

Eileen

Tidelands by Philippa Gregory

Tidelands is set during the English Civil War (1648). Suspected of possessing dark secrets in superstitious times, Alinor, the local herbalist, faces mortal danger compounded by the secrets she keeps on behalf of her family and the young cavalier she meets on Midsummer Eve.

I like the complicated politics that weave through the book and the next two in the series, and the glimpses of what those grand schemes meant for ordinary people.

Gregory is famous for her portrayals of Tudor royalty in books like *The Last Boleyn Girl* and *The White Queen*, both also successful screen adaptations.

Platforms: book

Kelly

The All-Girl Filling Station's Last Reunion by Fannie Flagg

I thought I had read just about everything Fannie Flagg has written but somehow missed this one until now. This dual timeline (current modern times and 1940s) novel is as wonderful as warm apple crisp with vanilla ice cream on a crisp fall day in New Hampshire. If you enjoy a sweet homespun novel with a bit of a twist like I do every once in a while then this is the book for you; Fannie Flagg's storytelling at its best. I so enjoyed getting to know the many characters and, as always, Fannie Flagg' has impeccable humor and charm. This is a short and sweet staff pick recommendation for me this time around as I don't want to spill the beans on the plot - you'll just have to read the book. Come to think of it - take a look at her other books too!

Platforms: book, Libby (audio/ebook)

Linda

The Authenticity Project by Clare Pooley

Nothing makes readers happier than to open a book, immediately become engaged with the characters, setting, and plot, and lose track of time. This reader did not want to put this book down!

A shared notebook brings six strangers together. Deep, caring friendships develop. Amongst the flotsam and jetsam of life, True Love triumphs. Although an entertaining work of fiction, the underpinning of the novel has to do with discovering one's identity, living an authentic life, overcoming obstacles, and the importance of relationships and caring for and about others.

The author's Acknowledgments educate readers about the author and her motivations and inspiration for writing this novel. This section also gives readers a glimpse into the publishing world: it takes a village of caring people to bring an author's vision into readers' hands.

Also available is the author's new release: *How To Age Disgracefully* (Staff Pick for September).

Platforms: book, Libby audio

Rebecca

MISSING (2023)

A thrilling roller coaster mystery that makes you wonder how well you know those individuals closest to you. June is in Los Angeles living every teenager's dream ... Home ALONE, while Mom is on vacation with her new boyfriend in Columbia. When her mom doesn't return, June has to rely on the technology she has to find her before it is too late.

An eye opening look at how much information is out there in the internet world, even when we think we are being safe. How FAR would you go to find a loved one?

Rating: 5/5 stars.

Platforms: dvd

Samantha

The Return of the King by JRR Tolkien

The final installment of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, *The Return of the King* continues the story of the previous two books, bringing everything together in one final, epic conclusion. Split between the storylines of Frodo and Sam, who are now nearing the end of their desperate quest, and Aragorn and his companions as they make their last stand against the forces of Mordor, the narrative can be a little tricky to follow, but is very rewarding by the end. Themes of sacrifice, loyalty, courage, and hope and despair are expertly woven throughout the book and give it greater weight.

Ultimately, *The Return of the King* is a suspenseful, powerful conclusion to one of the most influential series of all time.

platforms: book, audio, Libby (ebook/audio), Hoopla (audio)