

Recent Reads

April Ide, Library Director

I never lack for books to add to my To-Be-Read List; what I do lack is the time to read all of the books on the ever-growing list! Here are a few that I found well-worth my time.

Tina Brown, founder of The Daily Beast and former Vanity Fair editor-in-chief, takes a deep dive into the British royal family in “The Palace Papers: Inside the House of Windsor-the Truth and the Turmoil.” She explores the Windsors’ relationships, scandals, and triumphs, creating a balanced picture of a complex and very human family thrust into a singular position. I found the sections on the family’s relationships with the press the most fascinating; there are a lot of behind-the-scenes players working to craft the royal family’s image. This is an immensely readable history of the modern royal family.

In Beth O’Leary’s “The No-Show,” Jane is trying to sort out her life after a devastating blow. Miranda is a tree surgeon who wants to be seen as just one of the guys on the job. Siobhan is attempting to balance her love life with a very hectic job as a life coach and motivational speaker. The three of them only have one thing in common, Joseph Carter, who has just stood each of them up. On Valentine’s Day, no less. Joseph seems perfect, but what is that perfection hiding? Can each of the women figure out what it is before he breaks her heart? Just as in O’Leary’s previous novels, there is more going on than what meets the eye and she brings her characters’ stories together in such a skillful way. Her books are always a great reminder not to dismiss romance novels as fluff – there’s often a lot of great character work at play!

Linda Holmes is a pop culture critic for NPR and host of the podcast “Pop Culture Happy Hour.” I really enjoyed her first novel, “Evvie Drake Starts Over.” In Holmes’ latest novel, “Flying Solo,” Laurie Sassalyn returns to her Maine hometown to sort through the belongings of her late beloved great aunt Dot. Laurie has long admired Dot for her independent lifestyle, which was full of friends and travel. While she works, Laurie discovers a Polaroid of Dot with a mysterious man, as well as a carved wooden duck with what seems to be the mark of a famous Maine artist. As Laurie investigates the history of the duck and the artist, she finds that she may not know everything about Dot’s life. She is helped along the way by her first love, Nick, who she still finds magnetic after all this time.

Ned Groom is poised to open his most exclusive club yet: set on an idyllic island off the coast of England and outfitted with every luxury imaginable, Island Home will cater to the most powerful and wealthy one percent. Island Home promises to be a place where they can get away and let loose without the constant surveillance of the media and public. But as the three-day launch party gets underway, long-held secrets rise to the surface and those who have much to lose become desperate to keep those secrets buried. “The Club” by Ellery Lloyd was an engaging, quick-paced thriller, one that would be great for a weekend read.

Library staff can help you place requests for these or any other items. Give us a call at 507-359-8331. If you prefer to place your own requests, you can visit www.newulmlibrary.org and choose "Library Catalog."

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