

Armchair Travel Book Club Selection List

Brookfield Public Library 2017-2018

All sessions are held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

We try to have enough books available for everyone in the discussion group by requesting them from other libraries. Under ideal circumstances, the books are available one month in advance of the meeting date from the Circulation Desk. The additional copies will not be displayed in our online catalog! Just ask at the check-out desk for the next available book discussion title. Please ask them to check the item out to you through the date of the discussion.

August 15, 2017 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room France
The Only Street in Paris: Life of the Rue des Martyrs by Elaine Sciolino

Part memoir, part travelogue, part love letter to the people who live and work on a magical street in Paris, Elaine Sciolino, the former Paris bureau chief for the *New York Times*, invites us on a tour of her favorite Parisian street, the Rue des Martyrs. Full of colorful history, Sciolino reveals the charms and idiosyncrasies of this street and its longtime residents, bringing Paris alive in all of its unique majesty (Polaris summary).

September 19, 2017 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room California mountains, U.S.
The Indifferent Stars Above: The Harrowing Saga of a Donner Party Bride by Daniel James Brown

A chronicle of the mid-nineteenth-century wagon train tragedy draws on the perspectives of one of its survivors, Sarah Graves, recounting how her new husband and she joined the Donner party on their California-bound journey and encountered violent perils, in an account that also offers insight into the scientific reasons that some died while others survived (Polaris summary).

October 17, 2017 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room Japan
The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet: a Novel by David Mitchell (fiction)

In 1799, Jacob de Zoet, a devout young clerk arrives at Dejima in Nagasaki Harbor in Japan. He has five years in the East to earn enough to win the hand of his wealthy fiancée back in Holland. But Jacob's original intentions are eclipsed after a chance encounter with Orito Aibagawa, the disfigured midwife to the city's powerful magistrate. The borders between propriety, profit, and pleasure blur until Jacob finds his vision clouded, one rash promise made and then fatefully broken—the consequences of which will extend beyond Jacob's worst imaginings (Amazon).

November 21, 2017 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room United States
I'm a Stranger Here Myself: Notes on Returning to America After Twenty Years Away by Bill Bryson

After living in Britain for two decades, Bill Bryson recently moved back to the United States with his English wife and four children. They were greeted by a new and improved America that boasts microwave pancakes, twenty-four-hour dental-floss hotlines, and the staunch conviction that ice is not a luxury item. This book is filled with hysterical scenes of one man's attempt to reacquaint himself with his own country, but it is also a love letter to the homeland he has returned to after twenty years away (Amazon).

No Meeting in December

January 16, 2018 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room England / France
No Man's Land by Simon Tolkien (fiction)

Inspired by the real-life experiences of his grandfather, J. R. R. Tolkien, during World War I, Simon Tolkien delivers a perfectly rendered novel rife with class tension, period detail, and stirring action, ranging from the sharply divided society of northern England to the trenches of the Somme. From the hot, dark seams of a Yorkshire coal mine to the exposed terrors of the trenches in France; Adam's journey from boy to man is set against the backdrop of a society violently entering the modern world (Polaris summary).

February 20, 2018 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room United States / India
Secret Daughter by Shilpi Somaya Gowda (fiction)

This book interweaves the stories of a baby girl in India, the American doctor who adopted her, and the Indian mother who gave her up in favor of a son, as two families--one in India, the other in the United States--are changed by the child that connects them (publisher description).

March 20, 2018 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room Afghanistan
Underground Girls of Kabul: In Search of a Hidden Resistance in Afghanistan by Jenny Nordberg

In Afghanistan, a culture ruled almost entirely by men, the birth of a son is cause for celebration and the arrival of a daughter is often mourned as misfortune. A "bacha posh" is a third kind of child – a girl temporarily raised as a boy and presented as such to the outside world. Jenny Nordberg constructs a powerful and moving account of those secretly living on the other side of a deeply segregated society where women have almost no rights and little freedom (Amazon).

April 17, 2018 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room Africa
The Bad-ass Librarians of Timbuktu: And Their Race to Save the World's Most Precious Manuscripts by Joshua Hammer

This book tells the incredible story of how Abdel Kader Haidara, a mild-mannered archivist and historian from the legendary city of Timbuktu, later became one of the world's greatest and most brazen smugglers. In 2012, thousands of Al Qaeda militants seized control of most of Mali, including Timbuktu. They imposed Sharia law and threatened to destroy the great manuscripts. As the militants tightened their control over Timbuktu, Haidara organized a dangerous operation to sneak all 350,000 volumes out of the city to the safety of southern Mali (Polaris summary).

May 15, 2018 10:00 a.m. Rotary Club Room Ontario, Canada
Lost in the Wild: Danger and Survival in the North Woods by Cary J. Griffith

This book chronicles the tale of two wilderness adventurers who entered the woods in search of tranquility-- but found something else entirely. Enduring days without food or shelter, these men faced the full harsh force of wilderness. *Lost in the Wild* takes readers with them as they enter realms of pain, fear, and courage, as they suffer dizzying confusion and unending frustration, and as they overcome seemingly insurmountable hurdles in a race to survive (Amazon).

June 19, 2018 10:00 a.m. Community Room
Selection Meeting for 2018-2019 season.