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A Cataloger's Story: Books about Books

By Diane Resnick, Cataloger, Delmont Public Library

From my now often behind-the-scenes library role at Delmont Public Library, I am so pleased for the opportunity to write for you, dear wonderful community members! I am Diane Resnick, and I have worked at Delmont Public Library for six years. I started as the Children's Services Coordinator and have become a level 2 cataloger (there being three levels in the WLN system). Recently, I have passed on the reigns of Children's Coordinator and gone to only cataloging duties.

My journey with the Delmont Library has been filled with love, friendship and community. I have a degree in Broadcast Communications. After working 10 years in the television and film industry in Pittsburgh, I decided on the harder task of stay-at-home mom. Denni Grassel, our Library Director, offered me a job at the library because I had attended so many children's programs with my daughter and felt a connection to the community. I had this wonderful new job, that I enthusiastically turned into a new career, reigniting a love of books, libraries and learning. Before working here, I loved walking into the library and being greeted by my first name. How many places can you do that today? We are so lucky to have such a place in our community. Walk in and see if we remember your name. We are getting older, so we may not, but we know a LOT of your faces!

Books about libraries, librarians and books have been a passion of mine for the last few years. Starting with a local favorite and one our staff shared during COVID, "The Giver of Stars" by Jo Jo Moyes (2019) is a mystery set in the world of Kentucky Pack Horse Librarians during the Depression. It is an endearing, engaging story of five brave female librarians. Am I partial because at the time of my first reading there were five female librarians at Delmont? Yes.

This of course led to "The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek" by Kim Michele Richardson (2019). It tells the story of another packhorse librarian and blue-skinned person of Kentucky. And if you want to continue to learn about this part of American history, "Down Cut Shin Creek: The Pack Horse Librarians of Kentucky" by Kathi Appelt (2019) is a wonderful non-fiction account.

"The Library Book" by Susan Orlean (2018) tells the story of the Los Angeles Public Library and its mysterious fire in 1986, the largest library fire in the United States. I usually struggle to read non-fiction, but this book read like fiction and kept me very engaged.

"The Midnight Library" by Matt Haig (2020) has a sci-fi twist asking what it would be like if at the end of our lives we go to a large library where each book shows how our lives would be different, if we made different decisions.

“The Paris Library” by Janet Skeslien Charles (2020) is a fictionalized story based on the real librarians of the American Library in Paris during WWII. If you didn’t think librarians were heroic, read this book.

“The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Society” by Annie Barrows and Mary Ann Shaffer (2009) is another story from WWII, about books bringing people together. And of course there is “The Book Thief” by Markus Zusak (2005) from the same era.

“The Sherlock Holmes Bookshop Mystery” series by Vicki Delany (2017-2023) is a lighter read that has a fun twist, set in a Sherlock Holmes bookshop with the owner who just happens to be as sharp as Sherlock himself.

Coming from the children’s world, I love juvenile fiction books as well, and “Escape from Mr. Lemoncello’s Library” by Chris Grabenstein (2013) is a fun read for anyone. It combines libraries with another passion of mine....games! And don’t forget about “Inkheart” by Cornelia Funke (2005).

I found a website, Bookriot.com, with a list of 100 must-read books about books. “Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress” by Dai Sijie (2001) is first on the list, and I found a few newer ones that look promising too. “The Woman in the Library” by Sulari Gentill (2022) looks like an interesting library mystery, and “The Librarian of Crooked Lane” by CJ Archer (2022) seems like it could be an intriguing mix of a library with fantasy.

I hope this article inspires other library employees to write a little about their library lives and books they love. And I hope it inspires patrons to stop in at Delmont Public Library to tell me about great books that you have read!