Zealand's University of Otago. Dr. Tamlin Conner, a researcher from the study, explained, "Engaging in creative behavior leads to increases in well-being the next day, and this increased well-being is likely to facilitate creative activity on the following day." No matter how old you are, expressing your creative impulses in the written word can make you happy and lessens the risk of becoming lonely and depressed. As Steven King said of writing, "It's about getting up, getting well, and getting over. Getting happy, okay. Getting happy."

Not only do seniors want to preserve their brain function while they are alive and to be happy in their remaining years, as is human nature, but most of them also want something of themselves to exist beyond their earthly life, or as Plato put it, "they (we humans) are all in love with immortality." Just as authors admired in college like Frost, Faulkner, and Fitzgerald continue to live on in elders' minds, seniors who write can be immortalized in the minds of whomever their future audience might be by putting down on paper their ideas, feelings, and memories. By archiving their identity for future generations, they become, as John Updike said of writers, "angels forever singing."

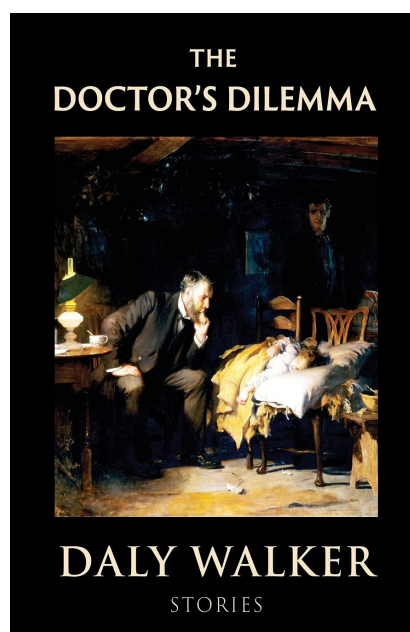
Ideas and memories of elders swarm around their grey-haired heads like bees drawn to perfume. To preserve them, they should be written down and shared, regardless of how large or small the audience who reads them will be. The stories will be important to those who write them because the act of recording them will slow the deterioration of the neurons in the author's brains and, hopefully, bring them a degree of satisfaction and make them happy, all the while, even in a small way, immortalizing them. However, the act of writing is not just self-serving. It can benefit humankind as well as the author. Words made into sentences can help connect people and foster understanding. By reminding the readers of their shared humanity, stories can evoke empathy and in doing so contribute to the creation of a more compassionate world. Yes, the stories of the elderly do indeed matter and need to be told.



A LITERARY SERIES EVENT

WITH

Daly Walker



Daly Walker has released his second collection of short stories, *The Doctor's Dilemma*. Daly creates poignant worlds shimmering with hope, pathos, trauma, and healing in this engrossing collection of short stories. Enlightenment and introspection pervade these stories, shaping their physician-protagonists' outlooks. They help readers to understand that all doctors stand in the shadow of the Hippocratic Oath. With their focus on issues of morality and mortality, the stories dramatize the lifelong commitment made by those who practice medicine.

Daly will speak in the library loggia. His talk will be followed by a booksigning and reception. The event is open to the public at no charge.

FEBRUARY 1, 2022 AT 4 PM
IN THE LIBRARY LOGGIA

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT NO CHARGE

TICKETS ARE REQUIRED  AVAILABLE AFTER JANUARY 3, 2022

A LITERARY SERIES EVENT WITH Local Author Sandy Jacobs

Boca Grande author Sandy Jacobs will speak in the library loggia on March 1, 2022. Sandy has written many articles and stories for magazines and newspapers, but it wasn't until she was eighty that she began to write books. She has now written three novels. Her first book, *Francie's Story*, was published in 2020. Earlier this year, she released *Tropical Disturbances*, and by the end of 2021, its sequel, *After the Storm*, will be published.

Francie's Story deals with the life of an Irish teenage girl whose circumstances cause her to leave Ireland to make a new life for herself in the United States.

Sandy's latest two novels are part love story, part character study, and part family dynamics. *Tropical Disturbances* tells the story of Sylvie and Hugo Deschamps. With their two children aboard their 42-foot sailboat, *Bateau de Rêve*, they set out from France to cross the Atlantic in an attempt to rebuild their marriage. But life on a tropical island isn't as peaceful as they imagined.

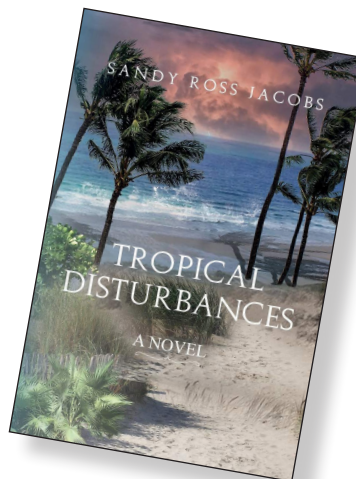
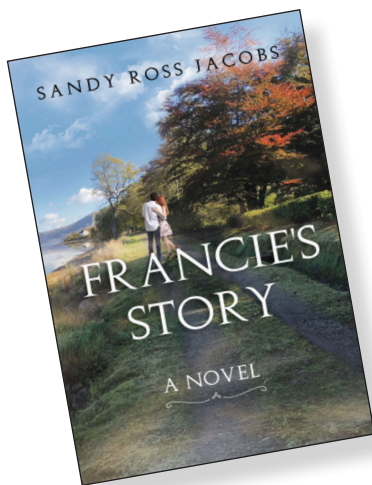
After the Storm revisits the tropical island of St. Dominic a few years after personal tragedies and a major hurricane wrecked homes and lives on the island. The prologue summarizes the story told in *Tropical Disturbances*, and the new story takes off from there. Readers can enjoy *After the Storm* as a standalone novel or as a sequel to the former book.

Sandy's talk will be followed by a book signing and reception.

**MARCH 1, 2022 AT 4 PM
IN THE LIBRARY LOGGIA**

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT NO CHARGE

TICKETS ARE REQUIRED 🌺 AVAILABLE AFTER 1/03/22



Sandy Ross Jacobs grew up in Philadelphia. She attended Overbrook High School, Pennsylvania State University, Temple University, and Villanova University for undergraduate and graduate studies.

She and her husband, Gene, have always enjoyed the charm of small islands. Their favorite vacation spot was an island in the Caribbean similar to the fictitious St. Dominic, to which they returned twice each year for almost twenty years. When the island lost its innocent charm, they discovered Boca Grande and have enjoyed it as homeowners for close to 35 years.

As a young adult, Sandy began writing articles about her experiences at home in suburban Philadelphia and its environs, then expanded her subject to include the many walking trips she and Gene took through the fields and woods of Italy, France, Madeira, and Guernsey.



Susan Hanafee is an award-winning former journalist whose career as a reporter for The Indianapolis Star spanned three decades. She formerly headed corporate communications for IPALCO Enterprises and Cummins Inc.

Her blogs can be found on www.susanhanafee.com. Her other previously published books include "Red, Black and Global: The Transformation of Cummins" (a corporate history); "Rachael's Island Adventures" (a collection of children's stories); "Never Name an Iguana" and "Rutabagas for Ten" (essays and observations on life).

A LITERARY SERIES EVENT
WITH
Local Author Susan Hanafee

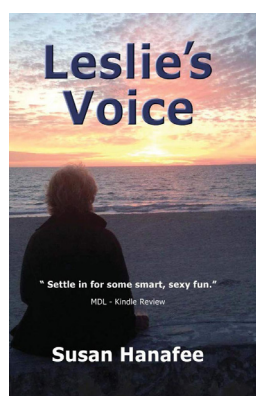
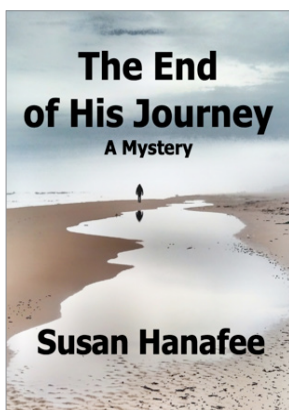
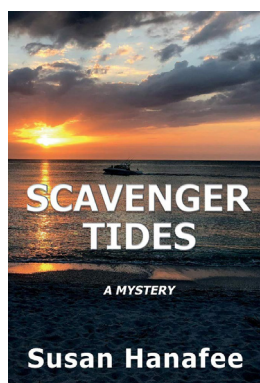
Susan Hanafee will speak in the library loggia on March 31, 2022. She will talk about writing and specifically about her mystery novels. Her most recent will be published in April 2022.

Susan's novel *Leslie's Voice*, re-released in 2020, introduces readers to her main character, Leslie. Leslie is trying to adapt to her new CEO, Brad Stewart, who plans to take over the neighboring electric utility and make himself the state's energy kingpin. She deals with the twists and turns of corporate intrigue while struggling to handle the men in her life. Colorful characters and a twisty plot form the backdrop for the introduction of savvy and independent Leslie and her reporter friend, Wes Avery.

Scavenger Tides, published in 2020, takes place shortly after Leslie Elliott quits her public relations job in the Midwest and moves to southwest Florida. Her dream of leaving the corporate world to become a mystery writer threatens to become a nightmare as buzzards lead her to a headless dog carcass, and a human body rolls in with the summer storms. Leslie's search for answers and her run-ins with the local sheriff take her on a journey that involves a fisherman with too many secrets, a local couple struggling to survive in a millionaire's playground, and criminals who will stop at nothing to protect their lucrative activities.

Susan's newest book, *The End of His Journey* – a sequel to *Scavenger Tides* – will be released in April 2022. In this story, the idyllic island where Leslie Elliott lives in southwest Florida is shaken by the return of drug dealer Jamie Thompson. He escapes the law and vows revenge on Leslie for exposing his thriving cocaine business. His presence leads to two deaths, including that of her friend. As Leslie sets out to discover what happened, Leslie joins forces with her reporter friend Wes Avery, who is delving into a decades-old island shooting.

Susan's talk will be followed by a booksigning and reception.



**MARCH 31, 2022 AT 4 PM
IN THE LIBRARY LOGGIA**

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

AT NO CHARGE

TICKETS ARE REQUIRED

AVAILABLE AFTER 1/03/22

ALICE GORMAN

Refrigerator, Mine

Through all the years I lived
alone, I knew my refrigerator
as an old friend.

I could reach for
the milk with my eyes closed,
observe the shelves,

butter and eggs in their place,
the vegetable drawer
with its humidity control

kept my celery crisp,
my bibb lettuce fresh,
and my carrots stiff.

Then, the family arrived
for a summer visit,
their canvas bags full

of special treats, their patés, their
Gouda, their unsweetened yogurt,
their four different kinds of milk.

Suddenly my leftovers disappeared,
hidden behind their boxes
of Middle Eastern dates.

I felt invaded by strange
unfamiliar offerings meant
to bring love

into what they thought
was my lonely life.

*Alice Gorman
Maine, Summer 2021*



*Alice Gorman has been writing poetry and prose since childhood. She credits her mother for reading A.A. Milne and *The Secret Garden* out loud to her. One of her greatest pleasures has been her nearly twenty-year membership in the Live Poets' Society of Boca Grande.*

*Alice earned her MFA in Writing from Spalding University in 2005. Her fiction and creative nonfiction have been published in *Vogue*, *O*, *The Oprah Magazine*, *The Louisville Review* and others. Her first novel, "Valeria Vose," was published in 2018. Her poems have been published in *The Dead Mule School of Southern Literature* and anthologized in "Island Dreams," and "Routes: 20 Years of Tenants Harbor Poetry Readings."*



Literature in the Courtyard 2022

Presented through the Generosity of Cotton Hanley

FEATURING

Tom McGuane

IN CONVERSATION WITH JOHN CLEGHORN

Literature in the Courtyard 2022 is the first in a series of annual events endowed by Cotton Hanley. The Library Foundation is honored to feature award-winning author Tom McGuane in conversation with John Cleghorn for this inaugural event.

Tom's impressive body of work includes ten novels, four short story collections, and three nonfiction works. He also wrote four screenplays: *Rancho Deluxe*, *The Missouri Breaks*, *Tom Horn*, and *92 in the Shade* – which he also directed. In 2018, Tom released *Cloudbursts*, thirty-eight pieces of collected and new stories. The book was a Wall Street Journal "Ten Best Books of the Year" selection. In Tom's fiction, original characters play out compelling human dramas against backdrops of vivid American landscapes.

His many honors include a Wallace Stegner Fellowship, election to the prestigious Academy of Arts and Letters, and a National Book Award nomination. In addition to his many literary accolades, he was also elected to the National Cutting Horse Association Hall of Fame and the Fly Fishing Hall of Fame.



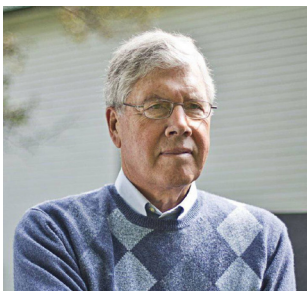
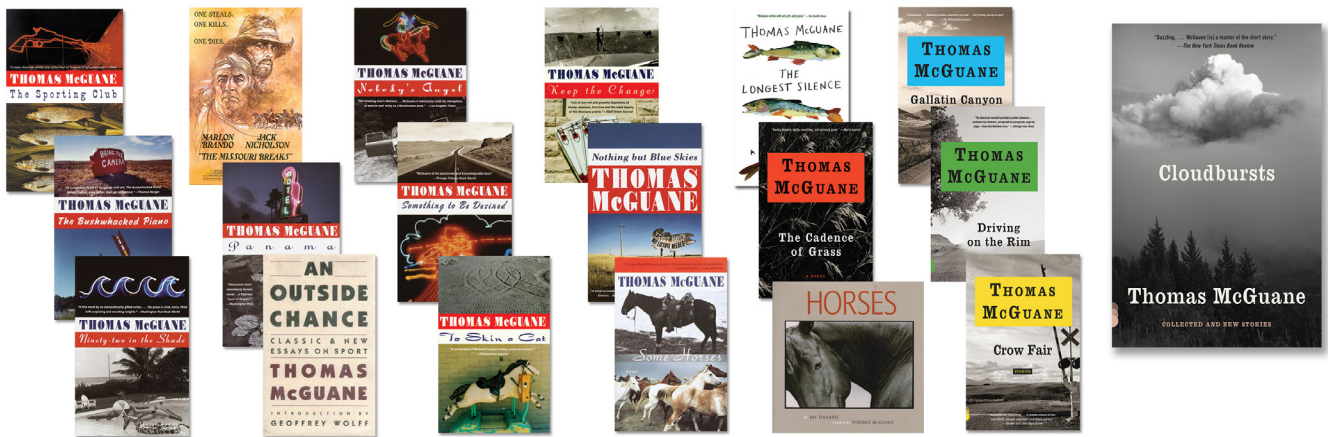
Photo by Anne Sherwood

FEBRUARY 17, 2022 4 PM

LIBRARY LOGGIA

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT NO CHARGE

TICKETS ARE REQUIRED 🌸 AVAILABLE 1/3/22

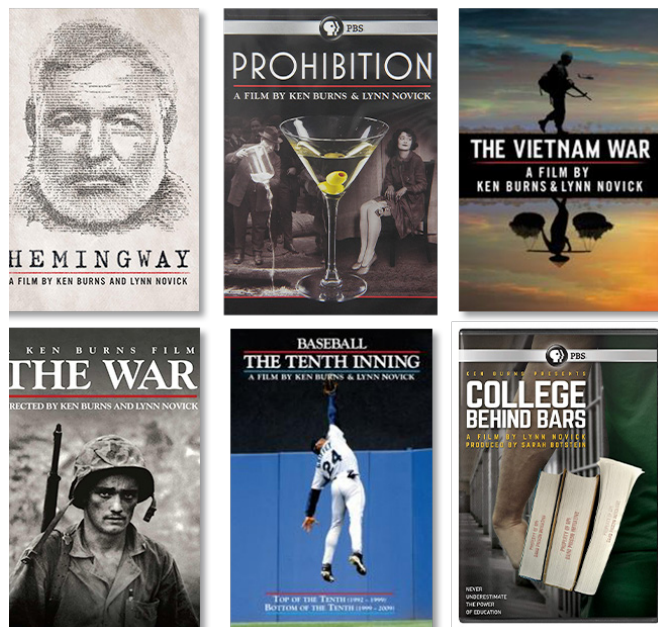


John Cleghorn retired as Chairman and CEO and a director of the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) in 2001. He is currently a director of the Atlantic Salmon Federation, Chancellor Emeritus of Wilfrid Laurier University, and Governor Emeritus of McGill University. John is a board member of the Johann Fust Library Foundation and served as president from 2019 to 2021. He is an avid reader, historian, and fly fisherman.

Johann Fust Library Foundation Annual Benefit

PRESENTING
Lynn Novick

AWARD-WINNING DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER



We are excited to present Lynn Novick as our featured speaker for this year's Annual Benefit.

Ms. Novick has been directing and producing landmark documentary films about American life and culture, history, politics, sports, art, architecture,

literature, and music for more than 30 years. She has created 92 hours of acclaimed programming for PBS in collaboration with Ken Burns, including *Ernest Hemingway*, *The Vietnam War*, *Baseball*, *Jazz*, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, *The War*, and *Prohibition* – landmark series that have garnered 19 Emmy nominations. One of the most respected documentary filmmakers and storytellers in America, Ms. Novick has received Emmy, Peabody, and Alfred I. duPont Columbia Awards.

College Behind Bars, Novick's first film as solo director, premiered at the New York Film Festival and aired on PBS in 2019. The film explores the transformational journeys of incarcerated men and women as they struggle to earn degrees in one of the most rigorous and effective prison education programs in the country, the Bard Prison Initiative (BPI).

Ms. Novick is collaborating with Ken Burns, Sarah Botstein, and writer Geoffrey C. Ward on a six-hour examination of America's response to the Holocaust and a series on the presidency of Lyndon B. Johnson. Her next solo project, produced by acclaimed filmmaker Laurens Grant, is a major series on the history of crime and punishment in America. Potential future projects include a series on the history of Soviet spying in America and a series about remarkable American women's public and private lives. She is a *magna cum laude* graduate of Yale with honors in American Studies and lives in New York City.

*One of the most respected
documentary filmmakers
and story tellers in
America, Novick has
received Emmy, Peabody
and Alfred I. duPont
Columbia Awards.*

THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 2022 – 4:30 PM
BOCA GRANDE COMMUNITY CENTER AUDITORIUM

Ticket information will be available in January 2022.

Johann Fust Library Foundation Author's Luncheon

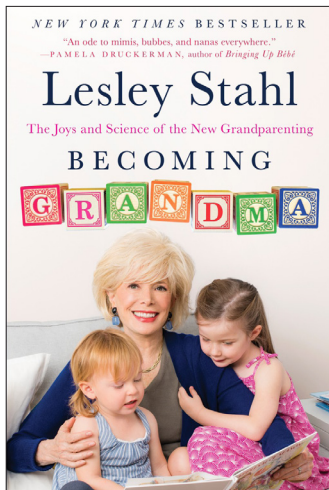
PRESENTING

Lesley Stahl

JOURNALIST AND AUTHOR

The Library Foundation is honored to present our first Author's Luncheon. Our guest speaker is the inimitable journalist Lesley Stahl. Ms. Stahl's presence in the national media is legendary. She has won many awards for her investigative journalism. To mention just a few, she was awarded 13 News and Documentary Emmy Awards – one for Lifetime Achievement. In 1996 she received the Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Silver Baton for her segment titled "Punishing Saddam." In 2013 she won the Edward R. Murrow Award for Overall Excellence in Television.

Ms. Stahl has worked at CBS News since 1972, when she covered the Watergate hearings. During the presidency of Jimmy Carter, she became the first woman at CBS to serve as White House Correspondent. She was also the CBS White House Correspondent during the presidencies of Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush. As the moderator of "Face the Nation" on Sunday mornings from 1972-91, Ms. Stahl interviewed world leaders including Margaret Thatcher, Boris Yeltsin, and Yasser Arafat. She has been featured on 60 minutes since 1991, where she has repeatedly demonstrated journalistic courage and excellence.



Not only has Ms. Stahl's journalism career been iconic, she has also authored two books. *Reporting Live* was published in 1999 by Simon and Schuster, and *Becoming Grandma* was published in 2016 by Blue Rider Press, an imprint of Penguin Random House. In *Becoming Grandma*, Ms. Stahl writes about the transformative experience of being a grandmother. She approaches the subject in both a personal and a journalistic manner. The theme is timely as many baby boomers are now grandparents, and they are decidedly different than those of past generations. Ms. Stahl tells this story through personal interviews with friends, discussions with professionals, and by relating her own experience.

The Library Foundation is thrilled that Lesley Stahl will be our featured speaker at this first-ever Author's Luncheon, which will be held at the beautiful Gasparilla Inn. Ticket information will be available in February of 2022.

THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 2022

11:30 AM

AT THE GASPARILLA INN

TICKET INFORMATION WILL BE
AVAILABLE IN FEBRUARY 2022



Delivered Under Fire: Absalom Markland and Freedom's Mail

by Candice Shy Hooper

Potomac Books, Fall 2022



Millions of letters traveled between the front lines and the home front during the Civil War. For more than a century and a half, historians have used those letters to produce more than 75,000 books about those four terrible years. To write my first book, *Lincoln's Generals' Wives*, I relied extensively on letters between generals Grant, Sherman, Frémont, and McClellan and their wives for insight into how the women affected the men's military careers. More than once during the years I spent researching that story, I asked myself: How did all those letters get to and from the ever-shifting war zones so quickly? I was sure someone had written that story, but when I couldn't find it, I decided to write the history I wanted to know. *Delivered Under Fire* is the first biography of the man who—in the midst of war—created the most efficient U.S. military mail system ever devised, much of which is still in operation today.

Absalom Markland occupies a unique place in our history. At the beginning of the war, at the request of his childhood friend, Ulysses S. Grant, he revolutionized the military mail system, and Grant gave him the honorary title of Colonel. He met regularly with President Lincoln during the war and carried important messages between Lincoln and generals Grant and Sherman at crucial points in our nation's peril. Markland was tirelessly and fearlessly devoted to delivering the mail, often delivering letters to troops on the battlefield. He risked his life and endured the horrors and privations of war along with Grant and Sherman and their men.

Known throughout the country in his day, Markland is all but invisible now, even as books about the Civil War and Reconstruction proliferate. Nearly every biography of Lincoln, Sherman, and Grant includes at least one footnote about Markland. However his important, sometimes daily, interaction with them during the war and with Sherman and Grant after the war, has so far escaped notice. Like so many men in the nineteenth century, Markland worked at many jobs—teacher, riverboat captain, lawyer, landlord, delivery agent, government clerk—before the tragedy of the Civil War created an environment in which his jack-of-all-trades talents could be deployed on a national scale for the most valuable possible cause: saving the Union.

One-time postmaster Lincoln and his generals Grant and Sherman knew the value of communication with the home front to the success of their armies, as have military commanders throughout history. In mathematical terms, mail = morale. Even today, mail carries the highest priority within U.S. military services everywhere in the world. In exploring the value of communication among families in wartime, *Delivered Under Fire* is a tribute to the men and women who make that communication happen, as he did, even when getting the mail through meant it had to be “delivered under fire.”

Candice Shy Hooper is a published poet and the author of "Lincoln's Generals' Wives," which won three national awards. She serves on the Editorial Advisory Board of The Journal of Military History and is a member of the Ulysses S. and Julia D. Grant Historical Home Advisory Board in Detroit, Michigan. She has served on the Board of Directors of President Lincoln's Cottage in Washington, DC, and is a past president of the Johann Fust Library Foundation. "Delivered Under Fire" will be released next autumn.

My Taj Mahal

I will let some other
white haired explorers
set sail across far away seas,
paddle on rivers
infested by caymans
gleefully fly hot air balloons.

I will let those elderly travelers
ride with great gusto
camels and elephants,
mean spirited horses,
sporting brave grins
on their dusty faces.

All is accepted, all is forgiven
in the name of adventure
by these aging crowds,
while in pursuit
of that one last picture
of that one last exotic sunset.

As I am counting
how many sunsets
I may have left,
I do not look for exoticism,
I do not care
for adventures.

I have seen
my Taj Mahal,
rose and celestial vision
arising at dawn
from a sea
of abject poverty.

I cherish that memory
and myriads of others
as much as I do
my loving family,
my aging body.
I have seen my Taj Mahal.

By Simonetta Balzer



Simona (Simonetta) Balzer was born in Rome, Italy. She received her degree in Classics and Archaeology at the University of Rome. She joined The Live Poets' Society of Boca Grande ten years ago. Simona and her husband Giorgio now divide their time between Boca Grande and New Jersey.



Friends

The shirt threw its sleeve across the shoulder of the vest hanging next to it in the closet and let it rest.

The vest hung more softly in the warmth of the companionship the two shared,
for in its duty, it enrobed the shirt in comfort and kept it warm.

This was their silent secret and they kept it with humility.

The human beneficiary of these two could never know that the comfort they rendered her was also known to each of them.

by Nancy White
August 2021

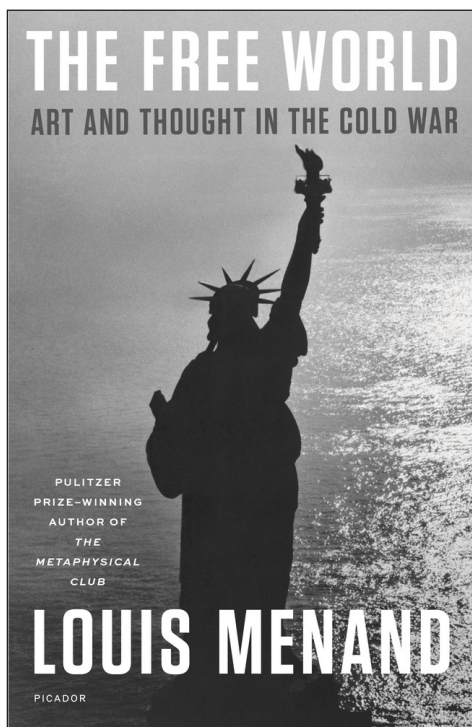
Poet's Note: I have always had a fascination with words and in time with writing of every kind; poetry being the most exquisite form of writing. Poetry conveys in words the sense of something observed or felt that is unfathomable in an analytical way. Answers to questions like "why did this catch my attention", "why did I feel this" can be unknowable. Surmising answers is not the activity of poets, but critics, whose answers often befuddle the poet.



The Free World: Art and Thought in the Cold War

by Louis Menand

Published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021



Louis Menand won a Pulitzer for his book *The Metaphysical Club* and it's my guess he's going to win another for this tome, *The Free World; Art and Thought in the Cold War*. This is history at its very best, up close and personal, but also on the grand scale, telling the epic tale of America growing into its world leadership self from World War II to Watergate... Menand seems to know everything about everybody involved in this vast undertaking, and he tells it all with brio and the light touch of a seasoned staff writer for the *New Yorker*. To clarify: this is not the usual sort of history book, though—it is an example of intellectual history. “Intellectual history,” Menand tells us on page 346, “explains art and ideas by examining the conditions of their production and reception (as this book tries to do).”

Reader, there are more than 700 pages, but fear not! Each of the eighteen chapters (and in turn these are themselves finely parceled out into littler units) tells a distinct story of its own, so one can skip about freely from painter to musician to philosopher to politician to poet, from New York to Berlin, to Paris or London, from reading about Kennan, James Baldwin, Miles Davis, Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, little magazines and Hollywood and the CIA, or universities like Yale and Berkeley... So this astonishing synthesis of the arts and ideas and the politics of our time and place (I speak as one who graduated from high school in 1955 and college in 1959) is always dramatic and vivid with biographical detailing of the myriad actors and actresses whom Menand calls up to enliven his pages. The scope of it is encyclopedic but yet so distinctly particular and controlled by the author's fine mind that one gets a really broad education from reading him; and yet one feels that it has all been a vast entertainment!



Davis Hammond was born in Boston. He was educated at St. Paul's School and Harvard College where he earned a BA and a Ph.D. He taught Romance Languages and French and Italian Literature, first at Brandeis University, then at Dartmouth College, and ultimately at Exeter Academy. After retiring to Boca Grande, an old family haunt since 1947 (and where he and his wife, Corinna, honeymooned in 1966), he continued to teach at the Pierian Spring Academy and Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Ringling College in Sarasota. He served on the Board of Directors for the Johann Fust Library Foundation, where he is now a Literary Advisor.

FOCUS ON FICTION

A WRITING CLASS & WORKSHOP

The Johann Fust Library Foundation is honored to present a writing workshop titled "Focus on Fiction." The course is designed for those who aspire to learn and practice the art of creative writing.

Students will have the opportunity to improve their own projects in progress, read passages aloud in class, receive guided feedback from the group, as well as margin notes and instruction from Lucinda Dixon Sullivan.

Sessions begin March 16th and run for five Wednesdays from 3:00 to 5:00 pm, including a break for Easter week, concluding April 20th. Registration information will be available after January 3rd.

Lucinda is originally from Kentucky. Her mother taught Speech and Drama at Western Kentucky University and coached the debate team. Lucinda's early life revolved around the University. She went on to the University of Kentucky and graduated from the University of Louisville. She later went to Vermont College, where she received her MFA in writing focused on fiction. Lucinda's novel, *It was the Goodness of the Place*, was published in 2003 by Fleur-de-Lis Press. She has also written essays and short stories and has had an active life as an editor.

Currently, Lucinda is working on a collection of stories, including a novella. For *Island Booknotes 2020*, she wrote a review of Colum McCann's 2020 book, *Apeirogon*. Lucinda was featured as one of the "Authors Unmasked" at the 2021 Virtual Literary Series produced by the Library Foundation.



CLASSES BEGIN MARCH 16, 2022 3 – 5 PM

IN THE FOUNDATION HEADQUARTERS ON THE 2ND FLOOR OF THE LIBRARY
REGISTRATION INFORMATION AVAILABLE AFTER JANUARY 3, 2022



JOHN THOMAS

Sun glistens on sea
like a beaten silver tray,
glints of dancing light.

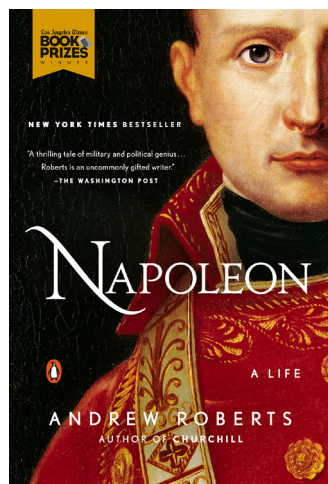
More Haiku by John Thomas
on pages 20 & 21



John H. Thomas was born in Wales, U.K. and spent a 40-year career with Wedgwood, the British ceramic manufacturer in the U.S., England, Canada, Asia and Australia. He and his wife Claudia live in Boca Grande FL. He enjoys singing with Grande Glee, is an avid reader of history and poetry and is a keen, but frustrated golfer.

Napoleon: A Life
by Andrew Roberts

Published by Viking, 2014



Winston Churchill described Napoleon as the greatest man of action born in Europe since Julius Caesar. The Duke of Wellington, who defeated Napoleon at the battle of Waterloo, when asked who was the greatest captain of the age replied, "In this age, in past ages, in any age, Napoleon."

Throughout the years historians have had to sort through so-called biographies, often entirely fictitious, of people who claimed knowledge of Napoleon. He is perhaps the most written about human being in history.

Napoleon's reputation was damaged when Hitler, a week after capturing Paris in 1940, visited Napoleon's tomb and had himself photographed staring down at the sarcophagus. A fatal connection was made in the public imagination between the two dictators, both born outside their countries, both sought to dominate Europe, both defeated in Russian campaigns.

Andrew Roberts has written a remarkable biography of Napoleon, having done years of extraordinary research. Roberts has had access to the work of the Foundation Napoleon in Paris which since 2004 has been publishing every one of the more than 33,000 letters that Napoleon signed. In addition, Roberts visited sixty-nine archives, libraries, museums, and research institutes in fifteen countries, and he visited fifty-three of the sixty battlefields where Napoleon fought. The resulting biography is certainly comprehensive, but Roberts tells the thrilling tale with such panache and exuberance that it is as entertaining as great fiction.

Roberts tells of Napoleon's early life when he was educated by an order of monks who subscribed to the Great Man View of history. Napoleon's heroes were Julius Caesar and Alexander the Great. When the French Revolution started, Napoleon welcomed it. In the beginning it upheld the Enlightenment ideals of Voltaire and Rousseau, but he rejected the turbulence. He eventually restructured France into a progressive centralized republic, and handed down laws for the ages. Roberts relates the triumphs as well as the atrocities—the good, the bad and the ugly. Roberts argues against the "deranged hubris" often ascribed to Napoleon by some historians.

Roberts believes that the recent information revealed by Napoleon's correspondence shows a man of charm, humor and the capacity for self appraisal.

Although the scope of Roberts's Napoleon biography is almost overwhelming, he has written the colossal epic as a clear and fascinating story. In Roberts's telling, Napoleon deserves to join his heroes of antiquity. Andrew Roberts has given several lectures recently at the Boca Grande Community Center. His talks are as engaging as his prose.



Lindsay Major was born in Wyoming and raised in Kansas City. She and her husband, Lee, have had a home in Boca Grande for twenty five years. Since childhood Lindsay has loved books and libraries. After a lifetime of mostly reading fiction and poetry, she is lately drawn to reading history and biography for pleasure. She finds that non-fiction in recent years reads as great literature, especially in the works of writers like David McCullough, Andrew Roberts, and Robert Caro. Lindsay is a published poet and has just completed a biography, "Lindsay Hughes Cooper, a Portrait." She is a past president of the Johann Fust Library Foundation.

Sleepover Secrets by Patricia Christakos

Published 2021

Patricia Christakos, a Boca Grande fine art photographer and video artist, has recently published her first artist's book, *Sleepover Secrets*. The work complements Christakos's installation, *The Sleepover*, currently on exhibit at the Southeast Museum of Photography at Daytona State College through December 16, 2021. It is part of their *Fresh Perspectives* exhibition.

A poetic 52-page meditation on the nature of girlhood, *Sleepover Secrets* combines Christakos's color photographs with sparse diaristic entries concerning the fluidity of memory and the way time and space shape identity and remembrances. For the artist, the ritual of the sleepover inspires diverse visual, cultural, and societal associations and congruences. From early Hollywood movies to an eclectic gathering of material objects—a sprinkler, plastic horse, a woman's wig—Christakos shares her insights into the liminal state of girlhood. She

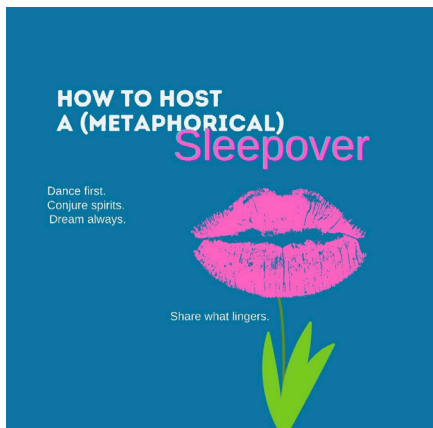
encourages readers to enter her world and their own with fresh eyes. Christakos calls her work “secrets,” so you'll listen.

Designed by Caleb Cain Marcus of Luminosity Labs, Brooklyn, New York, *Sleepover Secrets* was printed in Amsterdam by Robstolk Press in a limited edition of 300. The book measures 6” x 8” and includes 42 color photographs.

Patricia Christakos, a recent graduate of Media Arts from Maine Media College in Rockport, Maine, lives in Boca Grande and Cazenovia, New York. Her photography and experimental films have been featured nationally. Most recently her work appeared at the Midwest Center for Photography, the LA Independent Women Film Awards, and the Southeast Center for Photography. Locally, she was highlighted at J McLaughlin's, Park Avenue, Boca Grande, for their outdoor exhibition, *Art after Dark*, in March 2021.



Photo by Monica Browning



Lindsay Hughes Cooper: A Portrait by Lindsay Major

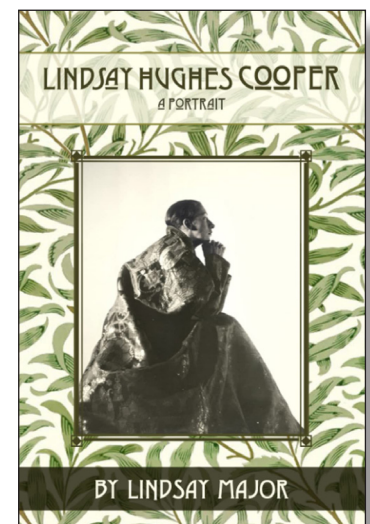
Published 2021

Lindsay Hughes Cooper came to prominence during a time when women were rarely welcomed in the inner sanctum of the art world. Born in a small Midwestern town in the early twentieth century, Lindsay, with persistence and determination, became an authority on Asian art. This biography tells the story of this complex and accomplished woman.

Lindsay Major is the niece and namesake of Lindsay Hughes Cooper. She wrote this biography to give tribute to her aunt and to resurrect her legacy.

Cover photo: Lindsay Hughes, modeling a robe from the Nelson Gallery's textile collection.

LINDSAY MAJOR



LANCE MORROW

A LITERARY SERIES EVENT WITH Lance Morrow

The Library Foundation is honored that author and journalist Lance Morrow will speak in the library loggia. His essays appeared for many years in *Time Magazine*, where he wrote over 150 cover stories, eight Man of the Year profiles, and hundreds of essays. His essays covered wars from Vietnam to the Middle East and Bosnia, every presidential election from Nixon to Biden, and the radical changes in American life in the second half of the 20th century into the 21st.

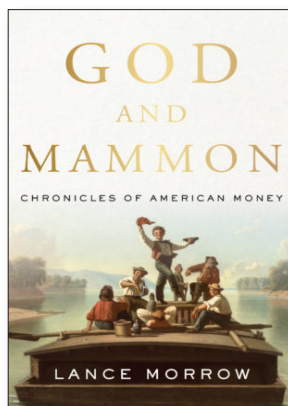


In his most recent book *God and Mammon: Chronicles of American Money*, Mr. Morrow writes about the partnership of God and mammon in the New World—about the ways in which Americans have made money and lost money and about how they have thought and obsessed about this peculiarly American subject. Fascinated by the tracings of theology in the ways of American money, Mr. Morrow sees a reconciliation of God and mammon in the working out of the American Dream.

Mr. Morrow is the author of eight other books, including a widely acclaimed memoir, *The Chief*. His essays have been published in *Fishing in the Tiber* and *Second Drafts of History*. He is a winner of the National Magazine Award in essay and criticism and is currently the Henry Grunwald Senior Fellow at Washington's Ethics and Public Policy Center.

Mr. Morrow was born in Philadelphia, the son of two journalists. His mother was a syndicated Washington columnist. His father was editor of the *Saturday Evening Post*. He then joined the staff of New York Governor and later Vice President Nelson Rockefeller, for whom he became chief speechwriter, aide, and political adviser.

Mr. Morrow grew up in Washington, where he was a Senate page in the early 1950s. He attended Gonzaga High School and went on to Harvard.



**MARCH 22, 2022 AT 4 PM
IN THE LIBRARY LOGGIA**

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT NO CHARGE

TICKETS ARE REQUIRED

AVAILABLE 1/03/22



Scudding gray storm clouds
driven by gusty March gales
race on like wolf packs.

by John Thomas



A LITERARY SERIES EVENT
WITH
Susan Brind Morrow

The Library Foundation is honored that author and poet Susan Brind Morrow will speak in the library loggia. She has written extensively on language and metaphor drawn from the natural world.

Ms. Morrow studied hieroglyphic texts as an undergraduate and graduate student in Classics at Columbia University in New York. She first went to Egypt as an archaeologist on the Dakhleh Oasis Project. She continued in Egypt and Sudan as a fellow of the Institute for Current World Affairs. While there, she lived with the nomadic population, studying the Arabic language and desert traditions with a particular interest in the origin of hieroglyphs in the desert environment. This decade of work became her first book, *The Names of Things: A Passage in the Egyptian Desert*, one of three finalists for the Pen Award in 1998.

Ms. Morrow's analysis, translation and commentary of the hieroglyphic text in the Pyramid of Unis, *The Dawning Moon of the Mind: Unlocking the Pyramid Texts*, was published by Farrar Straus and Giroux in 2015. She is also the author of *Wolves and Honey: A Hidden History of the Natural World*.

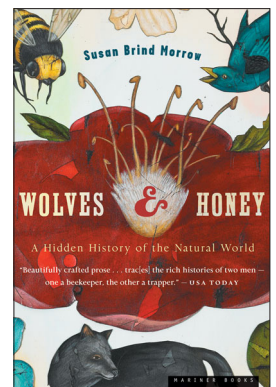
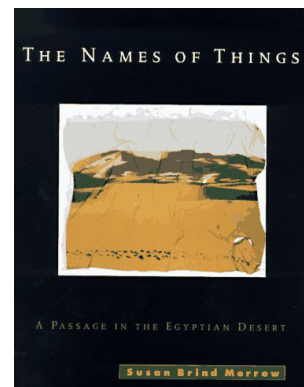
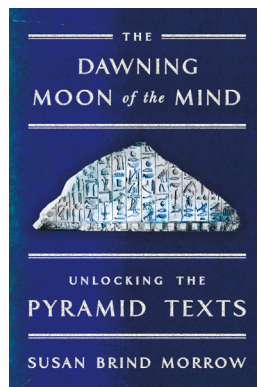
Her papers are studied as part of The Sowell Family Collection in Literature Community and the Natural World at Texas Tech University. Ms. Morrow's work has appeared in *Harper's*, *The New York Times*, *The Nation*, *The Seneca Review*, and *Lapham's Quarterly*. She is a fellow of The New York Institute for the Humanities and a former fellow of the Guggenheim Foundation.

**MARCH 24, 2022 AT 4 PM
IN THE LIBRARY LOGGIA**

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT NO CHARGE

TICKETS ARE REQUIRED

AVAILABLE 1/03/22



Arrowheads of geese
fly swiftly across the sky,
a change of season.

by John Thomas

B.G.- Plus Ça Change

Then

For Barbara and me, our affair with B.G. began over 25 years ago. It started strong, remains strong: changed, but true. For us, even to have considered a Florida locale was a tectonic shift. But persistent “nudging” by Sewickley, PA friends had us accepting their B.G. long-weekend invitation. Instantly entranced, we bought and built here in B.G.

Rationalizing our B.G. infatuation with our Florida reticence, we simply deemed our new Island external to and independent of the Florida entirety. This was NOT Florida! Back then, such Florida feelings were not unique. Epitomized by the father of a close B.G. friend from my frigidly native Buffalo: “I’m not afraid of death. I just don’t want to have to go through Florida to get there.” To conclude our Florida hypocrisy, we sped to the Lee County Property Office to grandfather our tax base and thus became actual residents of the Florida state!

“Of Course, It’s Changed!”

We settled on the Island as mere babes in our 50’s: “The Kiddies,” as dubbed by a neighbor. How we snickered when informed B.G. was “the place where really old people came to visit their grandparents.” So young that by now, most of our originally grand Boca Grande mentors are no longer here. And, how grand they were!

An early entrée for us was to the Island yachtsman, Ted Brown. Until his advancing age was termed a medical-nautical-impediment, the Browns sailed “solo duo” between their B.G. and Nantucket properties on their sleekest of sloops, Excalibur, trailed by dingy, Merlyn. Saying he’d been coming to B.G. “since God invented barrier islands,” Ted cautioned I’d hear many his age complain that B.G. had “changed over the years; not what it used to be.” Ted’s rejoinder: “Of course it’s changed; Nature of the beast! Just never forget, no matter the changes, it’s STILL the best! Just look at Naples, for heaven’s sake!” How prescient!

Glorious Pieces of a B.G. Puzzle

As we cracked open this Island’s kaleidoscope, we discovered that Boca Grande was... well just uniquely, Boca Grande: The wonderfully weary Gasparilla Inn (“If you can’t pass the test of sleeping on iron-framed beds, it ain’t for you.”); a “stuck-in-the-19th century” village (the financial district defined as the area near the ATM machine at Englewood Bank). A charming historic district filled with clapboard cottages (“tear- downs” in Palm Beach, but in B.G. hotly sought after); Village royalty: the original fishing guide families, long-ago migrants from Key West; A Park Avenue filled with colorful cottages of colorful resident artists; supper at the Temp so dark a flashlight was needed to read the menu; Air Futch (a spin in the sky with native tales to match); Bayard’s great equalizer gift: The Dog Park; and the magnificently understated Johann Fust!

Those Intellectual Island Pursuits

How special was B.G.’s broad scope of active intellectual (and slightly intellectual) enterprises: Theatricals; Poetry; Historical Research; Visual Arts of all kinds; Music; Lectures on topics too numerous to name. All backed up by the resources of Johann Fust. In scorning the newly emergent colonial institution: “the American intellectual



During his long professional career in banking and finance, Emerson always made time for painting and creative writing. He and Barbara came to Boca Grande 20+ years ago seeking a sunny escape for a few winter months. This winter escape led to a rich Island life paralleling lengthy times spent in northern Italy. These two locales combined to focus his retirement passions: his poetry, his interpretive work on the Renaissance arts of Florentine cofanetti, and his creative writing.

retreat,” George Bernard Shaw vilified the popular Chautauqua Institute as: “the acme of mediocrity.” But for us, B.G. was the real thing!

We dove right in! Fred Berger’s wonderful Live Poets included real poets like Alison Bradford. The Scholars did indeed focus on historical research of ideas – no slouches there – actual library research! Leadership flowed from such as gentle gentleman Fred; depth from such as Christian Scott-Hansen; spice and fun from Carol Sundberg; zany zing from Jane Geniesse; the unrivaled voice of Pam Miles reciting in the Library Garden.

B.G.’s binding twine: commonality of camaraderie; distaste for the nasty partisan; policy not personality; sharing not sermonizing.

And Now

We were B.G.’s “new kids” until, suddenly, we were not. Aging happens! B.G. isn’t what it used to be...but nor are we. So many of us have come and have gone. Years have changed both the Island and us. That never stops. Houses much bigger. The Inn’s been resort-i-fied. Golf cart styles got carried away. Shifts toward destination, away from escape. The cottages still thrive. The Temp is still dark. Island friendships are still electrically eclectic and long. More moss on Johann Fust’s steps, but still nonpareil.

As to Ted Brown’s insight: “T.G. for B.G.”

Editor's Note: Plus ça change: from French, meaning "the more things change, the more they remain the same."



JACK BLUM

At Sea

Beyond the rhythmic rushing of the ship
Sailing East in a soft but moonless night,
Far North there is a tiny, lighted blip,

A twinkling, moving inch of yellow light.
No sound is heard, and yet there would be some
If she were closer, dancing in the brine,

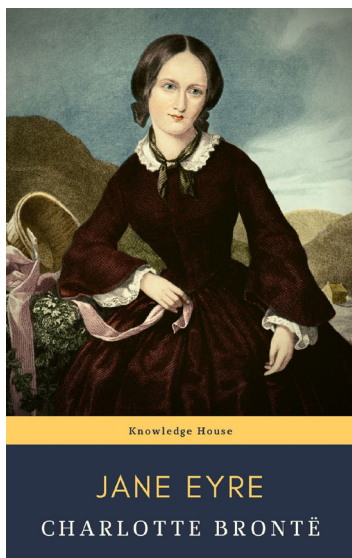
Perhaps, while steaming on her voyage home.
How strange to see her pass and have her still
Too far away for haunting signal blast,

Or even thoughts to span the growing miles,
And re-ignite some dream of Journeys past,
Leaving one of us, at least, with smiles.

Jack Blum 12-3-2013



Jack won the Poetry Prize at the Hotchkiss School in 1947 and says he has never quite gotten over it. Since then, he has been a swimmer, sailor, lawyer, banker, farmer and, along the way, husband, father, and grandfather. A Florida resident since 2008, more than 50 years ago Jack began coming from Connecticut for winter visits to Boca Grande with his wife Jeanne.



Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë

Mr. Estey was a proper man. Soft spoken and somber; he always wore a suit, usually with a vest. He had a pencil mustache and thinning hair. As an English master for the Fourth Form, he introduced me and other 16-year-old boys to his favorite literature: the Victorian classics by Dickens, Austen and the Bronte sisters.

If these authors were Mr. Estey's passion, one could scarcely tell by his demeanor.

I struggled. The prose was convoluted; the usage dated; the sentences long; and, the emotions seemed overwrought to a 16-year-old boy. Moreover, my spelling was atrocious (and still is, thank goodness for spell-check) and my grammar was shaky. My written work was returned painted in red. In the end Mr. Estey gave up getting me to love his favorite literature and focused on how to spell separate.

I am now returning to Mr. Estey's assignments, most recently to *Jane Eyre*. What a wonderful work! The character sketches are indelible: who has not met a brat like

John Reed or a social butterfly like his sister Charlotte? Perhaps the Reverend Brocklehurst is a bit over the top but what a name! Edward Rochester's complex personality is like a mystery within the mystery—slowly revealed piece by piece.

I linger over Brontë's descriptions of nature and now appreciate how they not only reinforce the scene but also foreshadow the story:

The breeze was from the west: it came over the hills, sweet with scents of heath and rush; the sky was of stainless blue; the stream descending the ravine, swelled with past spring rains, poured along plentiful and clear, catching golden gleams from the sun, and sapphire hints from the firmament. As we advanced and left the track, we trod a soft turf, mossy fine and emerald green, minutely enameled with a tiny white flower, and spangled with a star-like yellow blossom: the hills, meantime, shut us quite in; for the glen, towards its head, wound to their very core.

If one savors each chapter they are about the same length as an episode of a Netflix series. One in an evening does not seem enough but more than two can put you into a binge-watching stupor.

Of course, the novel has been seized upon by readers today as introducing a nineteenth-century feminist. Yes, Jane Eyre stood up to Mrs. Reed; had the fortitude to not only survive Lowood but also prosper; parried St. John Rivers; and, was Mr. Rochester's equal in courtship. Brontë shares with us Eyre's thoughts which reveal a self-aware, young woman of principle, discipline and moral strength. Impressive, even by 21st century standards.

Yet we should not read too much of our 21st century sensibility into this novel. After all, in the end she gets her man and her fortune—the acceptable objectives of a proper woman of her age.



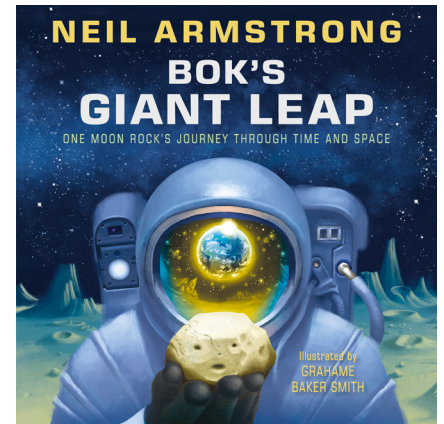
Dod and Susan Fraser started vacationing in Boca Grande in 1987. They purchased their home in 1994 and have spent the winters in Boca Grande over the last numbers of years. They spend their summers in Sonoma California, near two of their sons and their families. A third son and family are in Bozeman Montana. Originally from Ohio, Dod spent fifty years in the New York area working on Wall Street. He is on the board of the Library Foundation; active in the lecture series of the Community Center; and, a member of St Andrew's.



Bok's Giant Leap One Moon Rock's Journey Through Time and Space by Neil Armstrong

On July 20, 1969, astronaut and engineer Neil Armstrong became the first person to set foot on the moon. He then spoke the memorable words, "That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind."

In 2006, at the Cincinnati Museum Center, Neil Armstrong was honored by NASA as an Ambassador of Exploration. At the ceremony, Neil presented the museum with a piece of moon rock NASA donated for the occasion.



Carol Armstrong

In his speech, the famous astronaut told a dramatic story of the formation of planet earth through the eyes of the rock, which he named Bok. He narrated Bok's fascinating story in vivid detail, humanizing the rock's 600-million-year journey – a journey that brought him to his resting place on the moon. That is where "a peculiar creature" (Neil) picked him up.

Carol Armstrong had the idea of bringing her late husband's story to life. She facilitated the publishing of *Bok's Giant Leap* with beautiful illustrations by Grahame Baker Smith. Crown Books for Young Readers will publish the book in February of 2022. All proceeds from the book sales will go to the Cincinnati Museum Center.



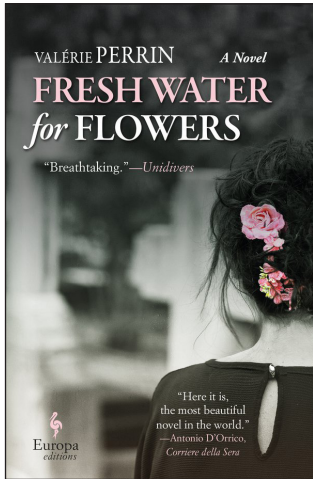
You might think that rocks are boring lumps you find on the ground. But scientists have a saying: "Rocks remember." And if there's one rock that has been on a truly unforgettable adventure, it's Bok.

Fresh Water for Flowers

by Valérie Perrin

Translated from the French by Hildegarde Serle

Published by Europa Editions, 2020



Could a book whose protagonist is a cemetery caretaker contain everything life has to offer? It can, and that's the case with *Fresh Water for Flowers*. The graveyard is a symbolic backdrop of grief, yet the story is full of life.

Each of the 94 chapters begins with an epitaph. For example, Chapter 23 begins, "If life is but a passage, let us at least scatter flowers on that passage," and Chapter 77 begins, "It's better to mourn you than not to have known you."

In her small cottage, Violette Toussaint treats friends and strangers to coffee, tea, and wine for comfort and a sympathetic ear. Along the way, we meet a variety of characters. Sasha, who held the caretaker position before Violette, is somewhat of a surrogate father figure. Nono, Gaston, and Elvis, a group of men who work at the cemetery, often gather in Violette's kitchen for coffee, jokes, and her homemade desserts. Julien, a detective from Marseilles, comes to the cemetery to place his mother's ashes. He befriends Violette and ultimately reveals a mystery. Early in the story, we meet Philippe Toussaint,

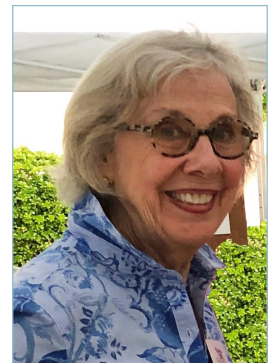
Violette's husband. He is elusive, emotionally unavailable, and a compulsive philanderer.

The story moves back and forth in time as Violette examines her life. Perrin weaves a tale with unpredictable turns. The book raises many questions about life, death, the past, and secrets. It is, in essence, about friendship, love, and finding a way through the darkness.

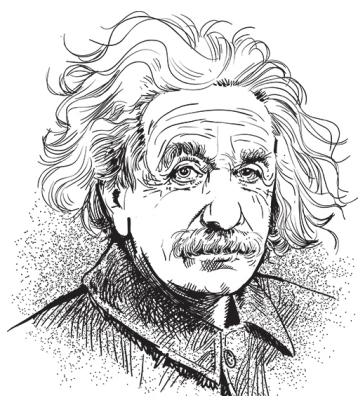
Reading fiction is full of delights. *Fresh Water for Flowers* takes us to Southern France and introduces us to people we would never have met. You know that an author has created a powerful work of fiction when you miss the characters after turning the last page.



Suzanne Fuller grew up in the small town of Owosso, Michigan. She graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in education and taught elementary school for five years before staying home to raise three children and to volunteer with education and advocacy organizations in Grand Rapids. Sue first came to Boca Grande in 1995 and has been involved with the Literature Forum Steering Committee, Woman's Club, and Friends of Boca Grande Community Center and the Johann Fust Library Foundation. She is a past president and board member of the Johann Fust Library Foundation.



Karen Zarse volunteers at the library and The Island School. Working with children to improve reading skills continually proves to be a rewarding experience. An avid reader, she often has three books going at a time; one on Kindle, one to listen to on her MP3 player, and always a hardcover book to read during lunch. She is a member of several book clubs, so presenting mysteries for Sleuths and helping to select books for Literature Forum keeps her actively looking at new books as they arrive at the library. Interested in promoting lifelong learning she has also facilitated classes at the Community Center. Karen is a current member of the Library Foundation Board.



*The only thing that you absolutely have to know,
is the location of the library.*

- Albert Einstein

From October 2020 to August 2021, almost twelve thousand people visited the library. It was wonderful to see many of you again.

Pandemic challenges have not stopped library innovation. Now when you visit, you can print wirelessly from your laptop, tablet or smartphone. It's been very popular. We've continued to develop our fantastic digital content with several new additions. You can enjoy thousands of magazines on our Libby app, learn a language using our Rosetta Stone app and peruse current coverage of The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times and The Chicago Tribune on US Major Dailies. From movies, books, audio books, magazines to research databases and music, it's great using the library from anywhere! Explore our digital resources at www.leegov.com/library/online.

This summer, our thirteen Lee County Library System branches offered the Tails and Tales reading program putting nearly thirteen thousand books into the hands of young readers. At our branch, 194 children received a free book and 25 children won prizes. Grab-and-go activity kits for all ages were enjoyed by almost 200 people. The county-wide adult grand prize winner was from Boca Grande. She won a Samsung Galaxy tablet.

In May, Mary Vickers and I welcomed our new colleague, Rebecca Schwandt. Rebecca has a bachelor's degree in History from Eckerd College and a master's degree of Public History from the University of Central Florida. Before joining our team, she worked for Collier County at Immokalee Pioneer Museum at Roberts Ranch bringing history alive for visitors of all ages. In addition to reference service, Rebecca will be presenting family story time on Wednesdays. If you can't make it to the library, tune in online to Story Time Anytime on www.leegov.com/library/kids.

I recently read the article "Bibliotherapy: Reading OVID During COVID" by Stip E, Östlundh L, and Abdel Aziz K published online on December 7, 2020 in Front Psychiatry <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7750194/>. It mentions the inscription above the entrance of Pharaoh Ramses II library at Thebes, "The House of Healing for the Soul" (Ψυχῆς latpeion). It reminds us of the value of libraries, reading and our resiliency. We hope you are well and please remember, we are only a call away.



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