

## **(Monday) Women of the West and Beyond – 2025 List**

**3/31/2025 Update** – dedicated to Nancy Myers (1934-2025)

**Meetings:** Unless otherwise indicated, all discussions are held from Noon to 1:30PM on the last Monday of each month in the Arapahoe Conference Room, second floor of the Boulder Public Library Main Branch.

For more information contact **Audrey**: email abambler AT msn DOT com, or call her at 3.442.8776.

### **Jan 27 (Celeste) - The Trials of Madame Restell: Nineteenth-Century America's Most Infamous Female Physician and the Campaign to Make Abortion a Crime**

Nicholas Syrett, (336 pages), 2023, history/biography, 4.6 stars on Amazon, 1 local copy, plenty in Prospector

Celeste will also read Madame Restell: The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Old New York's Most Fabulous, Fearless, and Infamous Abortioneer by Jennifer Wright and offer comparisons between the books.

### **Feb 24 (Celeste) - Strong Passions: A Scandalous Divorce in Old New York**

Barbara Weisberg, (320 pages), 2024, history – 5 copies in Flatirons Consortium, same time period as Madame Restell

### **March 31 (Jackie) - A Train in Winter: An Extraordinary Story of Women, Friendship, and Resistance in Occupied France**

Caroline Moorhead, (374 pages) 2011, history – 3 copies in Flatirons Consortium, Jackie owns a copy

### **April 28 (Audrey) - Untold Power: The Fascinating Rise and Complex Legacy of First Lady Edith Wilson**

Rebecca Boggs Roberts, (320 pages) 2023, biography

### **May 19 (Celeste) - **Factory Girls: From Village to City in a Changing China** (week before Memorial Day)**

Leslie T. Chang, (420 pages), 2008, current events – 2 copies in Flatirons Consortium, more copies in Prospector

### **June 30 (Celeste) - Brave the Wild River: The Untold Story of Two Women Who Mapped the Botany of the Grand Canyon**

Melissa L. Sevigny, (290 pages), 2023, history/biography – 13 copies in Flatirons Consortium

### **July 28 (Audrey) - Mademoiselle Eiffel: A Novel**

Aimie Runyan, 368 pgs, 2024, novel based on real events and people – 2 copies in Flatirons Consortium, more in Prospector

### **Aug 25 (Jackie) - The Princess Spy: The True Story of World War II Spy Aline Griffith, Countess of Romanones**

Larry Loftis, (361 pages), 2021, biography, 7 copies in the Flatirons Library Consortium

### **Sept 29 (author Pat) - **Around the World in 80 Years: A Lifetime of Extraordinary People and Adventures****

Pat Peterson, longtime Boulder resident (292 pages), 2024, autobiographical – 2 copies in Flatirons Consortium

### **Oct 27 (Jackie) - In Search of the Blonde Tigress: The Untold Story of Eleanor Jarman**

Sylvia Pettem – local author, 214 pages (267 pages total), 2023, biography

### **Nov 24 (Jackie) - Be Ready When the Luck Happens: A Memoir**

Ina Garten, (306 pages), memoir, 2024 – 22 copies in the Flatirons Consortium, over 100 on the wait list

### **December – no meeting**

For a complete list of WOW Monday meetings over the years see <http://www.sackett.net/WOWMondayAll.pdf>.

2025 Women of the West -

Book descriptions abridged from amazon.com or Boulder Public Library

All books have at least 4 copies in the Flatiron Consortium and/or Prospector system, unless otherwise noted.

## **Around the World in 80 Years: A Lifetime of Extraordinary People and Adventures**

Pat Peterson, longtime Boulder resident

(292 pages), autobiographical, 2024 - 2 copies in Flatirons Consortium

Pat Peterson's collection of captivating stories from across the globe are a testimony to a life full of travel and adventures. Falling off Long's Peak after a blizzard, camping in the USSR, dancing on Red Rocks' stage, teaching in Haiti, surviving scuba diving in Fiji, climbing Fuji, experiencing Korea, walking through Machu Picchu and Patagonia, hitchhiking 25,000 kilometers in France, boating in Provence and British Columbia, experiencing a rescue in the Grand Canyon, fishing in the Yukon, meeting Martin Luther King, Jr., digging dinosaurs, and recounting the story of the Episcopal Bishop of Okinawa and other inspiring individuals.

## **Be Ready When the Luck Happens: A Memoir**

Ina Garten

(306 pages), memoir, 2024 - 22 copies in the Flatirons Consortium, over 100 on the wait list

Ina Garten presents an intimate, entertaining, and inspiring account of her remarkable journey. Ina's gift is to make everything look easy, yet all her accomplishments have been the result of hard work, audacious choices, and attention to detail. With her signature combination of playfulness and purpose, she brings her past and her process to life in a no-holds-barred memoir that chronicles decades of personal challenges, adventures (and misadventures) and unexpected career twists. From a difficult childhood to meeting the love of her life, Jeffrey, and marrying him while still in college, from a boring bureaucratic job in Washington, D.C., to answering an ad for a specialty food store in the Hamptons, from the owner of one Barefoot Contessa shop to author of bestselling cookbooks and celebrated television host, Ina has blazed her own trail and, in the meantime, taught millions of people how to cook and entertain. Now, she shares the important life lessons she learned along the way: do what you love because, if you love it, you'll be really good at it, swing for the fences, and always Be Ready When the Luck Happens.

## **Brave the Wild River: The Untold Story of Two Women Who Mapped the Botany of the Grand Canyon**

Melissa L. Sevigny

(290 pages), 2023, history/biography - 13 copies in Flatirons Consortium

In the summer of 1938, botanists Elzada Clover and Lois Jotter set off to run the Colorado River, accompanied by an ambitious and entrepreneurial expedition leader, a zoologist, and two amateur boatmen. With its churning waters and treacherous boulders, the Colorado was famed as the most dangerous river in the world. Journalists and veteran river runners boldly proclaimed that the motley crew would never make it out alive.

Clover and Jotter were determined to be the first to survey the plant life of the Grand Canyon. Through the letters and diaries of the two women, science journalist Melissa L. Sevigny traces their 43-day journey down the river. Along the way, they chased a runaway boat, ran the river's most fearsome rapids, and turned the harshest critic of female river runners into an ally. Clover and Jotter's plant list, including four new cactus species, would one day become vital for efforts to protect and restore the river ecosystem

## **Factory Girls: From Village to City in a Changing China**

Leslie T. Chang

(420 pages), 2008, current events – 2 copies in Flatirons Consortium, more copies in Prospector

China has 130 million migrant workers—the largest migration in human history. Leslie T. Chang, a former correspondent for the Wall Street Journal in Beijing, tells the story of these workers primarily through the lives of two young women, whom she follows over the course of three years as they attempt to rise from the assembly lines of Dongguan, an industrial city in China's Pearl River Delta. As she tracks their lives, Chang paints a picture of migrant life—a world where nearly everyone is under thirty; where you can lose your boyfriend and your friends with the loss of a mobile phone; and where a few computer or English lessons can catapult you into a completely different social class.

Chang takes us inside a sneaker factory so large that it has its own hospital, movie theater, and fire department; to posh karaoke bars that are fronts for prostitution; to makeshift English classes where students shave their heads in monklike devotion and sit in front of machines watching English words flash by; and back to a farming village for the Chinese New Year, revealing the poverty and idleness of rural life that drive young girls to leave home in the first place.

Chang also interweaves the story of her own family's migrations, within China and to the West, providing historical and personal frames of reference for her investigation. *Factory Girls* demonstrates how the mass movement from rural villages to cities is remaking individual lives and transforming Chinese society, much as immigration to America's shores remade our own country a century ago.

## **In Search of the Blonde Tigress: The Untold Story of Eleanor Jarman**

Sylvia Pettem – local author

214 pages (267 pages total), 2023, biography

Beginning in 1933, Eleanor Jarman was sensationalized by the press as the "blonde tigress" and "the most dangerous woman alive." But a closer look at her life shows that she was an otherwise ordinary woman who got caught up in a Chicago crime spree. Readers are given a front-row seat for Eleanor's arrest, trial, conviction, sentencing, and her subsequent prison years. In 1940, Eleanor escaped and managed to live out her life as, perhaps, America's longest-running female fugitive.

*In Search of the Blonde Tigress* sets the mystery and intrigue of this wanted woman into historic context. It also includes her family's plea, in 1993, for Eleanor to come forward and apply for clemency. Most revealing at the time was Eleanor's alias. Boulder author Sylvia Pettem documents her search for Eleanor's remains—right up to a visit to her likely grave.

## **The Trials of Madame Restell: Nineteenth-Century America's Most Infamous Female Physician and the Campaign to Make Abortion a Crime**

Nicholas Syrett

(336 pages), 2023, history/biography, 4.6 stars on Amazon, 1 local copy, plenty in Prospector

Another book on the same topic, same length, same publishing year which Celeste will read: *Madame Restell: The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Old New York's Most Fabulous, Fearless, and Infamous Abortionist* by Jennifer Wright

For forty years in the mid-nineteenth century, "Madame Restell," the nom de guerre of the most successful "female physician" in America, sold birth control medication, attended women during their pregnancies, delivered their children, and performed abortions in a series of clinics run out of her home in New York City. It was the abortions that made her famous.

Restell began practicing when abortion was largely unregulated in most of the United States, including New York. But as a sense of disquiet arose about single women flocking to the city for work, greater sexual freedoms, changing views

of the roles of motherhood and childhood, and fewer children being born to white, married, middle-class women, Restell came to stand for everything that threatened the status quo. From 1829 onward, restrictions on abortion began to put Restell in legal jeopardy. For much of this period she prevailed—until she didn't.

## **Mademoiselle Eiffel: A Novel**

Aimie Runyan

(368 pages), 2024, novel based on real events and people – 2 copies in Flatirons Consortium, plenty more in Prospector

Claire Eiffel, the beautiful, brilliant eldest daughter of the illustrious architect Gustave Eiffel, is doted upon with an education envied by many sons of the upper classes, and entirely out of the reach of most daughters. Claire's idyllic childhood ends abruptly when, at fourteen, her mother passes away. It's soon made clear that Gustave expects Claire to fill her mother's place as caregiver to the younger children and as manager of their home. She also accompanies him on his travels and becomes his confidante and private secretary. She learns her father's architectural trade, but when his bright young protégé, Adolphe Salles, takes up more of Gustave's time, Claire resents being pushed aside. Slowly, the animosity between Claire and Adolphe turns to friendship...and then to something more.

After their marriage in 1885, they are privileged by the biggest commission of Eiffel's career: a great iron tower dominating the 1889 World's Fair to demonstrate the leading role of Paris in the world of art and architecture. Now hostess to the scientific elite, such as Thomas Edison, Claire is under the watchful eye not only of her family and father's circle, but also the world. When Gustave Eiffel's involvement in a disastrous endeavor to build a canal in Panama ends in his imprisonment, it is up to Claire to secure her father's freedom. Claire Eiffel's story of love, devotion, and the pursuit to preserve her family's legacy is not only an inspired reflection of real personages and historical events, but a hymn to the iconic tower that dominates the City of Lights.

## **The Princess Spy: The True Story of World War II Spy Aline Griffith, Countess of Romanones**

Larry Loftis

(361 pages), 2021, biography, 7 copies in the Flatirons Library Consortium

When Aline Griffith was born in a quiet suburban New York hamlet, no one had any idea that she would go on to live a life of glamour and danger that Ingrid Bergman only played at in the film *Notorious*. As the US enters WWII, the young college graduate wants to aid in the war effort, but no one is interested in a bright-eyed young woman whose only career experience is modeling clothes. Aline's life changes when, at a dinner party, she meets a man named Frank Ryan and reveals how desperately she wants to do her part for her country. Within a few weeks, he helps her join the Office of Strategic Services, forerunner of the CIA. With a code name and expert training under her belt, she is sent to Spain to be a coder, but is soon given the additional assignment of infiltrating the upper echelons of society, mingling with high-ranking officials, diplomats, and titled Europeans, any of whom could be an enemy agent.

## **Strong Passions: A Scandalous Divorce in Old New York**

Barbara Weisberg

(320 pages), 2024, history – 5 copies in Flatirons Consortium

In 1864, the nation was riveted by a society divorce trial that had everything: cheating, wealth, feuding brothers and lurid details. Weisberg's examination reconstructs the trial while giving dimension to the real-life people involved.

What could possibly go wrong in a wealthy matriarch's country home when her dilettante son, his neglected wife, and his widowed brother live there together? *Strong Passions*, rooted in the beguiling times of Edith Wharton's "old New York," recounts the true story of Wharton's cousin Mary. In 1862, Mary Strong stunned her husband, Peter, by confessing to a two-year affair with his brother. Peter sued Mary for divorce for adultery—the only grounds in New York—but not before she accused him of forcing her into an abortion and having his own affair with the abortionist. She then kidnapped their young daughter and disappeared.

Barbara Weisberg presents the Strong v. Strong divorce trial's chaotic courtroom and panoply of witnesses — governess, housekeeper, private detective, sisters-in-law, and others — who provided contradictory and often salacious testimony. She then asks us to be the jury, deciding each spouse's guilt and the possibility of a just resolution.

## **A Train in Winter: An Extraordinary Story of Women, Friendship, and Resistance in Occupied France**

Caroline Moorhead

(374 pages) 2011, history – 3 copies in Flatirons Consortium, Jackie owns a copy

In January 1943, the Gestapo hunted down 230 women of the French Resistance and sent them to Auschwitz. This is their story, told in full for the first time—a searing and unforgettable chronicle of terror, courage, defiance, survival, and the power of friendship to transcend evil. An essential addition to the history of World War II.

## **Untold Power: The Fascinating Rise and Complex Legacy of First Lady Edith Wilson**

Rebecca Boggs Roberts

(320 pages) 2023, biography

While this nation has yet to *elect* its first woman president, just over a century ago a woman became the nation's first acting president. In fact, she was born in 1872, and her name was Edith Bolling Galt Wilson. She climbed her way out of Appalachian poverty and into the highest echelons of American power and in 1919 effectively acted as the first woman president of the U.S. (before women could even vote nationwide) when her husband, Woodrow Wilson, was incapacitated. Beautiful, brilliant, charismatic, catty, and calculating, she was a complicated figure whose personal quest for influence reshaped the position of First Lady into one of political prominence forever.

For the first time, we have a biography that takes a look at the woman whose ascent mirrors that of many powerful American women before and since, one full of the compromises and complicities women have undertaken throughout time in order to find security for themselves and make their mark on history. She was a shape-shifter who was obsessed with crafting her own reputation, at once deeply invested in exercising her own power while also opposing women's suffrage.