

Alexander Pope

Alexander Pope (1688-1744) was the only surviving child in his family, so his mother hovered over him throughout his life. His early education was entrusted to Catholic priests, which in late 17th century England wasn't exactly a plus. In addition, he suffered from a crooked spine (he was never taller than four-and-a-half feet) and frail health. Pope, however, had a flair for the epigram (a short poem that ends with a witticism or an ingenious turn of thought) and could compress reams of knowledge into compact verse.

In 1711 Pope fired his opening salvo – an *Essay on Criticism*. With commendable clarity, it spells out the rules of literary art. A year later he wrote *The Rape of the Lock*, a classic poem of mock-heroics. The lyrics tell of the theft of a young lady's lock of hair by a lusty baron. They were read in many of London's clubs and coffeehouses. Suddenly Pope found himself hailed as England's cleverest poet. He should have stopped there. Instead he went on to publish a translation of Homer's *Iliad*. If scholarship had been the only criterion, it would deserve but little praise. But its verses demonstrate noteworthy grandeur, and for two centuries they were the epic's favored rendition. Lastly, Pope published, in four epistles, his philosophical *Essay on Man*. Taken together, they demonstrate a commendable compactness of style.

Ever conscious of his bodily defects, Pope constantly sustained critical comment regarding his character and poetry. In time he became irritable, demanding, and morose. He resorted to lambasting his foes through the open ridicule of their quackery and ineptitude. But there's something forgivable about a man who's embittered by the daily humiliation of his physical disabilities. His genuine affection for his mother shows a vanity tempered by pure and lasting sentiment. Certainly there must have been something loveable in him. He had several prominent admirers including Jonathan Swift, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, and Voltaire.

– essay by Bill Lounsbery

KRL has *Rape of the Lock* and *Selected Works* by Pope.

Plant Sale A Success !

Thank you to everyone who helped with the plant sale and those who purchased (and continue to purchase) plants. We netted nearly \$5,400.

The Leisure Seeker by Michael Zadoorian.

John is in the beginning stages of Alzheimer's. Ella is in the last stages of cancer. So what do they do? They go on the lam! Against the wishes of their doctors and children, they pack up their trusty RV, the Leisure Seeker, and take Route 66 from Detroit to Disneyland.

RV parks, corny sites along the way, all contribute to the emotional roller coaster ride that is this book. If you remember Stuckey's nuts, red Burma-Shave road signs, or using an old sheet to project slides at a camp ground, the nostalgia will make you wish you were on a road trip too!

Narrated by witty, feisty Ella, this book is all about living life on one's own terms, while at the same time addressing the tragedy of reaching an age "where all our friends are dying." The story will make you cry and laugh out loud. It is a refreshing look at the realities of life after being married for 60 years. Ella and John are both strong-willed and opinionated and have moments of yelling at each other. But, there are also many scenes of tender affection, gentle humor and melancholy, along with times of extreme helplessness and terror that arise when people's faculties are less than intact. Ella herself says in the beginning that, "between the two of us, we were one whole person."

Don't miss taking this wonderful journey with John and Ella. It will really make you think how you might live out your last days.

Review by Jill Jean, Director KRL

STILL TIME TO PARTICIPATE:

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 laptop bar 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

e-reader Classes at Manchester:

June 17th 7-8pm and July 15 7-8pm

In May Manchester Branch Library had a successful Self-Publish an e-Book program. If anyone needs help in creating and/or publishing their very own e-Book, please call or come to the Manchester Branch Library and make an appointment with our head Librarian, Zak Sherman, for your free one-on-one tutorial. He'll walk you through the process of formatting, converting, and uploading your work to Amazon.