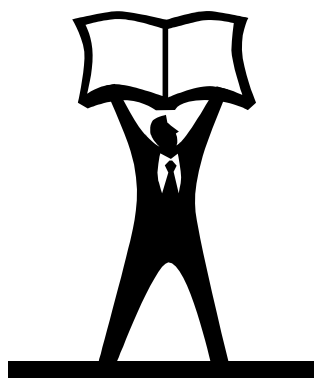




Recommended Reads *for* Reading Groups



**Books read by Bracknell Forest Libraries Reading Groups
(except those marked*)**

At present Bracknell Forest Libraries has at least four copies of each of these titles in stock (this may include 'large print' copies). For information on current availability you will need contact your local library.

Last updated: August 2007

ACHEBE, Chinua: 'Things fall apart' Things Fall Apart tells the story of Okonkwo, an important man in the Igbo tribe in the days when white men were first on the scene. Okonkwo becomes exiled from his tribe, as a result of his pride and his fears, with tragic consequences.

ADICHIE, Chimamanda: 'Purple hibiscus' When Nigeria begins to fall apart under a military coup, Kambili's father, involved in mysterious ways with the unfolding political crisis, sends Kambili and her brother away to their aunt's. Here she discovers love and a life - dangerous and heathen - beyond the confines of her father's authority.

ALBOM, Mitch: 'The five people you meet in heaven' 'The Five People You Meet in Heaven' is a beautifully written first novel that addresses the meaning of life - and life after death.

ALI, Monica: 'Brick Lane' In this tale of two Muslim sisters Monica Ali explores how they live out their own personal tragedies. One lives in a tower block in London's

East End whilst the other lives in a Bangladeshi village.

ATKINSON, Kate: 'Case histories' Full of suspense and heartbreak, 'Case Histories' is a feat of bravura storytelling that conveys the mysteries of life, its inanities and its hilarities. Jackson is 45 but feels much older. Surrounded by death, intrigue and misfortune, his own life is brought sharply into focus.

***ATWOOD, Margaret: 'Oryx and Crake'** With her shocking material and customary sharp wit and dark humour, Atwood projects readers into a less-than-brave new world, an outlandish yet wholly believable space populated by a cast of characters who will inhabit dreams.

AUSTEN, Jane: 'Sense and sensibility' Jane Austen sets social snobbery against summer picnics; social rejection against the passion of real love. Her warm portrait of the relationship between two very different sisters contrasts her precise observation of vanity, selfishness and snobbery.

BANK, Melissa: 'The wonder spot' Meet Sophie Applebaum - as enchanting a heroine as Jane in The Girl's Guide to Hunting and Fishing. Sophie is an outsider and an inventor of rules, simply because she does not fit into any neat description of who she might be: she's Jewish, but lacks religious feeling; a book-lover but a mediocre student; a loyal friend often unpleasantly surprised and a less-than-devoted employee. She falls in love precipitously but isn't sure whom she should marry - or if she wants to marry at all despite all the family pressures and social clamour on this subject.

BANVILLE, John: 'The sea' When Max Morden returns to the coastal town where he spent a holiday in his youth he is both escaping from a recent loss and confronting a distant trauma. Winner of the Booker Prize 2005.

BARNES, Julian: 'Arthur and George' Arthur and George grow up worlds and miles apart in late 19th century Britain - Arthur in shabby-genteel Edinburgh, George in the vicarage of a small Staffordshire village. As the new century begins, they are brought together by a sequence of events which

make sensational headlines at the time as The Great Wyrley Outrages.

BENNETT, Alan: 'Untold stories' "Untold Stories" is Alan Bennett's first collection of prose since "Writing Home" and takes in all his major writings over the last ten years. The title piece is a poignant family memoir with an account of the marriage of his parents, the lives and deaths of his aunts and the uncovering of a long-held family secret. Also included are his much celebrated diaries for the years 1996 to 2004, as well as essays, reviews, lectures and reminiscences ranging from childhood trips to the local cinema and a tour around Leeds Art Gallery to reflections on writing, honours and his Westminster Abbey eulogy for Thora Hird. At times heartrending and at others extremely funny, "Untold Stories" is a matchless and unforgettable anthology.

BRAGG, Melvin: 'The soldier's return' In The Soldier's Return Bragg explores the most unsettling of experiences: returning to a normality that's no longer normal.

BRODRICK, William: 'The Sixth Lamentation'

A man arrives at Larkwood Monastery claiming sanctuary. Edward Schwermann is accused of Nazi war crimes: the chances are he is stained with blood, but politics demand that Larkwood shelter him. Father Anselm is given the task of finding out more about Schwermann's crimes.

BRONTE, Emily: 'Wuthering heights'

The saga of two Yorkshire families in the remote Pennine Hills. The book has been interpreted as an historical romance, a ghostly thriller, a psychological love-story, a religious allegory and a nature poem. This is the author's only novel.

BROWN, Dan: 'The Da Vinci Code'

Robert Langton, visiting Paris, is called in when the curator of the Louvre has been murdered. Alongside the body is a series of baffling ciphers. Langton and a gifted French cryptologist, Sophie Neveu, are amazed to find a trail that leads to the works of Da Vinci - and beyond.

BRYSON, Bill: 'A short history of nearly everything' (Non-fiction)

Bill Bryson describes himself as a reluctant traveller, but even when he stays safely in his own study at home, he can't contain his curiosity about the world around him. This book is his quest to understand everything that has happened from the Big Bang to the rise of civilization.

CARTWRIGHT, Justin: 'The promise of happiness'

The Judds, formerly of London N1, now scattered, are about to be thrown together again by the eldest child Juliet's release from prison in New York. The family is devastated by Juliet's conviction for art theft. The nature of this theft and the reasons for it plague all the protagonists.

CHEVALIER, Tracy: 'The virgin blue'

Ella is a young American who moves to rural France and becomes obsessed by the colour blue and the history of the French side of her family. Ella learns about Isabel, one of her ancestors, who was persecuted during the time of the Huguenots.

CLARK, Clare: 'The great stink' Returning to London after the horrors of the Crimean War, William May has landed a job at the heart

of Bazalgette's transformation of the London sewers. But when the sewers begin to yield dark and dangerous secrets, May discovers that life above ground is far more dangerous than beneath.

CLARK, Mary Higgins: 'The Christmas thief' When an 80ft spruce is chosen to be the Rockefeller Center's Christmas tree, no-one knows of its precious secret. Hidden in its branches lies a cache of diamonds. Will Packy get his hands on his bounty before Alvirah and Regan track him down?

DESAI, Kiran: 'Inheritance of loss' At the foot of Mount Kanchenjunga in the Himalayas lives an embittered old judge who wants nothing more than to retire in peace. With the arrival of his orphaned granddaughter, and his cook's son hopscotching from one New York restaurant to another, trying to stay ahead of the US immigration services, this is far from easy.

DONNELLY, Jennifer: 'A gathering light' When Mattie is given letters by a guest at the hotel where she has a summer job, she thinks the guest is simply upset. But when the woman

is found drowned next day, Mattie must decide whether she will read them, or burn them as requested. A touching, funny surprising novel, set in 1906 and based on a true story.

DU MAURIER, Daphne: 'A loving spirit' Janet Coombe was born with the loving spirit and she passed it on to her son Joseph. In Janet's great-granddaughter, Jennifer, it again reappears, breaking down the barrier of years. Wild and eerie, it is something that carries them beyond all prudence in their need to love and be loved.

DUNMORE, Helen: 'The Siege' Whilst German tanks surround Leningrad during September 1941, two families struggle to stay alive. As winter grips the city first the furniture is burnt, then the books, but some may not live to see another day.

FLAUBERT, Gustave: 'Madame Bovary' Finding herself stifled by marriage, Emma Bovary throws herself into a desperate love affair and by doing so, sows the seeds of her own downfall.

FORSTER, Margaret: 'Diary of an ordinary woman'

Presented as the 'edited' journal of a real-life woman who was born in 1901 and died in 1995, this is a fiction where every word rings true. Millie starts her diary at the age of 13, on the eve of the Great War.

FRAYN, Michael: 'Headlong'

Martin Clay, a young would-be art historian, sees a chance of a lifetime: to perform a great public service, and to make his professional reputation. To obtain the treasure he thinks he has identified involves him setting up a classic sting and risking everything that is valuable to him.

FRAYN, Michael: 'Spies'

There is very little evidence of the war where Keith and Stephen live. But the friends suspect the inhabitants of the close aren't what they seem. As Keith informs his trusting friend, the district is riddled with secret passages and underground labs.

FRAYN, Rebecca: 'One life'

Raising fundamental questions about women's choices and the very nature of femininity and maternal ambition, 'One Life' is a

poignant and emotional exploration of womanhood that asks the question of what happens when the most natural thing in the world - the act of conception - stays just out of reach.

GRAHAM, Laurie: 'Future homemakers of America'

It is 1953. Five American Airforce wives in Norfolk are waiting for their husbands to return. There is very little to do, so they dare to look beyond the safety of the perimeter fence for a little excitement with the natives.

GRAHAM, Laurie: 'Mr Starlight'

Laurie Graham's novel is about the grubby side of celebrity and the tangled web of family secrets. We follow the ups and downs of My Starlight's career as he heads to the bright lights of America, as seen through the eyes of Cled, his brother.

GRENVILLE, Kate: 'The secret river'

Following a childhood marked by poverty and petty crime in the slums of London, William Thornhill is sentenced in 1806 to be transported to New South Wales for the term of his natural life. With his wife and children, he arrives in a harsh land to a life that feels like a

death sentence.

GRISHAM, John: 'The Chamber'

A thriller about a rookie lawyer defending a member of the Klu Klux Klan who has been on Death Row for 23 years and faces the gas chamber. The lawyer hates his client's racist views, but as the case develops, it appears that his client may be innocent.

GRISHAM, John: 'Skipping Christmas'

This novel from John Grisham describes a family who, sickened by the over-commercialisation of Christmas, decide to go away for the holiday. When things go wrong, they are forced to return home. Then they discover the real meaning of Christmas.

HADDON, Mark: 'The curious incident of the dog in the night time'

A murder mystery like no other, this novel features Christopher Boone, a 15 year-old who suffers from Asperger's syndrome. When he finds a neighbour's dog murdered, he sets out on a journey which will turn his whole world upside down.

HARRIS, Joanne: 'Chocolat'

When the beautiful and mysterious Vianne moves to Lansquenet and opens a chocolate shop across from the church, the inhabitants of the tiny village find themselves torn between the solemn law of religion and the joyful rewards of Vianne's confections.

HARRIS, Joanne: 'Gentlemen and players'

Set in an old, long-established boys' grammar school in the north of England. A new year has just begun, and for the staff and boys, a wind of unwelcome change is blowing. Beneath the little rivalries, petty disputes and everyday crises of the school, a darker undercurrent stirs.

HEARN, Lian: 'Across the nightingale floor' Set in a mythical, feudal Japanese land, a world both beautiful and cruel, this is the intense love story of two young people takes place against a background of warring clans.

HISLOP, Victoria: 'The island' On the brink of her own life-changing decision, Alexis Fielding longs to find out about her mother's past. But Sofia has never spoken

of it. All she admits to is growing up in a small Cretan village before moving to London.

HOFFMAN, Alice: 'The blue diary'

Blue Diary is a dark and compelling new novel about the lies beneath the surface of a 'perfect' marriage. Alice Hoffman is also the author of Practical Magic, made into a Hollywood movie, Local Girls and The River King.

HOLDSTOCK, Robert: 'Mythago Wood'

One of the few true Fantasy classics In this World Fantasy Award-winning novel, Robert Holdstock introduces us for the first time to his best-selling creations: Mythagoes and Mythago Wood. Ryhope Wood, Britain's last fragment of primeval forest, is inhabited by long-extinct animals and figures of ancient myth. George Huxley and his two sons, Steven and Christian, each explore the woodland in their turn, changing it by their very presence and finding wonderful - and deadly - things...

HOLMAN, Michael: 'Last orders at Harrods' Charity Mupanga is the owner of Harrods International Bar (& Nightspot) - a favourite

meeting place for the movers & shakers of Kibera. While she can handle most challenges, threatening letters from London lawyers are beginning to overwhelm her. How dare a London store claim exclusive use of the first name of her late father?

HORTON, Babs: 'A jarful of angels'

In a remote Welsh village, Iffy, Bessie, Fatty and Billy formed a remarkable friendship and enjoyed an impoverished yet magical childhood. But at the end of that long, hot summer of 1963, one of them disappeared. Over 30 years later, retired detective Will Slone returns to that village of secrets

HOSSEINI, Khaled: 'The kite runner' Winter, 1975: Afghanistan, a country on the verge of an internal coup. 12 year old Amir is desperate to win the approval of his father, one of the richest merchants in Kabul. He's failed to do so through academia or brawn but the one area they connect is the annual kite fighting tournament.

HYDE, Elisabeth: 'The abortionist's daughter' 'The problem was Megan had just taken the second half of her

ecstasy when her father called with the news'. Nineteen-year-old university student Megan Thompson is beautiful, cool, clever and sexy - the kind of girl boys fall in love with. She's mostly steered clear of family life since the death of her younger brother. That is until the day she hears her mother, Diana, has been found floating face down in their swimming pool. Diana, as Director of the Center for Reproductive Choice, was a national figure who inspired passions and made enemies. Detective Huck Berlin is brought in to investigate the case when it becomes clear that Diana was murdered. Several people have quarrelled with Diana on that fateful day, not least Frank, her husband of twenty years, and her wayward child. Now, father and daughter are thrown together in an unexpected twist of family life. Set in a small town in Colorado, "The Abortionist's Daughter" is an utterly compelling novel of family secrets, dark passion and, ultimately, catharsis for those whose lives have become so strangely entwined.

IRVING, John: 'A prayer for Owen Meany'

Owen Meany hits a foul ball

while playing baseball in the summer of 1953 that kills his best friend's mother, an accident that Owen is sure is the result of divine intervention.

ISHIGURO, Kazuo: 'Never let me go' Kathy, Ruth and Tommy were pupils at Hailsham - an idyllic establishment situated deep in the English countryside. The children there were tenderly sheltered from the outside world, brought up to believe they were special, and that their personal welfare was crucial. But for what reason were they really there?

JAMES, P.D.: 'The murder room'

A private museum near Hampstead Heath has been inherited by three siblings, all of whom are required by a trust to sign any new lease. Without the lease the museum will have to close. One brother, Neville Dupayne, is adamant he won't sign. Then his body is discovered in his still blazing car.

KELLY, Clara Olink: 'The flamboya tree: memories of a family's war-time courage' (Non-fiction)

When the Japanese invaded

Java during World War II, 4-year-old Clara Kelly was sent to a women's camp with her mother and brothers. Her descriptions of the appalling conditions are countered by the resilience and courage of the internees.

KIDD, Sue Monk: 'The secret life of bees' Lily has grown up believing she accidentally killed her mother when she was 4. She not only has her own memory of holding the gun, but her father's account of the event. Now fourteen, she yearns for her mother, and for forgiveness.

KINGSOLVER, Barbara: 'The poisonwood bible' This is a story told by the wife and four daughters of Nathan Price, a fierce evangelical Baptist who takes his family and mission to the Belgian Congo in 1959.

KINSELLA, Sophie: 'The undomestic goddess' Samantha Smith got the highest law degree of her year and she's on the fast track for a partnership at a high pressure legal firm. Until she makes a mistake. A mistake so huge, she goes into meltdown, walks out of the office, gets on the first train she sees, and finds

herself in the middle of nowhere.

KRAUS, Nicole: 'A history of love' A young girl, hoping to find a cure for her mother's loneliness, stumbles across a book that changed her mother's life and she goes in search of the author. Soon these and other worlds collide in 'The History of Love', a captivating story of the power of love, of loneliness and of survival.

LAWSON, Mary: 'Crow Lake' In this universal drama of family love and misunderstandings, of resentments harboured and driven underground, Lawson ratchets up the tension, playing out her story with heartbreaking humour.

LEVY, Andrea: 'Small Island' Returning to England after the war Gilbert Joseph is treated very differently now that he is no longer in an RAF uniform. Joined by his wife Hortense, he rekindles a friendship with Queenie who takes in Jamaican lodgers. Can their dreams of a better life in England overcome the prejudice they face?

LEWYCKA, Marina: 'A short history of tractors in

Ukrainian' For year, Nadezhda and Vera have had as little as possible to do with each other. But now they find they'd better learn how to get along, because since their mother's death their ageing father has been sliding into his second childhood, and an alarming new woman has just entered his life.

McCALL-SMITH, Alexander: 'The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency'

The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency is one woman, Precious Ramotswe, working out of a breezeblock office in Botswana. A cross between Kinsey Millhone & Miss Marple, Precious makes an unlikely heroine as she embarks on a very African mystery.

***McEWAN, Ian: 'Atonement'**

Atonement is the novel for which Ian McEwan will always be remembered. Enthralling in its depiction of childhood, love and war, class and England, at its centre is a profound and profoundly moving exploration of shame and forgiveness.

McEWAN, Ian: 'Enduring love'

A fatal ballooning accident in the Chilterns disrupts the organised life of Joe Rose, leading to an encounter which tests his rationalism to the limits. The author was shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 1981 and 1992 and is a previous winner of the Whitbread Novel of the Year award.

McEwan, Ian: 'Saturday'

'Saturday' is a novel set within a single day in February 2003. Henry Perowne is a contented man, but what troubles him is the state of the world. Following a minor car accident, Perowne is brought into contact with a small-time thug called Miller. This meeting has savage consequences.

McGREGOR, Jon: 'If nobody speaks of remarkable things'

On a street in an unnamed town in the north of England, perfectly ordinary people are doing totally ordinary things - but then a terrible event shatters the quiet of the early summer evening and no one who witnesses it will be quite the same again.

MALLADI, Amulya: 'Mango season' 'The Mango Season' is a lush and beautifully written novel from a highly acclaimed author. With vivid descriptions and compelling characters, it takes the reader on a trip into the heart and soul of contemporary India.

MARTEL, Yann: 'Life of Pi' Pi lives in Pondicherry, India, where his father owns the city's zoo. The family decides to emigrate to Canada, but tragedy strikes at sea. In the lifeboat are five survivors: Pi, a hyena, a zebra, a female orang-utan and a 450-pound Royal Bengal tiger. Winner of the 2002 Man Booker Prize.

MASON, Daniel: 'The piano tuner' It is 1886 and piano tuner Edgar Drake receives a strange request from the War Office: he must leave his wife, and his life in London, to travel to Burma to tune a rare Erard grand piano. The piano belongs to Surgeon-Major Anthony Carroll, an enigmatic British officer whose unorthodox methods are attracting suspicion.

MATSUOKA, Takashi: 'Cloud of sparrows' Into a realm of samurai and geishas, ninjas and Zen masters comes a man and a

woman from the West, and the destiny of a nation that has been closed to the outside world for 250 years is about to change forever.

MEEK, James: 'The people's act of love' Siberia, 1919. In the outer reaches of a country recently torn apart by civil war live a small Christian sect and, stationed nearby, a regiment of Czech soldiers. Into this isolated community trudges Samarin, an escapee from Russia's northernmost prison.

MOSSE, Kate: 'Labyrinth' 'Labyrinth' spans eight centuries to unite the destinies of two women - a modern-day archaeologist who uncovers a tomb in southern France with strange inscriptions on the walls and a pervading atmosphere of evil, and a 13th-century herbalist and healer entrusted with a book that contains great secrets.

NIFFENEGGER, Audrey: 'The Time Traveler's Wife' This is the story of Henry and Clare, who have known each other since Clare was six and Henry was 36, and were married when Clare was 20 and Henry was 28. This is possible only because Henry is one of the first people

diagnosed with chrono-displacement-disorder.

NOBLE, Elizabeth: 'The Reading Group'

Liz Noble's first novel is an exploration of the characters who participate in a reading group. Of course, the real subject of the group discussions is the reading group itself. Each member expresses dissatisfaction in one way or another.

O'RIORDAN, Kate: 'The memory stones'

Set in Paris and Ireland, this is a moving story about a woman in her forties, dealing with her sexuality, a damaged daughter and a fear of returning to her roots.

PATCHETT, Ann: 'Bel Canto'

Somewhere in South America, at the home of the country's vice president, a lavish birthday party is being held in honor of Mr. Hosokawa, a powerful Japanese businessman. Roxanne Coss, opera's most revered soprano, has mesmerized the international guests with her singing. It is a perfect evening -- until a band of gun-wielding terrorists breaks in through the air-conditioning vents and takes the entire party hostage. But

what begins as a panicked, life-threatening scenario slowly evolves into something quite different, as terrorists and hostages forge unexpected bonds and people from different countries and continents become compatriots.

PICOULT, Jodi: 'My sister's keeper'

The only reason Anna was born was to donate her cord blood cells to her older sister. By the age of 13, she has undergone countless surgeries, transfusions and injections so that her sister Kate can fight the leukemia that has plagued her since she was a child. Now Anna wants control over her own body.

PULLMAN, Philip: 'Northern lights'

In this first part of the "Dark Materials" trilogy, Lyra's friend Roger disappears. She and her daemon, Pantalaimon, determine to find him. Their quest leads them to the bleak splendour of the North where a team of scientists are conducting unspeakably horrible experiments.

RHYS, Jean: 'Wide Sargasso Sea'

Antoinette Cosway is a Creole heiress - product of an

inbred, decadent, expatriate community - a sensitive girl at once beguiled and repelled by the lush Jamaican landscape. Soon after her marriage to Rochester rumours of madness in the Cosway family poison Rochester's mind against her.

RUIZ ZAFON, Carlos: 'The shadow of the wind'

Hidden in the heart of the old city of Barcelona is a labyrinthine library of obscure & forgotten titles that have long gone out of print. A man brings his 10-year-old son to the library & allows him to choose one book to keep. But as he grows up, several people seem inordinately interested in his find.

SCHLINK, Bernard: 'The reader'

An exceptionally powerful novel exploring the themes of betrayal, guilt and memory against the background of the Holocaust. An international bestseller.

SHREVE, Anita: 'The last time they met'

Linda Fallon and Thomas Janes meet up again after 26 years. Theirs is a story bound by the irresistible pull of true passion - a love which begins in the 1960s, is rekindled in the 1970s, and which is about

to play out its astonishing final episode.

SHRIVER, Lionel: 'We need to talk about Kevin'

Who is to blame for teenage atrocity? Narrator, Eva Khatchadourian's son, Kevin, murdered seven of his fellow high school students, a cafeteria worker, and the much-loved teacher who tried to befriend him. This novel is an examination of the effect tragedy has on a town, a marriage and a family.

SMITH, Ali: 'The accidental'

'The Accidental' is the follow-up novel to 'Hotel World', which was shortlisted for the Booker and Orange prizes in 2002. Ali Smith's other novels include 'Free Love', 'Like', 'Other Stories and Other Stories' and 'The Whole Story and Other Stories'.

***SMITH, Zadie: 'White teeth'**

White Teeth is a comic epic of multicultural Britain by one of the most exciting young writers of 2000. It tells the story of immigrants in England over a period of 40 years.

SMITH, Zadie: 'On beauty'

When Howard Belsey's oldest son Jerome falls for Victoria, the stunning daughter of the right-wing Monty Kipps, both

families find themselves thrown together, enacting a cultural and personal war against each other.

SPARKS, Nicholas: 'The wedding' After more than 20 years of marriage, Wilson Lewis is forced to admit that the romance has gone out of his marriage. Desperate to win back his wife Jane's heart, he must figure out how to make her fall in love with him - again.

STAFFORD, Hildred: 'David Jason' (Non-fiction) This biography traces David Jason's life from his humble roots in north London, through his days as an electrician, to the David Jason we all know and love. It is based on the actor's own memories and also recollections from friends, relatives and co-stars of both stage and screen.

STEINBECK, John: 'Cannery Row' In the din and stink that is Cannery Row, a colourful blend of misfits - gamblers, whores, drunks, burns and artists - survive side by side in a jumble of adventure and mischief. Lee Chong, the astute owner of the well-stocked grocery store, is also the proprietor of the Palace

Flophouse that Mack and his troupe of good-natured 'boys' call home. Dora runs the brothel with clockwork efficiency and a generous heart, and Doc is the fount of all wisdom. Packed with invention and joie de vivre, CANNERY ROW is Steinbeck's high-spirited tribute to his native California.

SUSKIND, Patrick: 'Perfume - the story of a murderer' Born in sweaty, fetid 18th-century Paris, Grenouille is distinctive even in infancy. He has a sense of smell more powerful than any other human's and no personal odour. Suskind develops this idea into a tale of murder controlled by a loathing of humanity.

SWIFT, Graham: 'The light of day' Sarah is in prison. Every fortnight she is visited by George, the private eye she employed to observe the final stage of her husband's affair. The visits - and the days between - lead George back into Sarah's past and into events he can picture only too well.

TAYLOR, Andrew: 'The American boy' Edgar Allan Poe is the American boy, a child standing on the edge of

mysteries. In 1819 two Americans arrive in London, and soon afterwards a bank collapses, a man is found dead and mutilated, a heiress flirts with her inferiors, and a schoolmaster struggles to understand what is happening.

TOMALIN, Claire: 'Samuel Pepys: the unequalled self' (Non-fiction)

A full-scale biography of naval administrator Samuel Pepys, who was well-known for being the friend of the famous and powerful. This text, which draws on Pepys' own personal diary, covers his childhood and young adulthood.

TREMAIN, Rose: 'The colour'

'The Colour' is a sweeping saga of sacrifice and greed set during the mid-nineteenth century gold rush in New Zealand.

TREVOR, William: 'The story of Lucy Gault'

Captain Gault has decided that his family must leave Lahardane. They are Protestants living in rural Cork, and the country is in turmoil. But 8 year old Lucy can't bear to leave so she hatches a plan. It is then that the calamity happens.

TRIGIANI, Adriana: 'Big stone gap'

It's 1978 and Ave Maria Mulligan is a 35-year-old spinster living in Big Stone Gap, Virginia. As the local pharmacist, she's been keeping the townfolk's secrets for years, but she's about to discover a scandal in her own family's past.

TROLLOPE, ANTHONY: 'The warden'

This is the first of the six Barchester novels. Septimus Harding is an unworldly, cello-playing clergyman, beloved by the pensioners of Barchester's almshouse, of which he is warden. When ecclesiastical and political skulduggery engulf him, he is pulled in two directions.

VICKERS, Salley: 'The other side of you'

David McBride is a psychiatrist unusually drawn to death. When he meets a failed suicide, he finds a haunting sense that the 'other side' of his elusive patient has a strange resonance for him too. Salley Vickers traces the boundaries of life and death and the difficult possibilities of repentance.

WATERS, Sarah: 'Affinity'

Following her father's death,

Margaret Prior pursues some "good work" with the lady criminals of one of London's most notorious gaols. Drawn to one of the prisons more unlikely inmates - imprisoned spiritualist Selina Dawes - she finds herself dabbling in a world of spirits and seances.

WESTWATER, Judy: 'Street kid' (Non-fiction)

Abducted by her psychotic spiritualist father and kept like a dog in his backyard, Judy suffered in a Manchester orphanage run by nuns before being taken to South Africa. There she ended up living wild on the streets. This is the story of her early years.

WILLIAMS, Stephanie: 'Olga's story' (Non-fiction)

From the comfort of her family to the terror of revolution and war, journeys across vast continents in exile, 'Olga's Story' is the breathtaking and heartbreaking tale of the author's grandmother, lived at the heart of the 20th century.

WINCHESTER, Simon: 'The surgeon of Crowthorne' (Non-fiction)

One of the keenest volunteers in the making of the Oxford English Dictionary was a W C Minor. His refusal to go to Oxford to receive his

congratulations led to the editor going to meet him in Berkshire, where he found that Minor was a millionaire American civil war surgeon turned lunatic, imprisoned in Broadmoor Asylum for murder.

WINSPEAR, Jacqueline: 'Maisie Dobbs'

She started as a maid in an aristocratic London household, studied her way into Garton College at Cambridge, then became a front line nurse in WW1. Now she has set up on her own as a private investigator - with a case that will force her to confront the ghost of her past.

WOOLF, Virginia: 'Orlando'

Orlando has always been an outsider...His longing for passion, adventure and fulfilment takes him out of his own time. Chasing a dream through the centuries, he bounds from Elizabethan England and imperial Turkey to the modern world. Will he find happiness with the exotic Russian Princess Sasha? Or is the dashing explorer Shelmerdine the ideal man? And what form will Orlando take on the journey - a nobleman, traveler, writer? Man or...woman?

