



## Mary Riley Styles Public Library

### Senior Book Discussion Series

### 2019-2020

Tuesday, September 10: ***Fly Girls: How Five Daring Women Defied All Odds and Made Aviation History*** by Keith O'Brien (*Non-fiction*)

*Fly Girls* weaves together the stories of five remarkable women: Florence Klingensmith, a high school dropout from North Dakota; Ruth Elder, an Alabama divorcée; Amelia Earhart, the most famous, but not necessarily the most skilled; Ruth Nichols, who chafed at her blue blood family's expectations; and Louise Thaden, the young mother of two who got her start selling coal in Wichita. Together, they fought for the chance to fly and race airplanes—and in 1936, one of them would triumph, beating the men in the toughest air race of them all.

Tuesday, October 22: ***Word by Word: the Secret Life of Dictionaries*** by Kory Stamper (*Non-fiction*)

With wit and irreverence, Stamper cracks open the obsessive world of dictionary writing, from the agonizing decisions about what to define and how to do it, to the knotty questions of ever-changing word usage. Filled with fun facts—for example, the first documented usage of “OMG” was in a letter to Winston Churchill—and Stamper's own stories from the linguistic front lines, *Word by Word* is an endlessly entertaining look at the wonderful complexities and eccentricities of the English language.

Tuesday, December 10: ***A Gentleman in Moscow*** by Amor Towles (*Fiction*)

In 1922, Count Alexander Rostov is deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal, and is sentenced to house arrest in the Metropol, a grand hotel across the street from the Kremlin. Rostov has never worked a day in his life, and must now live in an attic room while some of the most tumultuous decades in Russian history are unfolding outside the hotel's doors. Unexpectedly, his reduced circumstances provide him entry into a much larger world of emotional discovery.

Tuesday, January 21: ***Meet Me at the Museum*** by Anne Youngson (*Fiction*)

In Denmark, Professor Anders Larsen, an urbane man of facts, has lost his wife. On an isolated English farm, Tina Hopgood is trapped in a life she doesn't remember choosing. Both believe their love stories are over. Brought together by a shared fascination with the Tollund Man, subject of Seamus Heaney's famous poem, they begin writing letters to one another – and find they have more in common than they could have imagined. As they open up to one another about their lives, an unexpected friendship blooms. But then Tina's letters stop coming, and Anders is thrown into despair. How far are they willing to go to write a new story for themselves?

Tuesday, March 3: ***Little Fires Everywhere*** by Celeste Ng (*Fiction*)

From the bestselling author of *Everything I Never Told You*, a riveting novel that traces the intertwined fates of the picture-perfect Richardson family and the enigmatic mother and daughter who upend their lives. *Little Fires Everywhere* explores the weight of secrets, the nature of art and identity, and the ferocious pull of motherhood – and the danger of believing that following the rules can avert disaster.

Tuesday, April 21: ***Becoming*** by Michelle Obama (*Non-fiction*)

The former first lady looks back on an unlikely rise to the top while navigating issues of race and gender. Obama's narrative is the story of an African-American striver, born to a working-class family in a Chicago ghetto, who got Princeton and Harvard degrees and prominent jobs in law and public relations, attended at every step by the nagging question, "Am I good enough?" It's also about her struggle to keep husband Barack's political career from subsuming her identity and the placid family life she preferred to the electoral frenzy, while she weathered misgivings over work-life balance and marital strains that required couples' counseling.

Tuesday, June 2: ***Women Rowing North*** by Mary Pipher (*Non-fiction*)

The New York Times bestseller from the author of *Reviving Ophelia*—a guide to wisdom, authenticity, and bliss for women as they age. Women growing older contend with ageism, misogyny, and loss. Yet as Mary Pipher shows, most older women are deeply happy and filled with gratitude for the gifts of life. Their struggles help them grow into the authentic, empathetic, and wise people they have always wanted to be.