

Davis Genealogy Book Club
Recommended reading - December 5, 2024

December 5 @ 12:30 pm

DGC Book Club - *The Stranger in my Genes: A Memoir* by Bill Griffeth **Nonfiction**. 2016

This is the 9th selected book for the DGC Book Club.

Suggested books

Copeland, Libby. *The Lost Family: How DNA testing is upending who we are*. **Nonfiction**. 2020

A look at the rise of home genetic testing and the seismic shock it has had on individual lives. You swab your cheek or spit into a vial, then send it away to a lab. You get a report that might tell you where your ancestors came from or if you carry certain genetic risks. Or the report could reveal a long-buried secret and upend your entire sense of identity. Copeland explores the culture of genealogy buffs, the science of DNA, the business of companies like Ancestry and 23 and Me, all while tracing the story of one woman, her unusual results, and a relentless methodical drive for answers that becomes a thoroughly modern genetic detective story.

Recommended by Suzanne Peterson

Fronczak, Paul Joseph and Alex Tresniowski. *The Foundling: The True Story of a Kidnapping, a Family Secret, and My Search for the Real Me*. **Nonfiction**. 2018

This is the inspiring and “page-turning” (*Booklist*) true story of a man who discovered that he had been kidnapped as a baby—and how his quest to find out who he really is upturned the genealogy industry, his own family, and set in motion the second longest cold case in US history.

Recommended by Sue Torguson

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

Recommended by Mary Dobosz

Hill, Richard. *Finding Family: My search for roots and the secrets in my DNA*. **Nonfiction**. 2012 *Finding Family: My Search for Roots and the Secrets in My DNA* is the suspenseful account of an adoptee trying to reclaim the biological family denied him by sealed birth records. This fascinating quest, including the author's landmark use of DNA testing, takes readers on an exhilarating roller-coaster ride and concludes with a twist that rivals anything Hollywood has to offer.

Recommended by Mary Dobosz

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

“Thought-provoking true-crime thriller...the book raises urgent questions of balancing public and private good that we’ll likely be dealing with as long as the title implies.”—*Wall Street Journal* A relentless detective and a civilian

genealogist solve a haunting cold case—and launch a crime-fighting revolution that tests the fragile line between justice and privacy.

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 to a house in the wilds of western Massachusetts. The rest of this impossible-to-summarize novel introduces us to inhabitants of that house over the ensuing three-plus centuries. 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, and an address to a historical society.

Recommended by Suzanne Peterson

Parthasarathy, Raghuveer. *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

Raymond, Barbara Bisantz. *The Baby Thief: The Untold Story of Georgia Tann, the Baby Seller Who Corrupted Adoption*. **Nonfiction**. 2007

For almost three decades, renowned baby-seller Georgia Tann ran a children's home in Memphis, Tennessee selling her charges to wealthy clients nationwide, Joan Crawford among them. Part social history, part detective story, part expose, The Baby Thief is a riveting investigative narrative that explores themes that continue to reverberate today.

Recommended by Sue Torguson

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.

Russell Shorto presents astonishing information on the founding of our nation and reveals in 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. This is a different perspective of our nation's beginnings.

Recommended by Suzanne Peterson

Shorto, Russell. *Smalltime: a story of my family and the mob*. Nonfiction. 2021

Smalltime is an American immigrant story that travels back to Risorgimento Sicily, home of Antonino Sciotto, the author's great-grandfather, who leaves his wife and children in grinding poverty for a new life—and wife—in a Pennsylvania mining town. *Smalltime* draws an intimate portrait of a mobster and his wife, sudden riches, and the toll a lawless life takes on one family.

Recommended by Suzanne Peterson

From Nancy Asmundson -suggestions

The best genealogical mystery novels (shepherd.com). Mystery Book Series with Genealogy Theme 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

Secret Harvests: A Hidden Story of Separation and the Resilience of a Family Farm-Nonfiction

Three Times Removed by M.K. Jones Fiction