

Fiction News



The Ridgefield Library's Fiction Newsletter

February 2014

AUTHORS IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Sarah Addison Allen

Sarah Addison Allen blends heartwarming Southern fiction with a bit of magical realism in her popular novels. Set in small towns in North Carolina, her characters repair their personal and family problems with the help of a little magic. Allen writes fun, indulgent reads.



Lost Lake (2014)

A beautiful, haunting story of old loves and new, and the power of the connections that bind us forever.

The Peach Keeper (2011)

Returning to the hometown of her youth after a failed marriage, Willa struggles to find her place in a community where she no longer feels like she belongs, uncovers a 60-year family feud and falls for a strangely secretive man.

The Girl Who Chased the Moon (2009)

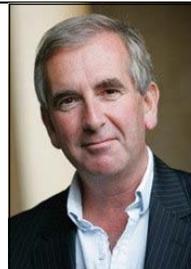
Emily Benedict came to Mullaby, North Carolina, hoping to solve at least some of the riddles surrounding her mother's life. But the moment Emily enters the house where her mother grew up and meets the grandfather she never knew--a reclusive, real-life gentle giant--she realizes that mysteries aren't solved in Mullaby, they're a way of life.

The Sugar Queen (2008)

Quiet, awkward Josey Cirrini's peaceful life--caring for her elderly mother, enjoying romance novels, and indulging in her secret passion for sweets--is turned upside down when Della Lee Baker, a sassy, confident, and bold waitress fleeing an abusive boyfriend, decides to hide out in Josey's home.

Garden Spells (2007)

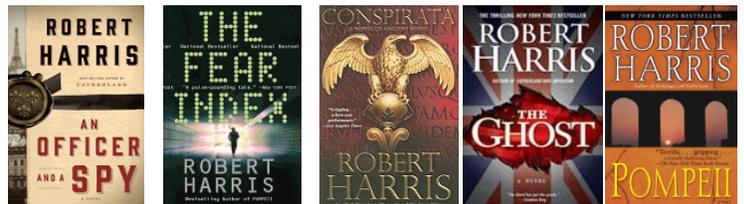
A successful caterer in Bascomb, North Carolina, Claire has always remained tied to the legacy of the Waverly family, until her peaceful life is transformed by Tyler Hughes, an art teacher and new next-door neighbor, and by the return of her prodigal sister, Sydney.



Robert Harris

British novelist Robert Harris writes gripping, fast-paced historical fiction and political thrillers. Whether set in ancient Rome or an alternative version of post-war Germany, Harris' suspenseful historical fiction is driven by elaborate mysteries, political conspiracies, and chilling violence involving vivid, well-developed portraits of famous historical

figures. In his intricately plotted political thrillers, Harris crafts addictive page-turners that apply his same flair for suspenseful intrigue to modern politics, espionage, and cybercrime.



Partial List

An Officer and a Spy (2014)

Robert Harris returns to the thrilling historical fiction he has so brilliantly made his own. This is the story of the infamous Dreyfus affair told as a chillingly dark, hard-edged novel of conspiracy and espionage.

The Fear Index (2012)

A visionary scientist creates a revolutionary form of artificial intelligence that predicts movements in the financial markets with uncanny accuracy. His hedge fund, based in Geneva, makes billions. But after an intruder breaks into his home, he has to try to discover who is trying to destroy him.

Conspirata (2010)

On the eve of Marcus Cicero's inauguration as consul of Rome, the death of a boy sends ripples of fear through a city already wracked by civil unrest, crime, and debauchery of every kind.

The Ghost (2007)

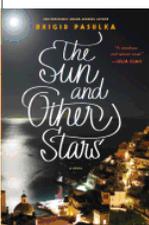
Having served as Great Britain's longest-enduring prime minister, Adam Lang accepts a large cash advance to write a tell-all memoir of his life and controversial political career, an effort for which he hires a ghostwriter who uncovers dangerous secrets about the former leader's term.

Pompeii (2003)

When the aqueduct that brings fresh water to thousands of people around the bay of Naples fails, Roman engineer Marius Primus heads to the slopes of Mount Vesuvius to investigate, only to come face to face with an impending catastrophe.

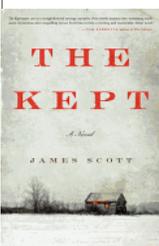
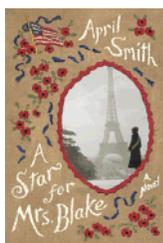
NEW FICTION

(Annotations from BookLetters)



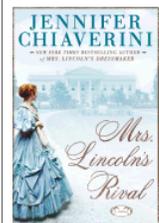
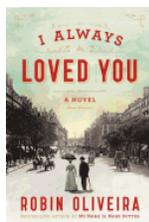
The Sun and Other Stars by Brigid Pasulka. In the seaside village of San Benedetto, a resort town on the Italian Riviera, twenty-two year- old Etto finds himself adrift. Within the past year, Etto has not only lost both his twin brother and his mother, but in his grief has become estranged from his father, the local butcher. While his father passes the time with the men of the town in the fine tradition of Italian men everywhere--a reverential obsession with soccer--Etto retreats ever further from his day-to-day life. *The Sun and Other Stars* is a gorgeous, celebratory tale about families, and community, and about how losses can be transformed into hope.

A Star for Mrs. Blake by April Smith. After losing her son in World War I, small-town librarian Cora Blake is surprised over a decade later to receive a letter from the U.S. government inviting her to go to Europe to visit his grave as part of a 'Gold Star Mother' tour. Looking forward to the adventure, Cora also hopes that she and the other mothers will be able to find the closure that has eluded them for so long.



The Kept by Hilary Boyd. Set in rural New York state at the turn of the twentieth century, superb new talent James Scott makes his literary debut with *The Kept*--a propulsive novel reminiscent of the works of Michael Ondaatje, Cormac McCarthy, and Bonnie Jo Campbell, in which a mother and her young son embark on a quest to avenge a terrible and violent tragedy that has shattered their secluded family.

I Always Loved You by Robin Oliveira. A novel of Mary Cassatt and Edgar Degas's great romance from the *New York Times* bestselling author of *My Name Is Mary Sutter*. Robin Oliveira brilliantly re-creates the irresistible world of Belle Epoque Paris, writing with grace and uncommon insight into the passion and foibles of the human heart.



Mrs. Lincoln's Rival by Jennifer Chiaverini. Jennifer Chiaverini, reveals the famous First Lady's very public social and political contest with Kate Chase Sprague, memorialized as "one of the most remarkable women ever known to Washington society."

On Such a Full Sea by Chang-Rae Lee. Chang-rae Lee's fifth novel, set in a troubled America more than a century hence, marks a significant departure from his previous work, much of which has been rooted in his Korean heritage.

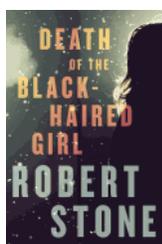
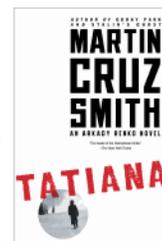


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STAFF PICKS

Elise's Picks

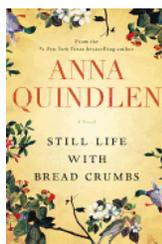
Tatiana by Martin Cruz Smith. In the long awaited eighth entry in this fascinating series, Moscow police detective Arkady Renko investigates the suspicious death of Tatiana Petrovna, a crusading journalist, who was loathed by the political and criminal establishment. Racing to decipher a cryptic notebook that may hold the key to the last case she was working on, Renko finds himself in the remote Baltic city of Kaliningrad, the notorious crime capital of Russia. Hailed by *The New York Times* as "the master of the international thriller" Martin Cruz Smith's latest mystery displays all the series' strengths - sophisticated plots, intriguing locations, sharp, wry dialogue, and enjoyable well-etched characters, particularly the world-weary, incorruptible Detective Renko.



Death of the Black-Haired Girl by Robert Stone. Was the hit and run death of a brilliant college student an accident? Reckless and ardent, Maud Stack had recently written a scathing editorial mocking local anti-abortion protestors and had refused to accept the end of their affair by confronting her English professor on the street outside his home. Some witnesses say the professor pushed Maud in front of the on-rushing car, but her college counselor tells the police that she was visited by a radical priest who made threats against Maud. Stone examines the effects of this town and gown tragedy on the survivors, most notably Maud's widowed father, and her compassionate counselor. Beautifully written, Robert Stone's most recent novel is a powerful, morally complex, psychological suspense story.

Dorothy's Picks

The Secret of Raven Point by Jennifer Vanderbes. Juliet Dufresne's beloved brother is off fighting in World War II. When he is listed as MIA, Juliet trains to be a nurse and enlists, determined to find her brother. At 18, working in field hospitals at the Italian front, she meets two men who will alter her view of the world. Henry Willard is a psychiatrist determined to heal the battered minds of the soldiers brought to the hospital. Christopher Barnaby, a soldier from her brother's unit, is a traumatized young man recovering from a self-inflicted wound and facing court martial. Is Barnaby's inability to speak the result of physical or psychological trauma and does he have knowledge of Juliet's brother? In this haunting novel, the author portrays how the horror of war brings out the best and worst of human nature, sometimes in the same person. Highly recommended.



Still Life with Bread Crumbs by Anna Quindlen. At 60, photographer Rebecca Winter is feeling like a "has been." Her work is no longer commanding high prices, her marriage has ended, and her financial woes are compounded by contributing to her elder parents care.. When she sublets her New York City apartment and rents a rustic country cottage, she begins a new chapter in her life and reflects on her past. Then she meets roofer Jim Bates. Initially, she thinks they have little in common, that is, until their paths begin to intersect. Filled with Quindlen's gracious humor and spot-on observations about contemporary life, *Still Life with Bread Crumbs* is a joy to read.