

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

KRL's Resolve to Read: 2013 focus on Mysteries

Part of KRL's celebration of mysteries and reading mysteries will include "Tea and Mystery," a program featuring a panel of mystery authors on Feb. 22 at Manchester. The "Tea and Mystery" panel will include Curt Colbert and Waverly Fitzgerald, who write as Waverly Curtis ("Dial C for Chihuahua"); Bernadette Pajer, author of the Professor Bradshaw mysteries; Bharti Kirchner ("Tulip Season: a Mitra Basu Mystery"); and Jane Isenberg ("The Bones and The Book").

Book Reviews from our Friends

Deafening (2004) by Frances Itani. *Deafening* was published a few years ago but I don't think widely read in the U.S. It is the story of a young girl deafened by a high fever when she was four years old. The book is not only well written, but gives great insight into what it is like to be deaf. The book follows her growing up, marriage, and the experiences of her husband who joins the military to fight in WWI. Not many books are written about the "great war" and this one certainly brings the tragedy of war into a sharp focus. It is softly written but with great impact on the reader.

-- Dee D'Haem

Rainwater (2010) by Sandra Brown. This is the story of a Mr. Rainwater who comes to board at a young widow's boarding house in the 1930's. The widow has a son who is autistic but little is known about the condition at the time. Mr. Rainwater reaches out to the young boy and to the widow who is very protective of her son who the small town deems "different". It is a very well written account of racial bigotry, bullying, finding real love and accepting death. It is poignant, engaging, thought-provoking and intriguing. A simple short read that will warm your heart while it stirs up your angst.

-- Dee D'Haem

The Lifeboat (2013) by Charlotte Rogan. A 1914 ocean liner sinking, the devolution of the survivors into their own natures in the lifeboat, including the narrator, on trial for murder for throwing a man overboard. A difficult but thoughtful novel about morals and their place in life or death situations. --Carol Campbell

Auction Items for Library Fundraiser

We have had a donation of a large work of art called "Land of the Free" by artist Alan M. Hunt. It is hanging above the self-checkout and it is up for raffle. There is also a week's lodging at a foreign location of your choice. Tickets are \$2.00 at the Library. The drawing will be in September 2013 at Amy's on the Bay Takeover, date TBA.

Glaciers in your Lap(top)

The Himalaya Glaciers website

<http://www.glacierworks.org/the-glaciers/pumori-spring-2012/>

was featured on public radio in mid-December 2012.

If you have 15 minutes (and possibly the rest of the day), go to the site, click on the big picture and then wander the mountains. Start with the many, many tents in the base camps at the bottom of the picture (it will take some zooming and moving the cursor to find them) ... and then you are off and climbing.

In the 19th century a Western nation would bestow upon one of its citizens the title: 'poet laureate'. In that unofficial capacity of exalted prominence the individual so designated placed into verse certain events in his/her nation's history, and waxed philosophically on matters of public import. In America that person was Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882). According to numerous literary critics, he was our nation's greatest poet — *ever*.

Charlie Chaplin once said: "Poetry doesn't have to make sense." (Charlie was always good for a throwaway line.) Longfellow not only wrote industrial-strength lyrics that made sense, but penned lines so sublime they're still remembered with admiration and affection. Church bells rang all along the Atlantic seaboard (no kidding) to announce his latest work. It united a people otherwise in total disagreement over practically everything. It's tough to know what really happened in early America, clouded as our history is with its plethora of urban legends and patriotic fervor. We do know that Longfellow came from a distinguished New England family, and that after a comfortable childhood he attended Bowdoin College. Upon graduation he wanted to be a writer, but his father (with whom he had a close and loving relationship) urged him to be a lawyer. As a compromise, he became a teacher. (America has always needed speculative intelligence in its educational institutions. They provide the yeast from which spring strong, original ideas.)

After a lifetime of flashy waistcoats, modern languages, and European tours, Longfellow resigned his professorship at Harvard and entered the ranks of the retired. Rather than become another lawn-mowing citizen, however, he sat down to write masterful poetry. It proved to be a 'K/T event.' Gratitude's a fleeting emotion, but even today English teachers ladle his writings with praise and honor. His dazzling stanzas in such epics as *Evangeline*, *Hiawatha*, and *The Courtship of Miles Standish* provide easily accessible inroads into our nation's history, and smoothly blend deep feeling with poignant expression. Longfellow himself suffers a fate common to many great men: he's often praised without being fully understood. America experienced dramatic turmoil during his lifetime. He managed to remain aloof from all of it—being a man of literature, not life. But read his poems carefully; you'll discover a genuine and appealing human being.

Essay by Bill Lounsbury

Groundhog Day Booksale!

At Manchester Library, 2 February

SAVE THE DATE !

Bring your shadow !!