

Kathleen's Recent Reads—August

Non-Fiction

The Field House : A Writer's Life Lost and Found on an Island in Maine by Robin Clifford Wood

Maine writer Robin Wood discovered a connection between herself and the acclaimed 20th century writer and illustrator Rachel Field: Wood and her family purchased a house in the Cranberry Islands that served as home, refuge and inspiration to Field. At the time, Wood was heavily involved in caring for her children and only just beginning to toy with the idea of being a writer, but as she researched Field's life, the urge to document it became irresistible, and the result is this lovely mixture of biography and memoir.

Fiction

With Love From London by Sarah Jio

A young American woman, abandoned as a child by her British mother, travels to England after her mother's death and her own divorce, intending to wrap up her mother's affairs. Instead she finds answers to long-held secrets, a new career, and a new love. Light and breezy, and a great book to escape into, especially for lovers of bookshops.

Sea of Tranquility by Emily St. John Mandel

Emily St. John Mandel is most famous as the author of *Station Eleven*, which follows a group of characters through the devastating after effects of a virulent pandemic. When COVID-19 hit, the origins and spread of that pandemic seemed eerily prescient to fans of *Station Eleven* (although thankfully without such dire results). Mandel and her book experienced an upsurge in interest, and she was interviewed multiple times about the experience of writing a pandemic book and then having it come true. She managed to gracefully dodge the question, but addresses it in this book, where one of the characters is an author on a book tour when a pandemic begins. This novel both serves as a postscript to *Station Eleven* and stands firmly on its own merits, involving an anomaly in the space time continuum, and a powerful secret society bent on controlling time travel and, thus, history-- albeit on a very human scale. As with *Station Eleven*, humanity and tenderness coexist beautifully with the more speculative elements of the book.

Audiobooks

The High Tide Club by Mary Kay Andrews

Four young women become estranged after a shocking event on a Georgia Sea Island in the 1940s; their story is alternated with present-day, when one of the last surviving members of the group seeks to make amends to those she harmed. Secrets, strength and unbreakable bonds form the fabric of this engaging women's fiction.

The Immortalists by Chloe Benjamin

The Gold siblings visit a fortuneteller as teenagers one afternoon in 1969, and she tells each the date of their death. The question of whether the siblings would have lived their lives differently without this terrible knowledge haunts the reader as the book follows each child through their lives: Simon as he hurls himself into the 1970s gay scene in San Francisco, Klara as she becomes a magician in Las Vegas, Daniel as a doctor and Varya as a scientist. A Book Club Selection.