

# September 2005

## Scrabble Club

Meets every Thursday at 7:00 PM.

## Book Group

Thursday, Sep. 15, 7:00 PM

Group will meet in Trustees Room to discuss *The Sex Lives of Cannibals: Adrift in the Equatorial Pacific* by J. Maarten Troost. In the following months, the group will meet on the second Thursday of the month.

## Guest Speaker: Megan Marshall

Thursday, Sep. 22, 7:00 PM

Lecture by author of *The Peabody Sisters: Three Women Who Ignited American Romanticism*. Copies will be available for purchase and signing at the event for \$28, payment in cash or personal check only. A wine and cheese reception to follow.

Writing in the *New York Times*, reviewer William Grimes praised the book as a "stunning work of biography and intellectual history," which Ms. Marshall spent nearly 20 years researching and writing and in which "she manages to create vivid portraits of three distinct, and distinctly engaging, personalities, placing them at the center of the seismic disturbances associated with writers like Hawthorne, Emerson and Thoreau. After reading Ms. Marshall, it is impossible to imagine this gallery of American greats without seeing the Peabody sisters in their midst."

*Members \$5, Non-Members \$8*

## The Bible In Crisis: A Weekend with John Dominic Crossan

### [Bentley Memorial Lecture Series](#)

Saturday, Sep. 24, 2:00 PM to 8:30 PM

Sunday, Sep. 25, 4:00 PM

Fundamentalism has recently achieved unprecedented political influence with its simplistic literal reading of selected texts. Dr. John Dominic Crossan, a former monk and priest, and others of like stature bring to sacred texts the tools of history, literary criticism, anthropology, archeology and other disciplines.

This weekend with Dr. Crossan is a refresher course in the best modern scholarship on the New Testament Gospels and on the Bible as a whole, and a guide to the wisest application of Biblical texts to current issues--conducted by a master teacher/lecturer who believes that the Bible and the sacred texts of other religions are embedded at the heart of every contemporary crisis from Middle Eastern politics to the validity of science to the nature of marriage to personal sexual morality.

Dr. Crossan is the author of more than 20 books on the New Testament, of which four are national religious bestsellers. A selection of his books are available for circulation at the Athenæum, and will also be available for purchase and signing following the lectures. [\[Schedule and ticketing information\]](#)

The Bentley Lecture Series is co-presented with the [First Church in Salem, Unitarian](#).

## Writers' Group

Wednesday, Sep. 28, 7:00 PM

Members and guests are welcome to share their own work or listen and discuss the writing of other participants. Group led by J.D. Scrimgeour.

## Book Sale Preview Night

Friday, Sep. 30, 7:00 PM

Members only preview and sale. Light refreshments served.

# October 2005

## Book Sale

Saturday, Oct. 1, 9 AM to 2 PM.

Offerings include bargain recent and older fiction, travel, biography, and general non-fiction. There will also be a section of valuable items. Cash or check payments only; no credit cards accepted. Donations to add to the sale will be accepted during operating hours through September 27th.

## Guest Speaker: Margot Livesey

Wednesday, Oct. 5, 7:00 PM

Novelist will be reading from her latest book, *Banishing Verona*. Copies will be available for sale and signing. A wine and cheese reception will follow.

Richard Eder describes its story line as "one of fiction's four or five classic chestnuts. And. . . Margot Livesey, though British, has whipped hers into the airborne delicacy known to the French as a Mont Blanc. Use the finest ingredients, the French advise, and Ms. Livesey has. Lace it with a curious home-distilled intoxicant; the French probably wouldn't, but Ms. Livesey certainly has."

## Scrabble Club

Meets every Thursday at 7:00 PM.

## Writers' Group

Wednesday, Oct. 12, 7:00 PM

Members and guests are welcome to share their own work or listen and discuss the writing of other participants. Group led by J.D. Scrimgeour.

## Book Group

Thursday, Oct. 13, 7:00 PM

Group will meet in the Trustees Room to discuss *Hedwig and Berti* by Frieda Arkin.

## Fall Class Series: "Understanding Islam: Going Beyond the Headlines," Session 1 of 2

Saturday, Oct. 15, 2:00 PM

The centerpiece of our fall programming will be a **2-week mini-course** on one of the most important topics of our time, led by a world-class scholar: the subject is "Understanding Islam: Going Beyond the Headlines," and our speaker will be Ali Asani, Professor of the Practice of Indo-Muslim Languages and Culture at Harvard.

Professor Asani holds a joint appointment between the departments of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures and the Study of Religion. He also serves on the faculty of the Dept. of Sanskrit and Indian Studies and offers instruction in a variety of languages such as Urdu/Hindi, Sindhi, Gujarati and Swahili as well as courses on various aspects of the Islamic tradition.

In addition to his specialization in the Muslim literatures of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, Prof. Asani is also interested in Shiism, Sufism and popular or folk forms of Muslim devotional life, and Muslim communities in the West.

His many books include *The Bujh Niranjana: An Ismaili Mystical Poem*; *The Harvard Collection of Ismaili Literature in Indic Literatures: A Descriptive Catalog and Finding Aid*; and *Celebrating Muhammad: Images of the Prophet in Muslim Devotional Poetry*. Among his numerous scholarly journal and encyclopedia articles is "Pluralism, Intolerance

and the Quran," *American Scholar* (Jan. 2002). He also serves on the advisory board of the Harvard Foundation for Intercultural and Race Relations and was recently awarded the Harvard Foundation medal for promoting intercultural and racial understanding at Harvard and in the nation.

The first lecture in the series will occur on Saturday, October 15, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. The topic will be "What Is Islam? Who Is a Muslim? : A Framework for Understanding Contemporary Expressions of Faith in Muslim Societies." The second lecture will take place on Saturday, October 22, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. and will focus on "Movements of Reform and Revival in Contemporary Muslim Societies: Causes and Manifestations." Discussion will follow each of the lectures.

*Members \$45, Non-Members \$55*

*Includes two sessions, advance registration required.*

### **Fall Class Series: "Understanding Islam: Going Beyond the Headlines," Session 2 of 2**

Saturday, Oct. 22, 2:00 PM

Session two of our Fall Class Series with Professor Ali Asani of Harvard. The topic will be "Movements of Reform and Revival in Contemporary Muslim Societies: Causes and Manifestations," and a discussion will follow. See above for a complete description.

### **Community Forum**

Monday, Oct. 24, 6:00 PM

State Representative John Keenan hosts a community forum to discuss "Historic Preservation in Salem." For more information, see <http://www.johnkeenan.org/>.

### **Writers' Group**

Wednesday, Oct. 26, 7:00 PM

Members and guests are welcome to share their own work or listen and discuss the writing of other participants. Group led by J.D. Scrimgeour.

### **Guest Speaker: June Beisch**

Thursday, Oct. 27, 7:00 PM

Cambridge poet June Beisch will read from her volume of poems entitled *Fatherless Woman*, winner of the 2004 Cape Cod Literary Press Poetry Prize. Beisch is an adjunct lecturer at Emerson College and works as a Poet in the Schools in Stoneham & Belmont. A former journalist and interviewer for WGBH, her essays, poems, and literary criticism have appeared widely in numerous publications.

## **November 2005**

### **Scrabble Club**

Meets every Thursday at 7:00 PM.

### **Writers' Group**

Wednesday, Nov. 9, 7:00 PM

Members and guests are welcome to share their own work or listen and discuss the writing of other participants. Group led by J.D. Scrimgeour.

### **Book Group**

Thursday, Nov. 10, 7:00 PM

Group will meet in the Trustees Room to discuss *Banishing Verona* by Margot Livesey.

## **White Murder and White Lead**

### **An Evening of Historical Exploration and Congeniality**

Friday, Nov. 11, 7:00 PM at the Phillips Library, Peabody Essex Museum

In observance of the 175th anniversary of the murder of Captain Joseph White, Robert A. Booth, Jr. will give a lecture on the White murder as a catalyst for Salem's transformation from a commercial seaport town to an industrial city, 1825-1835. Immediately following will be an interactive reception hosted by Captain Joseph White and other individuals involved with his murder, played by cast members of History Alive!'s history-mystery production "Goodnight, Captain White." Evening presented by The Bowditch Institute in cooperation with The Peabody Essex Museum, The Salem Athenæum, and History Alive!.

*Tickets \$32.50*

### **Guest Speaker: Charlotte Gordon**

Thursday, Nov. 17, 7:00 PM

Charlotte Gordon, author of *Mistress Bradstreet: The Untold Life of America's First Poet* will be discussing the life of the remarkable Anne Bradstreet - America's first woman poet, author of the first American best-seller, daughter of one of Massachusetts's Puritan founders, and wife of Governor Simon Bradstreet. The book was praised by Ray Olson in *Booklist* for its "clarity and communicativeness" and its "vibrant, engaging, realistic portrayal of early colonial Massachusetts and of its fascinating biographical subject."

*Members \$5, Non-Members \$8*

## **December 2005**

### **Book Group**

Thursday, Dec. 8, 7:00 PM

Group will meet in the Trustees Room to discuss *Demon of the Waters: The True Story of the Mutiny on the Whale Ship Globe* by Gregory Gibson.

### **Holiday Open House**

Sunday, Dec. 11, 1:00-3:00 PM

Please join us for the opening reception of our new exhibit *The Charm of the Book Cover: American Decorative Bindings, 1890-1910* featuring stunning examples from the Athenæum collection and private holdings of guest curator and member Elaine von Bruns.

Children are invited to make an ornament and listen to author, illustrator, and Athenæum member Katy Bratun read her story *The Gingerbread Mouse*. Copies of her book will be available for sale and signing. All are welcome. Introduce a friend to the Athenæum today!