



Five Colleges Learning In Retirement

Peer-led Life Long Learning in the Pioneer Valley

Amherst College - Smith College - Hampshire College - UMASS Amherst - Mount Holyoke College

August Newsletter

Inside this issue: the fall picnic returns, update on the Office Manager search, call for spring seminar proposals, summer book group meeting, article by Nina Scott, a report on the recent Robert Frost program, and letter from the president.

Announcements

- LIR has a new email address: fclir@fivecolleges.edu If you have a question, do not call Five Colleges, Inc.; use this email address instead. Also, put the address in your email address book to avoid messages possibly going to spam.
- Have you paid your dues for the coming year? You must be a member of LIR to participate in seminars. If you haven't, please fill out the membership form on the website and submit your dues. If you have already paid your 2022-23 dues, do NOT duplicate that payment.
- Membership cards are available, however, we need a volunteer to prepare and mail them. If you have time to help with this task, please email fclir@fivecolleges.edu.
- Are you in touch with your local senior center? If not, think about making contact and exploring ways LIR and your local center can help each other to find ways to engage senior citizens. With Zoom, even shut-ins can participate in many LIR activities.
- Remember, If you have a concern, a vision, a question about LIR, please let me know at francieborden@gmail.com.

Save the Date!

Potluck Picnic Lunch on Wednesday, September 21

The Dow Pavilion at Look Park is booked for our traditional LIR Potluck Picnic, an opportunity to get together with members and friends before Fall seminars begin. Stay tuned for more details about what to bring, and please pass the word!

Nancy Hayes Clune, Social Events Committee

Search Underway for New Office Manager

With interviews scheduled this week with candidates for a new office manager for LIR, the search committee is hopeful that someone will be on board in September. Meanwhile, Darcy Johnson, LIR secretary, is working from home as interim office manager.

Darcy is also a member of the search committee, along with Michael Miller, vice president, and Margaret Russell, who coordinates the newsletter. Chairman of the committee is Yvette Morneau, who is Director of Business Services for Five Colleges, Inc. Because LIR comes under the auspices of FCI, it is FCI that will make the final hiring decision.

Book Group Invites Others to Join *Frankenstein* Discussion

The classics book club moderated by Lise Armstrong will welcome a few LIR members to this month's discussion of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. The group will meet on Thursday, August 25, at 2 p.m. Those interested should contact Lise to receive a Zoom invitation and plan to read the book to participate. Numbers are limited.

Lise Armstrong, esarmstrong@comcast.net

If you missed this...

In case you missed this article in the Daily Hampshire Gazette from Nina Scott, you may read it here:

https://northamptondaily-ma-app.newsmemory.com/?publink=37aeebd6c_134854f

Planning Starts for Spring Seminars

Even though summer is still upon us, the Curriculum Committee is already setting its sights on spring. That means it's time for those of you who are considering moderating a spring seminar to start sending in those proposals. While the deadline to submit a proposal still seems far away, the Curriculum Committee is meeting August 4 to begin reviewing proposals. So, while you're daydreaming on a beach chair or really into that 1,200-page saga, get started on that proposal you have been thinking about.

All forms to submit a pre-proposal or a proposal for a seminar or workshop are located on the 5CLIR website, and use the link "Help and Resources." Then just click on "5CLIR Forms." You'll find all the information you need to start a proposal.

If you have never moderated a seminar or not sure how to go about it, we are here to help. Just give one of us a call or send an email, we'll walk you through it.

Jake Greenburg (Co-Chair) jaglagreen@comcast.net
Tom Jones (Co-Chair) tomjones87@gmail.com



Moderator Lise Armstrong, from left, Mimi Sauer and Sherry Wilson visit the Robert Frost Collection at the Jones Library. (Photograph by Nina Scott)

"Delightful, Challenging" Summer Seminar

Robert Frost had a long association with Amherst through Amherst College, so a summer seminar on "Sound and Sense: The Poetry of Robert Frost" seemed especially appealing to eight Learning in Retirement members. The Zoom seminar, led by moderator Lise Armstrong, met in five sessions in July plus an optional field trip to Special Collections at the Jones Library, which holds 12,000 items related to the poet.

Each participant led a discussion of two or three poems ranging from the well-known "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" and "The Road Not Taken" to lesser-known gems like "Departmental" and "Choose Something Like a Star." We learned about basic poetry structure, Frost's concept of "the sound of sense" and his long literary life as poet, teacher and performer. Some poems revealed his mischief, others his dark side, and many his love of nature and his wonderful imagery of all seasons.

Discussions were definitely lively, often with disagreements on meaning and importance. One participant also provided two poems by contemporary rival Carl Sandburg for contrast.

Frost's poems about farming ring true because he was a farmer—if not an especially successful one. His ambitions as a writer were famous and his work was recognized with four Pulitzer Prizes. He was a popular teacher and lecturer. Two LIR participants heard him read his poetry in Amherst in the 1950s.

At the Jones Library we saw revisions of his poems in his handwriting, a \$3 check he disdained to cash and letters to people like Charles Green, Jones librarian who was among the first to collect Frost material. Randall Thompson's choral work, "Frostiana," autographed by the poet, and first performed in Amherst in 1959, is part

of the collectin.

The Frost seminar was altogether a delightful and challenging way to spend time on Zoom during a heat wave.

Sherry Wilson

Letter from the President

Dear Fellow Learners,

July is traditionally a quiet month at LIR. But not this year. Darcy Johnson, our Secretary, has stepped into the role of temporary office manager while the search committee is at work finding a replacement for Mindi, who left on June 30. Gene Fisher and Roger Webb, our Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, have been working with Five Colleges, Inc. to streamline our accounting. In the process Darcy and Roger have, with great persistence and ingenuity, managed to reconcile the membership list with the dues paid list. The pay-off for all that work will be that we will soon have accurate and up-to-date rosters and accounting. (A word to the wise: pay your dues if you have not!) When we find a new office manager, the data bases will be accurate and the office in excellent shape. Many of you are reading and researching topics for Fall seminars, and some of you have been enjoying the LIR summer offerings. I hope you saw Nina Scott's article in the *Gazette*.

In a break from tradition, we held a July Council meeting via Zoom in spite of interferences such as vacations and being on the road (literally in a car!). It was not a business meeting; instead, it was an opportunity for the new Council members to meet their outgoing counterparts as well as ongoing members. We shared our hopes for LIR: Encourage greater diversity and accessibility for LIR, energize volunteers, tell new acquaintances about LIR, learn more about our organization, motivate the Council to become a dynamic and creative force within LIR as we adjust to the realities of our changing world.

The results of the LIR surveys that most of you took last spring will be ready to be presented at the August Council meeting. Council members have already seen the Strategic Planning Committee recommendations. Unsurprisingly, we confirmed that most of us are in LIR for the active learning that keeps us mentally engaged and young at heart. We are hopeful that we can expand the reach of our shared joy in learning.

Thanks to all of you who contribute your time and expertise. And a hearty welcome to those of you who have yet to enjoy the rewards of accomplishment and friendship that come with pitching in.

Francie Borden, President

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