

LUMBY'S BOUNTY

Reading Group Guide

About this Guide

The synopsis, proposed topics for discussion and author biography that follow are designed to support and enhance your group's discussion of Gail Fraser's Lumby's Bounty, the third novel in the Lumby series. Comments and suggestions are invited by the author at www.lumbybooks.com.

About this Book

When a silly scheme commits Lumby to building a balloon for the regional festival it must host in twelve short weeks, the town's worthies take up the challenge, wreaking havoc along the way as test balloons suffer hilarious fates. But two foreigners who are visiting Saint Cross come to their rescue; Kai, a sincere young man who discovers his destiny is not in the priesthood, and his brother, Jamar, who brings his own brand of charismatic mischief to the scene and involves several locals in a wildly romantic real estate venture. As the festival approaches, the monks of Saint Cross Abbey, now nationally known for their good works, struggle to deal with the masses of devotees-and more than a few nutcases-flocking to take up residence on the monastery grounds. But in the end, the skies clear and The Bounty of Lumby, breathtaking in color and size, lifts off the ground and floats gently over Montis Inn.

For Discussion

1. Hot air ballooning seems to be at the top of many people's fantasy list. Is it on yours? If not, what other adventure you would like to try, if only just once?
2. Pam appears to face almost insurmountable challenges when she decides to build a koi pond by simply "digging a hole and filling it with water." But she becomes unnerved when she doesn't excel at excavating. Is it natural to assume we can do anything if we just put our minds to it? What projects have you come across that demanded more than you thought you have the time or skill for?
3. From a very early age, Kai thought he was being called to religious life and subsequently based many of his decisions on that intention. For Kai, though, his course changes when he meets Caroline. When you were young, did you have a strong sense of who you wanted to be? And did that come to pass or are you now living a very different life?

4. In *Lumby's Bounty*, several people try to live up to expectations of others – Caroline with the residents of Lumby and Kai with family and island villagers, to name a few. Are expectations of others a positive or negative thing? And how can we manage those relationships and expectations while keeping true to our own goals and meaning?
5. Pam really sees Mark change when he assumes much of the responsibility for the hot air balloon festival, but then she's delighted when he returns to his "normal self". Is it natural to overlook some of the positive qualities in a person who we see everyday? And how do you respond when someone in a close relationship with you changes so dramatically?
6. Jamar thinks himself more of a ladies man than most the ladies of Lumby do. Do you think there is sincerity and a good heart beneath all the winks and hair combing? Is there something attractive about Jamar that Kai lacks?
7. The seekers really bring chaos to Saint Cross Abbey and the monks initially respond with open arms until they become a bit wiser. Is there anything positive for the monks that came from being deluged by the seekers? Are there "seekers" in your own life with who you deal with?
8. Gabrielle and Dennis Beezer feel like failed parents because of Brian's behavior, especially when Brian commits the town to a festival they know nothing about. Should they shoulder all of the responsibility for how their son turned out, both good and bad? At what age do teenagers or young adults become accountable for their own actions independent of their parents? Have you had similar experiences with your own children?
9. Now that Brian Beezer has a positive channel for all of his talents and energy, do you expect great things from him or are there still a lot of life's lessons he needs to learn? And do you think his relationship with the monks will stay on a business level, or will it grow deeper and more spiritual once Brian sees experiences the poverty and need down in South America?
10. Lahar represents an escape to paradise for many in Lumby. Do you have such a place? If so, where is it and why is it so special to you?
11. During her marriage, Hannah never seems to flourish into adulthood and became very withdrawn. It takes a physical separation Jimmy D to collect her thoughts and begin to understand and like who she is. Do you know anyone who has had a similar experience? Or have you ever been in a relationship that limited your growth? And how did you respond?

About the Author

Gail R. Fraser, author of *The Lumby Lines* (Aug 2005), *Stealing Lumby* (May 2006), and *Lumby's Bounty* (Fall 2008) continues to work full time on her six-book series about the extraordinary small town of Lumby and the humorous, benign mayhem surrounding it. Prior to changing her life and becoming a novelist, Gail had a successful corporate career holding senior executive and upper management positions in several Fortune 500 and start-up corporations, and traveling extensively throughout the world. She studied at the University of London, earned her BA at Skidmore College and completed her MBA at the University of Connecticut, with graduate work done at Harvard University. Married to artist, Art Poulin, Gail is also an avid potter, gardener and cook. Art and Gail live with their dogs, Emma and Yoda, in the rural landscape of upstate New York. You can visit Gail at www.lumbybooks.com.