

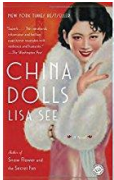
LITERARY LUNCHEON 2017-2018
at the Hamilton-Wenham Public Library
Meeting on the third Tuesday of each month at 11:30 a.m.
Bring lunch, we will have the drinks and dessert ready
A copy of each book may be picked up during the meeting (or after)
the month prior.

September 19, 2017— Fates and Traitors by Jennifer Chiaverini

John Wilkes Booth, the mercurial son of an acclaimed British stage actor and a Covent Garden flower girl, committed one of the most notorious acts in American history—the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln.

The subject of more than a century of scholarship, speculation, and even obsession, Booth is often portrayed as a shadowy figure, a violent loner whose single murderous act made him the most hated man in America. Lost to history until now is the story of the four women whom he loved and who loved him in return: Mary Ann, the steadfast matriarch of the Booth family; Asia, his loyal sister and confidante; Lucy Lambert Hale, the senator's daughter who adored Booth yet tragically misunderstood the intensity of his wrath; and Mary Surratt, the Confederate widow entrusted with the secrets of his vengeful plot.

Fates and Traitors brings to life pivotal actors—some willing, others unwitting—who made an indelible mark on the history of our nation

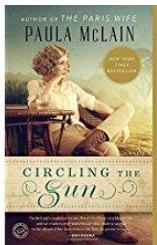


October 17, 2017— China Dolls by Lisa See

It's 1938 in San Francisco: a world's fair is preparing to open on Treasure Island, a war is brewing overseas, and the city is alive with possibilities. Grace, Helen, and Ruby, three young women from very different backgrounds, meet by chance at the exclusive and glamorous Forbidden City nightclub. Grace Lee, an American-born Chinese girl, has fled the Midwest with nothing but heartache, talent, and a pair of dancing shoes. Helen Fong lives with her extended family in Chinatown, where her traditional parents insist that she guard her reputation like a piece of jade. The stunning Ruby Tom challenges the boundaries of convention at every turn with her defiant attitude and no-holds-barred ambition. The girls become fast friends, relying on one another through unexpected challenges and shifting fortunes. When their dark secrets are exposed and the invisible thread of fate binds them even tighter, they find the strength and resilience to reach for their dreams. But after the Japanese attack Pearl Harbor, paranoia and suspicion threaten to destroy their lives, and a shocking act of betrayal changes everything.

November 21, 2017— [Alice I Have Been](#) by Melanie Benjamin

Part love story, part literary mystery, Melanie Benjamin's spellbinding historical novel leads readers on an unforgettable journey down the rabbit hole, to tell the story of a woman whose own life became the stuff of legend. Her name is Alice Liddell Hargreaves, but to the world she'll always be known simply as "Alice," the girl who followed the White Rabbit into a wonderland of Mad Hatters, Queens of Hearts, and Cheshire Cats. Now, nearing her eighty-first birthday, she looks back on a life of intense passion, great privilege, and greater tragedy. First as a young woman, then as a wife, mother, and widow, she'll experience adventures the likes of which not even her fictional counterpart could have imagined. Yet from glittering balls and royal romances to a world plunged into war, she'll always be the same determined, undaunted Alice who, at ten years old, urged a shy, stuttering Oxford professor to write down one of his fanciful stories, thus changing her life forever.



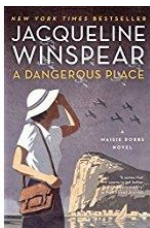
December 19, 2017— [Circling the Sun](#) by Paula McLain

Circling the Sun brings to life a fearless and captivating woman—Beryl Markham, a record-setting aviator caught up in a passionate love triangle with safari hunter Denys Finch Hatton and Karen Blixen, who as Isak Dinesen wrote the classic memoir *Out of Africa*.

Brought to Kenya from England as a child and then abandoned by her mother, Beryl is raised by both her father and the native Kipsigis tribe who share his estate. Her unconventional upbringing transforms Beryl into a bold young woman with a fierce love of all things wild and an inherent understanding of nature's delicate balance. But even the wild child must grow up, and when everything Beryl knows and trusts dissolves, she is catapulted into a string of disastrous relationships.

Beryl forges her own path as a horse trainer, and her uncommon style attracts the eye of the Happy Valley set, a decadent, bohemian community of European expats who also live and love by their own set of rules. But it's the ruggedly charismatic Denys Finch Hatton who ultimately helps Beryl navigate the uncharted territory of her own heart. The intensity of their love reveals Beryl's truest self and her fate: to fly.

Set against the majestic landscape of early-twentieth-century Africa, McLain's powerful tale reveals the extraordinary adventures of a woman before her time, the exhilaration of freedom and its cost, and the tenacity of the human spirit.

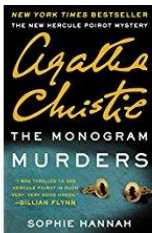


January 16, 2018— [A Dangerous Place](#) by Jacqueline Winspear

Four years after she set sail from England, leaving everything she most loved behind, Maisie Dobbs at last returns, only to find herself in a dangerous place . . .

In Jacqueline Winspear's powerful story of political intrigue and personal tragedy, a brutal murder in the British garrison town of Gibraltar leads Maisie into a web of lies, deceit, and peril. Spring 1937. In the four years since she left England, Maisie Dobbs has experienced love, contentment, stability—and the deepest tragedy a woman can endure. Now, all she wants is the peace she believes she might find by returning to India. But her sojourn in the hills of Darjeeling is cut short when her stepmother summons her home to England; her aging father Frankie Dobbs is not getting any younger. But on a ship bound for England, Maisie realizes she isn't ready to return. Against the wishes of the captain who warns her, "You will be alone in a most dangerous place," she disembarks in Gibraltar. Though she is on her own, Maisie is far from alone: the British garrison town is teeming with refugees fleeing a brutal civil war across the border in Spain.

Yet the danger is very real. Days after Maisie's arrival, a photographer and member of Gibraltar's Sephardic Jewish community, Sebastian Babayoff, is murdered, and Maisie becomes entangled in the case, drawing the attention of the British Secret Service. Under the suspicious eye of a British agent, Maisie is pulled deeper into political intrigue on "the Rock"—arguably Britain's most important strategic territory—and renews an uneasy acquaintance in the process. At a crossroads between her past and her future, Maisie must choose a direction, knowing that England is, for her, an equally dangerous place, but in quite a different way.



February 20, 2018— [Monogram Murders](#) by Sophie Hannah

Hercule Poirot's quiet supper in a London coffeehouse is interrupted when a young woman confides to him that she is about to be murdered. Though terrified, she begs Poirot not to find and punish her killer. Once she is dead, she insists, justice will have been done. Later that night, Poirot learns that three guests at a London Hotel have been murdered, and a monogrammed cufflink has been placed in each one's mouth. Could there be a connection with the frightened woman? While Poirot struggles to put together the bizarre pieces of the puzzle, the murderer prepares another hotel bedroom for a fourth victim.

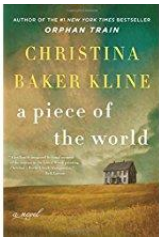
March 20, 2018— [The Street of a Thousand Blossoms](#) by Gail Tsukiyama

It is Tokyo in 1939. On the Street of a Thousand Blossoms, two orphaned brothers dream of a future firmly rooted in tradition. The older boy, Hiroshi, shows early signs of promise at the national obsession of sumo wrestling, while Kenji is fascinated by the art of Noh theater masks. But as the ripples of war spread to their quiet neighborhood, the brothers must put their dreams on hold --- and forge their own paths in a new Japan. Meanwhile, the two young daughters of a renowned sumo master find their lives increasingly intertwined with the fortunes

of their father's star pupil, Hiroshi. The Street of a Thousand Blossoms is a powerfully moving masterpiece about tradition and change, loss and renewal, and love and family from a glorious storyteller at the height of her powers.

April 17, 2018—[A Week In Winter](#) by Maeve Binchy

Stoneybridge is a small town on the west coast of Ireland where all the families know each other. When Chicky Starr decides to take an old, decaying mansion set high on the cliffs overlooking the windswept Atlantic Ocean and turn it into a restful place for a holiday by the sea, everyone thinks she is crazy. Helped by Rigger (a bad boy turned good who is handy around the house) and Orla, her niece (a whiz at business), Stone House is finally ready to welcome its first guests to the big warm kitchen, log fires, and understated elegant bedrooms. Laugh and cry with this unlikely group as they share their secrets and—maybe—even see some of their dreams come true. Full of Maeve's trademark warmth and humor, once again, she embraces us with her grand storytelling



May 15, 2018—[Piece of the World](#) by Christine Baker Kline

To Christina Olson, the entire world was her family's remote farm in the small coastal town of Cushing, Maine. Born in the home her family had lived in for generations, and increasingly incapacitated by illness, Christina seemed destined for a small life. Instead, for more than twenty years, she was host and inspiration for the artist Andrew Wyeth, and became the subject of one of the best known American paintings of the twentieth century. As she did in her beloved smash bestseller *Orphan Train*, Christina Baker Kline interweaves fact and fiction in a powerful novel that illuminates a little-known part of America's history. Bringing into focus the flesh-and-blood woman behind the portrait, she vividly imagines the life of a woman with a complicated relationship to her family and her past, and a special bond with one of our greatest modern artists. Told in evocative and lucid prose, *A Piece of the World* is a story about the burdens and blessings of family history, and how artist and muse can come together to forge a new and timeless legacy.