**2015-1016 BCBG Reading List**

**AUGUST - *At the Water's Edge* by Sara Gruen.**Linda Young

                In this thrilling new novel from the author of Water for Elephants, Sara Gruen again demonstrates her talent for creating spellbinding period pieces. At the Water’s Edge is a gripping and poignant love story about a privileged young woman’s awakening as she experiences the devastation of World War II in a tiny village in the Scottish Highlands.

After disgracing themselves at a high society New Year’s Eve party in Philadelphia in 1944, Madeline Hyde and her husband, Ellis, are cut off financially by his father, a former army colonel who is already ashamed of his son’s inability to serve in the war. When Ellis and his best friend, Hank, decide that the only way to regain the Colonel’s favor is to succeed where the Colonel very publicly failed—by hunting down the famous Loch Ness monster—Maddie reluctantly follows them across the Atlantic, leaving her sheltered world behind.

**SEPTEMBER *- All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr.**Lynne Walters

                      From the highly acclaimed, multiple award-winning Anthony Doerr, a stunningly ambitious and beautiful novel about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II.

Marie Laure lives with her father in Paris within walking distance of the Museum of Natural History where he works as the master of the locks (there are thousands of locks in the museum). When she is six, she goes blind, and her father builds her a model of their neighborhood, every house, every manhole, so she can memorize it with her fingers and navigate the real streets with her feet and cane. When the Germans occupy Paris, father and daughter flee to Saint-Malo on the Brittany coast, where Marie-Laure’s agoraphobic great uncle lives in a tall, narrow house by the sea wall.

**OCTOBER - *Interpreter of Maladies* by Jhumpa Lahiri.**Faye Walker

                   Short stories

                   The Das family is in India on vacation, and Mr. Das has hired Mr. Kapasi to drive them to visit the Sun Temple. The family sits in the car, which is stopped near a tea stall. Mr. and Mrs. Das are arguing about who should take their daughter, Tina, to the bathroom, and Mrs. Das ultimately takes her. Ronny, their son, darts out of the car to look at a goat. Mr. Das, who closely resembles Ronny, reprimands him but does nothing to stop him, even when he says he wants to give the goat a piece of gum. Mr. Das tells Bobby, the younger of their two sons, to go look after Ronny. When Bobby refuses, Mr. Das does nothing to enforce his order.

**NOVEMBER *- Ellen in Pieces* by Caroline Adderson, Canadian.**Heather Thompson \*\*tentative...due to arrangements with author to Skype/FaceTime during our discussion

                    In this witty, compelling and genre-bending novel, a single mother navigates the loves, lusts and losses of middle age to arrive at a final, bittersweet contentment. The cleverly titled Ellen in Pieces recounts the tale of a woman putting the shattered pieces of her life back together, but it’s also told in pieces — in two acts comprising a dozen stand-alone short stories. They’re not chronological, and they don’t always star Ellen. Some feature her boyfriend or her daughter or her young grandson.

**DECEMBER - Book exchange and discussion of what we want for Christmas/what are we buying for others/grandchildren.**OPEN. We need someone to host this month.

**JANUARY - *An Invisible Thread* by Laura Schroff**.   Suzanne Ligon

                   The True Story of an 11-Year-Old Panhandler, a Busy Sales Executive, and an Unlikely Meeting with Destiny. It could have ended with a passing glance. He could have been just another panhandler, and she could have been one of many New Yorkers who simply walks on by. Instead, Laura Schroff stopped and bought lunch for eleven-year-old Maurice. From that day, their unique bond evolved into a profound friendship that changed the course of their lives in ways neither could have imagined.

- See more at: <http://books.simonandschuster.com/An-Invisible-Thread/Laura-Schroff/9781451648973/reading_group_guide#sthash.wbmtv5Xx.dpuf>

**FEBRUARY *- What Comes Next and How to Like It***, by Abigail Thomas:  A Memoir" Patti Erwin

                     A deeply moving memoir, the best work yet by a woman who has already done some of the best work in the field. It’s about friendship, and the shocks friendship can endure when it’s true and deep. It’s about the rueful pleasures (not to mention the jarring pitfalls) of getting old. It’s about enduring tragedy, sickness, and loss. Thomas speaks of these big things by scattering the ordinary jewelry of everyday life: loving dogs (even when they chew your most precious possessions), Googling old boyfriends, rescuing an orphan mouse, and trees that try to grow in the crack between boards. Small speaks for large here, in a calm voice that talks to the mind while it fills the heart. Abigail Thomas is the Emily Dickinson of memoirists, and so much of this book’s wisdom is between the lines and in the white spaces. It may only take you two days to read, but the impact will stay with you for a long, long time.

**MARCH - *A God in Ruins* by Kate Atkinson**Roberta Beutel

                A sprawling, unapologetically ambitious saga that tells the story of postwar Britain through the microcosm of a single family, and you remember what a big, old-school novel can do. Atkinson’s book covers almost a century, tracks four generations, and is almost inexhaustibly rich in scenes and characters and incidents. It deploys the whole realist bag of tricks, and none of it feels fake or embarrassing. “A God in Ruins” is especially impressive because it’s a sequel of sorts — a “companion volume,” in the words of the publisher — to “Life After Life,” Atkinson’s fascinating 2013 novel.

**APRIL - *The Forgotten Garden* by Kate Morton**.                 Judy Griffin

            A four-year-old girl abandoned aboard a ship touches off a century-long inquiry into her ancestry.  In 1913, Hugh, port-master of Maryborough, Australia, discovers a child alone on a vessel newly arrived from England. The little girl cannot recall her name and has no identification, only a white suitcase containing some clothes and a book of fairy tales by Eliza Makepeace. Hugh and his wife, childless after several miscarriages, name the girl Nell and raise her as their own. At 21, she is engaged to be married and has no idea she is not their biological daughter. When Hugh confesses the truth, Nell’s equilibrium is destroyed, but life and World War II intervene, and she doesn’t explore her true origins until 1975, when she journeys to London.  Interviewing secretive locals at Blackhurst, now under renovation as a hotel, Nell traces her parentage to Rose and her husband, society portraitist Nathaniel Walker—except that their only daughter died at age four. Nell’s quest is interrupted at this point, but after her death in 2005, her granddaughter Cassandra takes it up. Intricate, intersecting narratives, and heavy-handed fairy-tale symbolism.

**MAY -  Discussion of selections for upcoming year**.   Susan Scott's front porch

**JUNE - *The Jane Austen Book Club* FILM.**Juel Bennewitz

            This is a 2007 American romantic drama film written and directed by Robin Swicord. The screenplay, adapted from the 2004 novel of the same name by Karen Joy Fowler, focuses on a book club formed specifically to discuss the six novels written by Jane Austen. As they delve into Austen's literature, the club members find themselves dealing with life experiences that parallel the themes of the books they are reading.

\*\*\*Plans are to have a catered meal and watch the movie.  Prior to watching the movie we are to read a Jane Austin book of our choice.

The novels included:  "Sense and Sensibility", "Mansfield Park", "Emma", "Northanger Abbey", "Persuasion" and "Lady Susan", represent all of Austen's mature work as a novelist and provide the reader with an introduction to the world she and her memorable characters inhabited.

If you are still in need of reading material, books suggested and discussed, but didn't make the list this year (we need more months in our year!):

"City of Fallen Angels" - By Cassandra Clare.

"Unaccustomed Earth" -  by Jhumpa Lahiri.

"Three Cups of Deceit"  - by Jon  Krakauer.

"Cleopatra"  by Stacy Schiff .

"The Girl on the Train" by Paula Hawkins.

"H is for Hawk" by  Helen Macdonald. A memoir

"Escape from camp 14"  by Blaine Hardin

"A Fall of Marigolds"  by Susan Meisner