

Davis Genealogy Book Club
Recommended reading - August 2024

August 15 @ 12:30 pm

DGC Book Club -*Secret Harvests: A Hidden Story of Separation and the Resilience of a Family Farm* by David Mas Masumoto. **Nonfiction.** 2023

This is the seventh selected book for the DGC Book Club.

In this moving family history, the author discovers a “lost aunt”, separated from the family due to racism and discrimination against the disabled. Afflicted with a mental disability from childhood meningitis, she was taken away in 1942 when Japanese Americans were unjustly imprisoned. Presumed dead, she resurfaced after 70 years, living near the family farm. The revelation prompts a quest to understand her survival and hidden existence.

Suggestions for future DGC Book Club Selection

Goodwin, Nathan Dylan. *The Forensic Genealogist Series. The Orange Lilies, The American Ground, The Spyglass File, The Missing Man, The Suffragette's Secret, The Wicked Trade, The Asylum, The Sterling Affair, The Foundlings, The Deserter's Tale.* **Fiction**

Recommended by Michael Bowling and Nancy Asmundson

Griffeth, Bill. *The Stranger in my Genes: A Memoir.* **Nonfiction.** 2016

Written by CNBC anchor and author, a longtime genealogy buff. His discovery of his DNA test results shakes his feeling of identity.

Recommended by Mary Dobosz

Griffeth, Bill. *Stranger No More: A sequel to The Stranger in my Genes.* **Nonfiction.** 2022

Recommended by Mary Dobosz

Harmon, Amy. *A Different Blue.* **Fiction.** 2017

Blue Echohawk doesn't know who she is. She doesn't know her real name or when she was born. Abandoned at two and raised by a drifter, she didn't attend school until she was ten years old. At nineteen, when most kids her age are attending college or moving on with life, she is just a senior in high school. With no mother, no father, no faith, and no future, Blue Echohawk is a difficult student, to say the least. Tough, hard, and overtly sexy, she is the complete opposite of the young British teacher who decides he is up for the challenge, and takes the troublemaker under his wing. This is the story of a nobody who becomes somebody. It is the story of an unlikely friendship, where hope fosters healing and redemption becomes love. Blue goes on a journey figuring out who she is and what happened to her and her parents. This journey comes complete by the end of the story and you get a full-circle affect that you don't (or maybe you do) expect.

Recommended by Robert Crow

Hill, Richard. *Finding Family: My search for roots and the secrets in my DNA*. **Nonfiction**. 2012
Recommended by Mary Dobosz

Humes, Edward. *The Forever Witness: How DNA and Genealogy Solved a Cold Case Double Murder*. **Nonfiction**. 2022

After 30 years, Detective Jim Scharf arrested a teenage couple's murderer-and exposed a looming battle between the pursuit of justice and the right to privacy. When Tanya Van Cuylenborg and Jay Cook were murdered during a trip to Seattle in the 1980s, detectives had few leads. The murder weapon was missing. No one witnessed any suspicious activity. And there was only a single handprint on the outside of the young couple's van. The detectives assumed Tanya and Jay were victims of a serial killer-but without any leads, the case seemed forever doomed. In deep-freeze, long-term storage, biological evidence from the crime scenes sat waiting. Meanwhile, California resident CeCe Moore began her lifetime fascination with genetic genealogy. As DNA testing companies rapidly grew in popularity, she discovered another use for the technology: solving crimes. When Detective Jim Scharf decided to send the cold case's decades-old DNA to Parabon NanoLabs, he hoped he would bring closure to the Van Cuylenborg and Cook families. He didn't know that he and Moore would make history. Anyone can submit a saliva sample to learn about their ancestry. But what happens after the results of these tests are uploaded to the internet? As lawyers, policymakers, and police officers fight over questions of consent and privacy, the implications of Scharf's case become ever clearer. Approximately 250,000 murders in the United States remain unsolved today. We have the tools to catch many of these killers-but what is the cost?"

Recommended by Lisa Henderson

Jerkis, Morgan. *Wandering in Strange Lands, A Daughter of the Great Migration Reclaims her Roots*. **Nonfiction**. 2022

Between 1916 and 1970, six million black Americans left their rural homes in the South for jobs in cities in the North, West, and Midwest in a movement known as The Great Migration. But while this event transformed the complexion of America and provided black people with new economic opportunities, it also disconnected them from their roots, their land, and their sense of identity, argues Morgan Jerkins. In this fascinating and deeply personal exploration, she recreates her ancestors' journeys across America, following the migratory routes they took from Georgia to Louisiana, Oklahoma and California.

Recommended by Suzanne Peterson

Jones, M.K. *Maze Investigation Series (6 titles) The Curiosity Club of St. Foy series. (2 titles so far)*. **Fiction** M. K. Jones is a family history researcher, genealogist and author of the "Maze Investigations" series and "The Curiosity Club of St. Foy" Recommended by Michael Bowling

Mason, Daniel. *North Woods: A Novel* **Fiction**. 2023. It begins with a pair of young lovers in colonial New England escaping wrathful judgment in their Puritan village. They flee into the wilds of western Massachusetts, chased by "solemn men ... with harquebuses cocked in their elbows." This is Hawthorne given an injection of breathless Edenic bliss: "Mica dusted her heels like silver. Damsel flies upon her neck. Flying squirrels in the trees above them, and in the silty sand the great tracks of cats." The lovers successfully abscond, yet "North Woods" is not about

them. It is about the foundation stone they lay at the chapter's close, and the yellow house that comes to occupy the spot.

The rest of this impossible-to-summarize novel introduces us to inhabitants of that house over the ensuing three-plus centuries. One of them is Charles Osgood, a Revolution-era Loyalist and autodidact whose memoirs, subtitled "Reminiscences of an Apple-Man," chart his lifelong "pomomania" — an obsession with apples that leads him to farm a luscious variety he christens Osgood's Wonder. *North Woods* is a hodgepodge narrative, brazenly disjointed in time, perspective and form. Letters, poems and song lyrics, diary entries, medical case notes, real-estate listings, vintage botanical illustrations, pages of an almanac, modern-day nature photographs, a true-crime detective story, an address to a historical society: Mason stuffs all this (and more!) into his bulging scrapbook of a novel. That "North Woods" proves captivating despite its piecemeal structure is testament to Mason's powers as a writer, his stylish and supple narrative voice. Recommended by Suzanne Peterson

Parthasarathy, Raghuvier. *So Simple a Beginning: How Four Physical Principles Shape Our Living World*. **Nonfiction**. 2022. A biophysicist reveals the hidden unity behind nature's breathtaking complexity - The form and function of a sprinting cheetah are quite unlike those of a rooted tree. A human being is very different from a bacterium or a zebra. The living world is a realm of dazzling variety, yet a shared set of physical principles shapes the forms and behaviors of every creature in it. *So Simple a Beginning* shows how the emerging new science of biophysics is transforming our understanding of life on Earth and enabling potentially lifesaving but controversial technologies such as gene editing, artificial organ growth, and ecosystem engineering. Recommended by Cyndi Young

Spaulding, Dale. *Fortitude: Preserving 400 years of an American family's faith, patriotism, grit and determination*. **Nonfiction**. 2022. *Fortitude* is an action-packed journey through history via the eyes of a family who lived it. From ancestral roots in England to over four hundred years in America, *Fortitude* brings our predecessors alive as it immerses the reader in the historical context in which they both struggled and thrived. Recommended by Nancy Asmundson (and Lisa Louise Cook)

Shorto, Russell *The Island at the Center of the World: The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan and the Forgotten Colony That Shaped America* **Nonfiction**. 2005.

In a landmark work of history, Russell Shorto presents astonishing information on the founding of our nation and reveals in riveting detail the crucial role of the Dutch in making America what it is today. In the late 1960s, an archivist in the New York State Library made an astounding discovery: 12,000 pages of centuries-old correspondence, court cases, legal contracts, and reports from a forgotten society: the Dutch colony centered on Manhattan, which predated the thirteen "original" American colonies. For the past thirty years scholar Charles Gehring has been translating this trove, which was recently declared a national treasure. Now, Russell Shorto has made use of this vital material to construct a sweeping narrative of Manhattan's founding that gives a startling, fresh perspective on how America began. Recommended by Suzanne Peterson

From Nancy Asmundson

More suggestions

[The best genealogical mystery novels \(shepherd.com\)](#)

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[Mystery Book Series with Genealogy Theme... – The Cozy Mystery List Blog \(cozy-mystery.com\)](#)

Books read by the Davis Genealogy Book Club

Hiding the Past, The Lost Ancestor by Nathan Dylan Goodwin-Fiction

The Pirate's Wife: The Remarkable True Story of Sarah Kidd by Daphne Palmer- Nonfiction

Inheritance: A memoir of genealogy, paternity, and love by Dani Shapiro-Nonfiction

Genealogy: a novel by Mae Wood-Fiction

The Lost Family: How DNA Testing is Upending Who We Are by Libby Copeland-Nonfiction

The Rosie Project: a novel by Samson, Graeme. Fiction