2021 October Newsletter

Hello patrons and friends of Chase Library! Autumn has officially arrived! It’s time to lay the gardens to rest, put away the trappings of summer, break out the backyard firepit, and look forward to cozy things – like more reading in a big old chair wrapped in a favorite fall sweater!!

So let’s talk library updates:

* Thanks to the generosity of library patrons and friends, our efforts to raise the needed funds to repair and re-shingle the roof are steadily finding success. You are the best!!
* Our first in-person author event and fund raiser will take place on October 13. We will gather at noon for a buffet luncheon at the Sea View in Dennis Port for a reading, talk, Q&A and book signing with Patry Francis. Her new book is All the Children are Home. If you wish to attend, the cost is $40. Please mail a check payable to Chase Library, PO Box 457, West Harwich, 02671 or drop by the library on a Tuesday or Saturday. RSVP final date is September 30.
* Stay tuned for details on our November 10, in-person author event featuring Juliette Fay!

We had fun at the Harwich Hometown Parade on September 12. If you were there, I hope we noticed and waved to you! We actually had a lot of fun!

Not yet sure if we are doing anything special for Halloween, so keep an eye out on Facebook and he website: chase-library.com

**October is National Book Month!!** With that in mind, I cornered a few of our volunteers and asked them this: What is one of the best books you ever read? And I received a variety of answers!

Carol has recently finished reading Caravans by James Michener. Published in 1963, Caravans is a story of Afghanistan post World War II, and describes the efforts of a military officer charged with finding an American woman living in the country. Michener captures the tension of the post-war period, provides a picture of the desolate landscape and its influence on daily existence, and offers insight into the inescapable religious and ethnic past which remains alive today. Now Carol is reading the new non-fiction work by Craig Whitlock, The Afghanistan Papers: a secret history of the war. Whitlock, a Washington Post investigative reporter, has produced a work which demonstrates that three successive Presidents were engaged in a war they could not win. Carol said she is now beginning to see how history is intersecting with today and the politics of our time.

The Shell Seekers by Rosamunde Pilcher was Jeanne’s choice (tho she waffled a lot between that and Pillars of the Earth by Ken Follett). The Shell Seekers is one of over 40 novels that Pilcher wrote. She was primarily a writer of the romance novel, the kind that whisks you up and takes you away, providing respite from current circumstances. Born in 1924, her breakthrough novel was a three-generation family saga, The Shell Seekers, which spanned from WWII to its publication in 1987. It is the story of the heart-break and passions that kept the Keeling family together. I asked Jeanne why she recalls this book as vividly as she does. Answer: It was the first book Jeanne read after the birth of her son. Think back to a time of insufficient sleep, a new baby, round-the-clock feedings, abundant laundry and all those feelings of cluelessness as a first-time mother. So easy to understand why a novel that provided a bit of escapism, a bit of romance, a chance to gather into one’s self and restore is Jeanne’s first choice!!

Diane had no problem with her choice. She immediately said: A Tree Grows in Brooklyn, by Betty Smith. Born in Brooklyn in 1896, Smith attended the local grammar school and completed eighth grade. She then left school and got a job as a factory worker. The book is semi-autobiographical and has as its main theme perseverance in the face of hardship during the first two decades of the 20th century. At one time, this beloved book was banned for its strong themes of sex, alcoholism and child abuse. It is no longer banned and remains a popular book to this day. Diane explained that this book is a favorite because it got her back into reading roots. She said, simply: the book was a gift – a gift in my life. And I will always be grateful for that.

Jacob’s favorite read?? Les Miserables by Victor Hugo. First published in 1862, Les Miserables is considered one of the greatest novels of the 19th century. Jacob read the novel when in his 20’s and said it made a huge impression on him. It is a sweeping work which includes the history of France, the politics of the time, the antimonarchy movement and the clash of classes, cruelty, love, justice and redemption. Jacob can vividly recall scenes and details from the work and has a real soft spot in his heart for this masterpiece. Is there any wonder why he is a great librarian?

And me? I will always remember my time reading Ahab’s Wife, by Sena Jeter Naslund. Written in 2000, I did not find this volume until much later. It is historical fiction. It is true to Melville’s Moby Dick. It is an alternate universe, where Naslund imagines that Captain Ahab leaves behind a wife when he begins his fated sail in search of the great white whale. His wife, Una, patiently watches and waits for him. She is alone in her New England community as time passes and her husband does not return. She must fend for herself. This a beautifully written epic tale that is insightful and impactful as it tells the story of a woman left behind who must survive in a time when women had no rights. Una is triumphant in her ability to stand on her own and survive! I read this book while on vacation just before we moved to Cape Cod. I sat on the beach, looking out at the sound, knowing Nantucket was 13 miles away. I love the ocean. I love the beach. And I knew I was soon going to call this magical place home. No better read for me.

What’s your favorite read? Send us an email at chaselibrarywh@gmail.com and share what you love about it. While we have included our names here, it is not necessary. Wouldn’t it be fun if we could include one short description of a book that has impacted someone in each newsletter?

Thanks for your time. Have a great October and happy reading!!