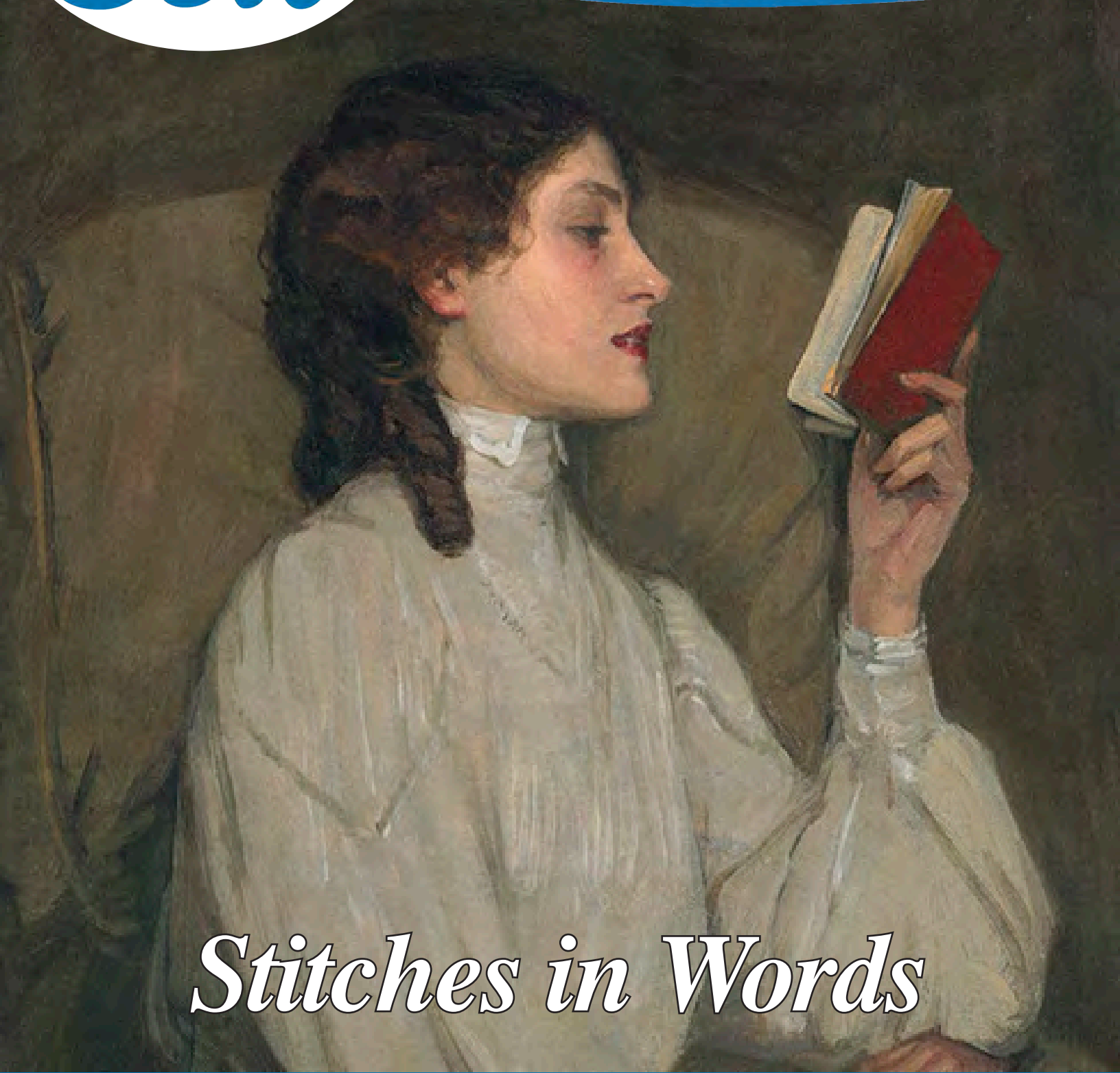




*A glimpse into the creative heart of today's  
most talented sewing & quilting artists.*



# *Stitches in Words*



What is Rhonda reading?

Need a break from marathon sewing & quilting? Rather than raiding the kitchen cabinets for candy and chips, get out a great book to read. Rita Farro researched books with a stitch theme. What a treasure trove she found! All the books listed are available at your public library or Amazon in either audio or paper. Add these titles to your book club lists or grab a friend and cherish a book discussion.

Thanks to Rita, I just finished reading Carol Bodensteiner's ***Stitched Through Time***. Like Carol, in the back of a closet, I have four vintage quilts seeking the light of day. Is 2021 the year these quilts resume their journey into the 21st century? Meanwhile, stay away from snacking ... unless it's chocolate! Stay tuned.

Sew SCHMETZ & Grabbit® Too!

*Rhonda*

Rhonda Pierce  
Spokesperson, SCHMETZneedles.com  
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- 
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## What Inspires YOU to Sew?



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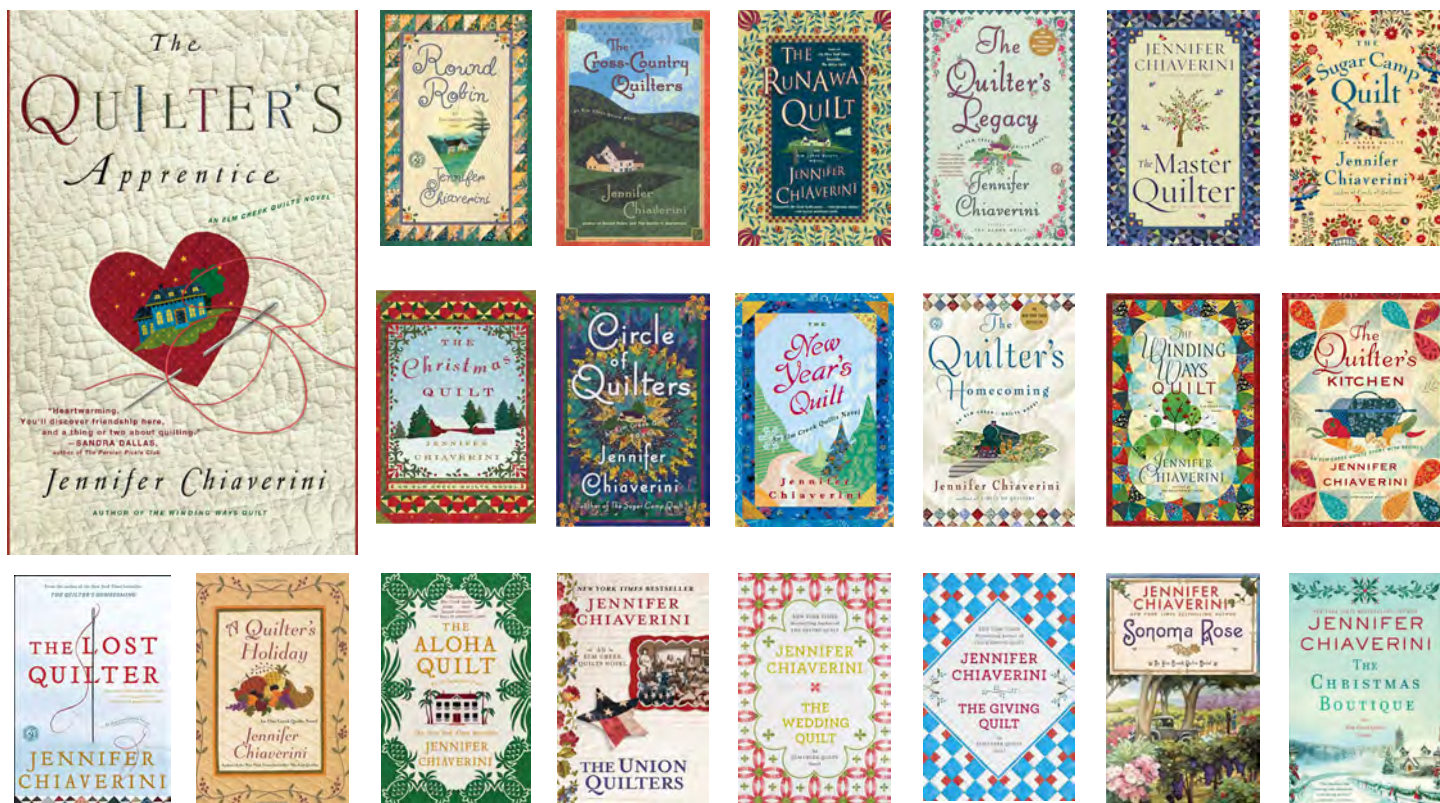


*There's an App for That!*



# *Stitches in Words*





The 21 books of The Elm Creek Quilt Series by Jennifer Chiaverini.

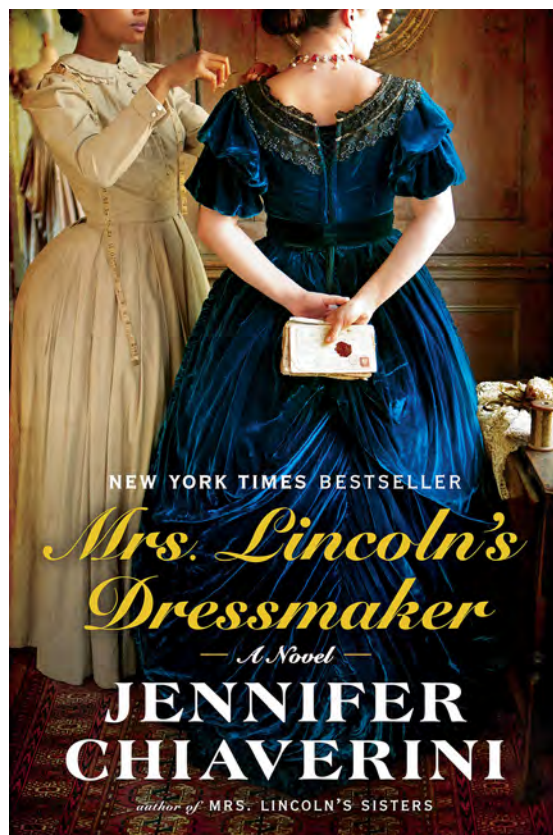
## Stitches in Words

If you love to sew, you will never be bored. For many of us, sewing kept us sane during this past year of fear and isolation. It gave us a sense of purpose and accomplishment. Kudos to us for using our considerable skills to bridge the PPE gap. With our machines all warmed up, and strict orders to STAY HOME, many of us just kept on sewing. We brought out our UFO's, we made new curtains for the kitchen, or we tackled that big quilt project we have been planning. The lesson we have learned is that sewing is more than just a wonderful hobby, it actually can be a super-power.

If you need to take a break from your machine, you might consider picking up a good book, with sewing as a central theme. There are many wonderful choices! Of course, if we are

going to write about books with sewing as a central theme, we must start with the master class that is Jennifer Chiaverini, the creator of the beloved Elm Creek Quilt series.

Jennifer Chiaverini brings history alive through her characters and their love of quilts. Every one of her books is meant to be a stand-alone novel, rich with history, and character development. You do not need to read her books in order. But, if you have not yet visited Waterford, Pennsylvania, you might want to read ***The Quilter's Apprentice*** first. It will introduce you to Sylvia, Sarah, and the Elm Creek quilters. Ms. Chiaverini is a gifted storyteller with a special gift for transporting you to a time in history you did not even know you were curious about. Every book is a page-turner.



Have you read all of Jennifer's captivating books?

#### The Elm Creek Quilt Series:

*The Quilter's Apprentice* (1999)  
*Round Robin* (2000)  
*The Cross-Country Quilters* (2001)  
*The Runaway Quilt* (2002)  
*The Quilter's Legacy* (2003)  
*The Master Quilter* (2004)  
*The Sugar Camp Quilt* (2005)  
*The Christmas Quilt* (2005)  
*Circle of Quilters* (2006)  
*The New Year's Quilt* (2007)  
*The Quilter's Homecoming* (2007)  
*The Winding Ways Quilt* (2008)  
*The Quilter's Kitchen* (2008)  
*The Lost Quilter* (2009)  
*A Quilter's Holiday* (2009)

*The Aloha Quilt* (2010)  
*The Union Quilters* (2011)  
*The Wedding Quilt* (2011)  
*The Giving Quilt* (2012)  
*Sonoma Rose* (2012)  
*The Christmas Boutique* (2019)

#### ***Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker***, Jennifer Chiaverini

In this departure from her popular Elm Creek Quilts series, Chiaverini weaves a historical fiction tale profiling the life of Elizabeth Hobbs Keckley, a former slave who would become a dressmaker for Mary Todd Lincoln. A character largely forgotten to history, Keckley blossoms under Chiaverini's masterful writing.





***Birds In The Air*, Frances O'Roark Dowell**

Set in today's world, Emma Byrd has just moved to Sweet Anne's Gap, a tiny mountain town in North Carolina. She is quickly drawn into a close-knit community of quilters and is enlisted to help organize a display of historical quilts. An uplifting story of a woman finding her way in a small town, this will delight experienced quilters and novice crafters alike.

***The Forgotten Seamstress*, Liz Trenow**

Trenow interweaves the story of Maria, a seamstress in the royal household of Buckingham Palace before World War I, and Caroline Meadows, who discovers a beautiful quilt in her mother's attic decades later.



Maria knows she is lucky to have landed in the sewing room of the royal household and she catches the eye of the Prince of Wales. But World War I casts a dark shadow and her life takes a turn. Decades later, Caroline Meadows discovers a beautiful quilt in her mother's attic. When she cannot figure out the meaning of the message embroidered into its lining, she embarks on a quest to reveal its mystery.

***The Hidden Thread*, Liz Trenow**

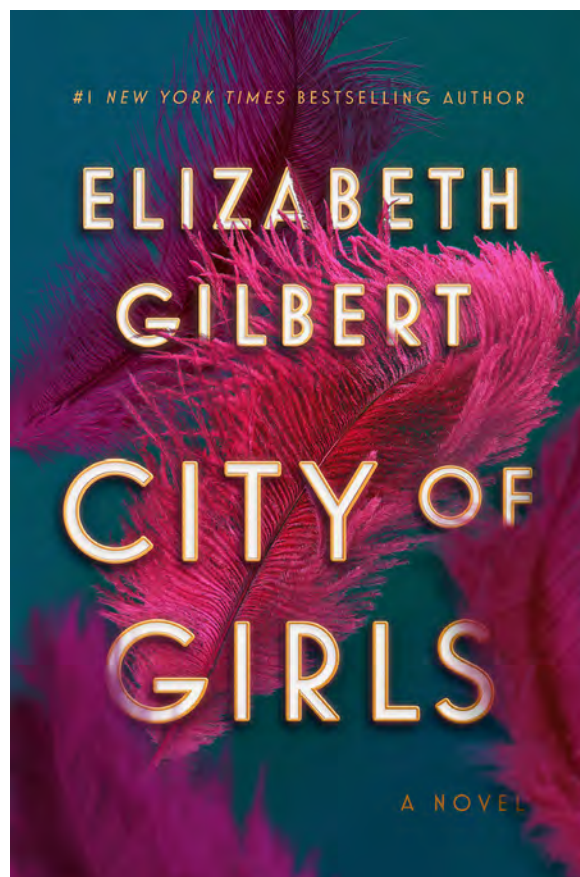
Set in 18th Century England. When Anna Butterfield's mother dies, she is sent to live with her uncle, a London silk merchant, to make a good match, and provide for her father and sister. There, she meets Henri, a French immigrant and apprentice hoping to become a master weaver. But Henri, born into a



lower class, becomes embroiled in the silk riots that break out as weavers protest for a fair wage. Caught between her family and her star-crossed romance, Anna must decide what it means to be a woman in a time of revolution.

***Go Away Home*, Carol Bodensteiner**

Maquoketa, Iowa right before World War I was a tumultuous crossroad of time and place. There were so many things happening, commercial photography, automobiles, sewing machines, a World War, the Influenza epidemic, a bias against immigrants. At that time, the bigotry and hatred were directed at German immigrants. Liddie was born on a farm in the middle of the country, at a time when there were very few options for women. You will identify with Liddie, who loved to sew. She used those skills to build a very different future for herself.

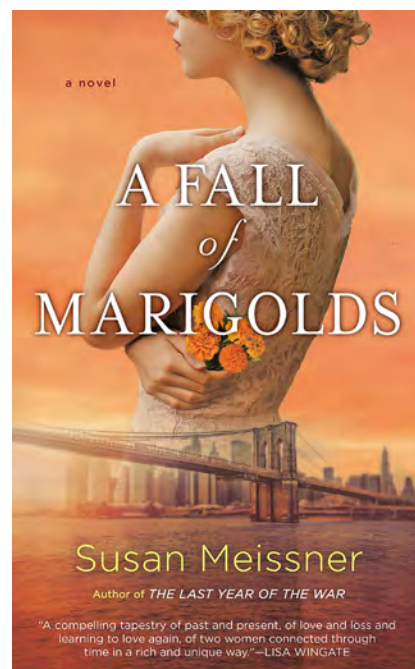
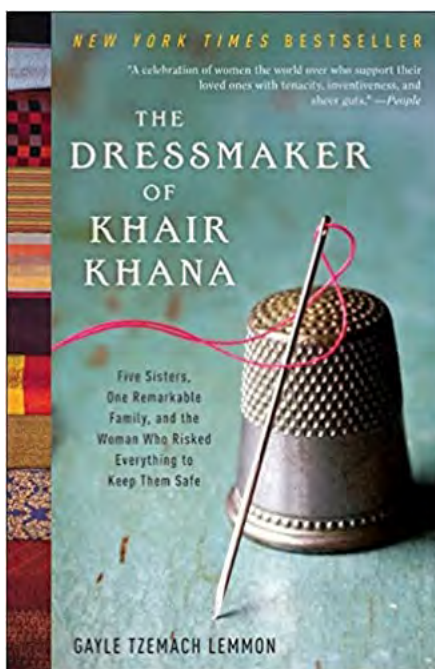
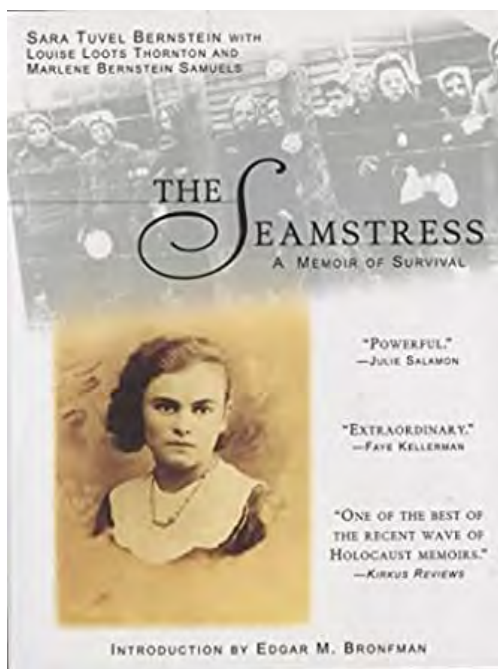


***City of Girls*, Elizabeth Gilbert**

Told from the perspective of an older woman as she looks back on her youth with both pleasure and regret, *City of Girls* is set in the New York City theater world during the 1940s. The two major players in Vivian's life are New York City and her Singer sewing machine. Vivian claims she is only good at two things: sex and sewing.

Excerpt from the first page of the book: *Accompanying this nineteen-year-old virgin to New York City were two large suitcases, one filled with my clothes, all folded neatly in tissue, and the other packed with fabrics, trimmings, and sewing supplies, so that I could make more clothes. Also joining me was a sturdy*





*crate containing my sewing machine, a heavy and unwieldy beast, awkward to transport. But it was my demented, beautiful soul-twin, without which I could not live.*

*So along with me it came.*

***The Seamstress a Memoir of Survival***, by Sara Tuvel Bernstein

Well written historical fiction set during World War II about an acclaimed Jewish seamstress and her struggles to stay alive. This novel is very captivating and one of the best reads ever! If you want to listen to this book, [Audible.com](https://www.audible.com) has a great version using a reader that sounds like she has a Hungarian accent. (Amazon Review by Meridee)

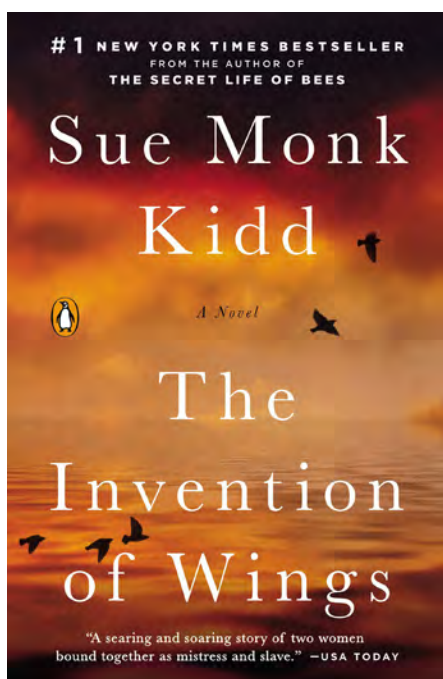
***The Dressmaker of Khair Khana***, by Gayle Lemmon

The true story of Kamila from Kabul that is so interesting. When the Taliban take over, her brothers and father flee their home. Kamila is forced to leave school and now she must find a way to provide for her mother and sisters. She travels alone (a forbidden act) to her oldest sister's home where she is taught to sew.

***A Fall of Marigolds***, by Susan Meissner

This book starts with a marigold floral scarf that travels 100 years forward from 1911 to 2011. A tale of two women from two different time periods who are trying to survive the tragedies they witnessed in New York City (the Shirtwaist Fire in Manhattan and the fall of the Twin Towers on 9-11). A must read.



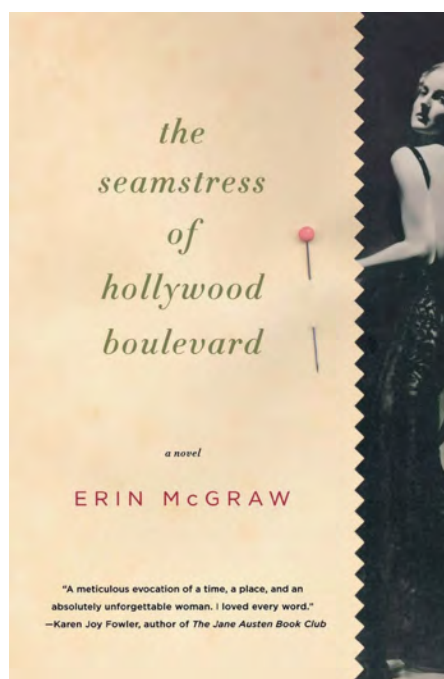


***The Invention of Wings*, Sue Monk Kidd**

The story begins with Thankful, a slave, who is given to Sarah Grimké, the middle daughter of a wealthy and prominent family at the pinnacle of Charleston's social hierarchy, on her eleventh birthday. Thankful's mother is the household seamstress and teaches Thankful this same skill.

***The Seamstress of Hollywood Boulevard*, Erin McGraw**

Nell Plat, the heroine of Erin McGraw's immersive fifth book, is a whiz with a needle, but a failure in the kitchen. While she makes a name for herself sewing dresses in early 20th-century Grant Station, Kansas, her lack of kitchen prowess is crippling to her marriage, prompting her to leave her husband and two daughters for Hollywood. With the help of a French grammar book, she becomes Madame Annelle, modiste to the fine ladies of Pasadena. Just as she realizes her dream,

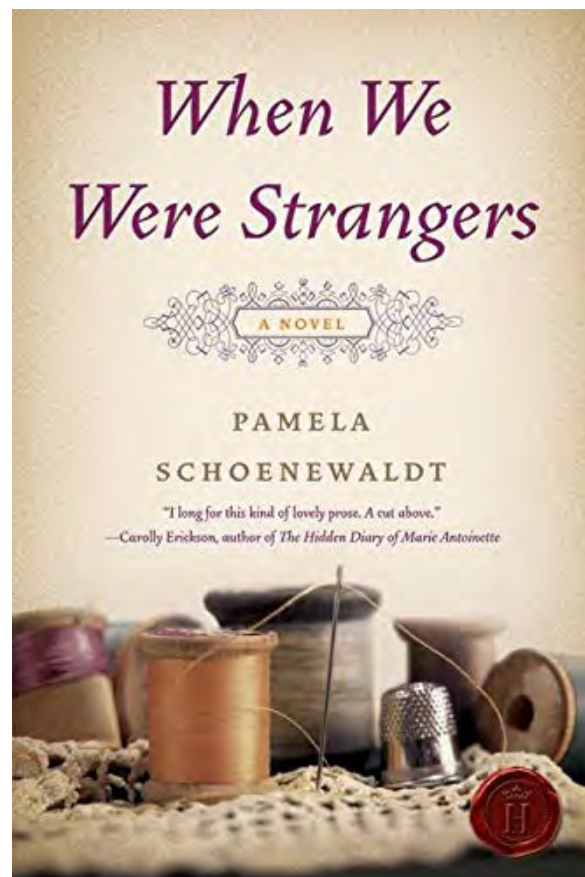
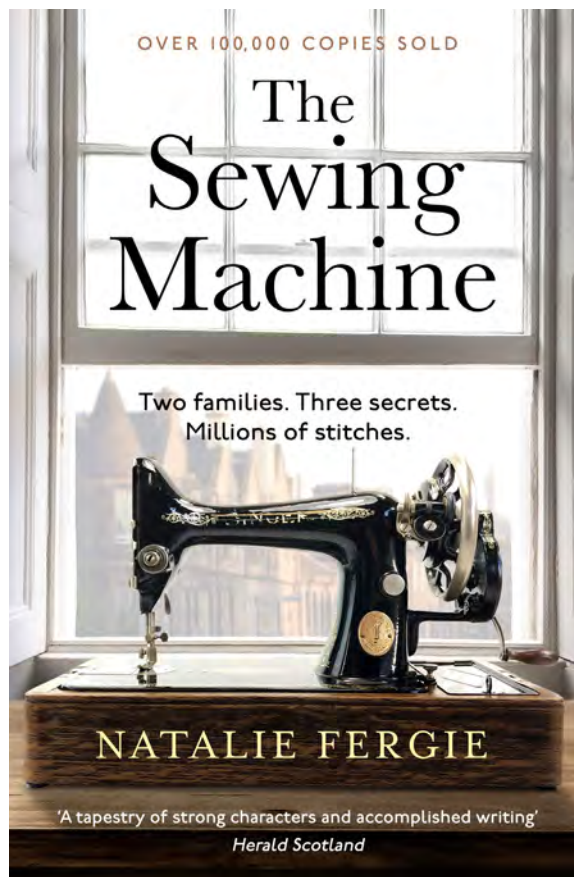


her past arrives on her doorstep in the form of her two grown daughters. Nell claims them as her sisters, but the lie only delays the unraveling of her California dream. Inspired by her grandmother's story, McGraw captures the lonely rigor of life on the plains and the invigorating lure of reinvention. (Publishers Weekly)

***The Grace Kelly Dress*, Brenda Janowitz**

Paris, the late 1950s. A seamstress who works for the "it" couturier whom every young woman dreams of wearing on her special day. No off-the-rack gowns here. This is a complicated business and one soon-to-be bride and the real designer's relationship reach beyond the walls of the atelier.





Fast forward to the present day. An independent, successful, and very much in love young woman is planning her nuptials. Her mother has an heirloom gown to pass down to her daughter, which holds more than just memories between generations. But it is not her taste. The last thing she wants to do is break her mother's heart. Is a dress just a dress?

#### ***The Sewing Machine*, Natalie Fergie**

This intriguing book follows the life of a sewing machine through its owners, from one generation to the next, for 100 years. The machine was built in the Singer factory in Scotland in 1911 and the story begins on the eve of a massive strike during the emergence of trade unions.

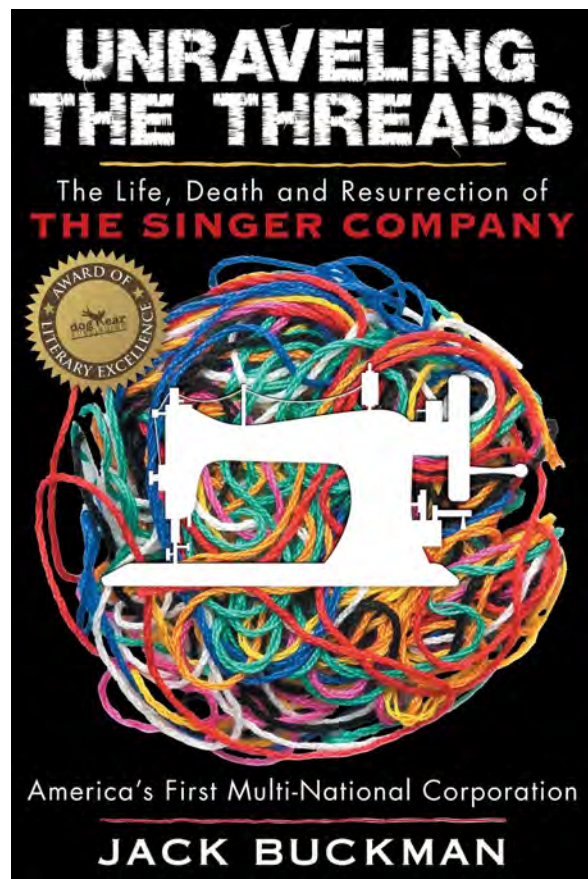
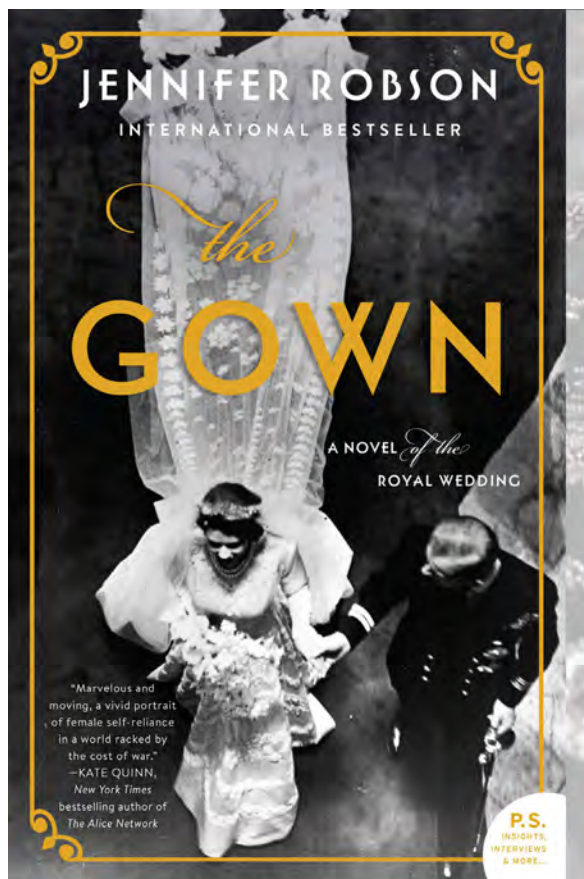
The strike changes the first owner, Jean's, life. The author weaves social changes and history into the lives of each

subsequent owner. The machine provided an income for its owners during strained financial times and becomes a symbol of stability.

#### ***When We Were Strangers*, Pamela Schoenewaldt**

It is the 1880s, and Irma joins a flood of other immigrants looking for a better life. Resting her hopes on her needlework skills, she stops first in Cleveland, where she ends up making collars in a sweatshop. Next stop is Chicago, where she is hired as a dressmaker. Irma also meets Signora D'Angelo, who runs a clinic, and this meeting helps send her west on the next part of her journey, in pursuit of a new dream. This is a busy book, and at times Irma's accumulation of experiences borders on "The Perils of Pauline." But Schoenewaldt (who lived in Naples for





several years) is a good storyteller, and this, plus her attention to physical details, helps make the novel one that readers who like immigrant sagas should enjoy.

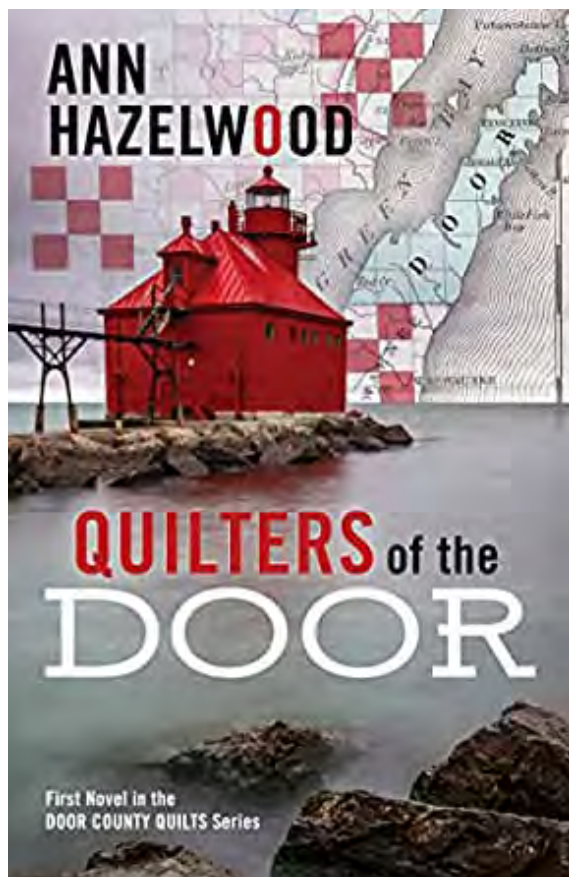
***The Gown: A Novel of the Royal Wedding*, Jennifer Robson**

London, 1947: Besieged by the harshest winter in living memory, burdened by onerous shortages and rationing, the people of postwar Britain are enduring lives of quiet desperation despite their nation's recent victory. With *The Gown*, Jennifer Robson takes us inside the workrooms where one of the most famous wedding gowns in history was created, Princess Elizabeth's wedding gown. Balancing behind-the-scenes details with a sweeping portrait of a society left reeling by the calamitous costs of victory. A special treat if you are a fan of *The Crown* (on Netflix).

***Unraveling The Threads: The Life, Death, and Resurrection of the Singer Sewing Machine Company, America's First Multi-National Corporation*, Jack Buckman**

This book is not a work of fiction. Jack Buckman spent seventeen years in executive positions with The Singer Company in New York, London, Paris, and Chicago. He left the company when it became the subject of a hostile takeover and subsequently landed at Yale University as its vice-president and chief financial officer. It was at Yale that the idea of writing about Singer germinated: Singer's history as the first multinational company and the birthplace of many of the modern retail tools we now take for granted. A professor suggested that Jack prepare a syllabus for a possible course, even a book, but Jack was never able to find the time until now.





### ***Quilters of the Door*, Ann Hazelwood**

It would be difficult to imagine a writer with more impressive quilt credentials than Ann Hazelwood. Not only did she own and operate a Missouri quilt shop for over 20 years, but along the way, she became a highly regarded quilt appraiser, certified by the American Quilting Society. She is a founding member of the Professional Association of Appraisers and Quilted Textiles. Ann serves as Official Textile Appraiser for the Antiques Roadshow when in St. Louis, MO. She is the former President of the National Quilt Museum Board in Paducah, KY.

### **Check out all of the books by Ann Hazelwood:**

#### **Colebridge Community Books**

The Basement Quilt	(2012)
The Potting Shed Quilt	(2013)
The Funeral Parlor Quilt	(2013)
The Jane Austen Quilt Club	(2014)
The Ghostly Quilts on Main	(2014)
Quilted Lilies	(2015)
A Colebridge Quilted Christmas	(2015)

#### **East Perry County Books**

The Forgiving Quilt	(2016)
Josephine's Guest House Quilt	(2016)
Quilt the Town Christmas	(2016)
Everlasting Quilts	(2017)
Church Ladies' Quilts	(2017)

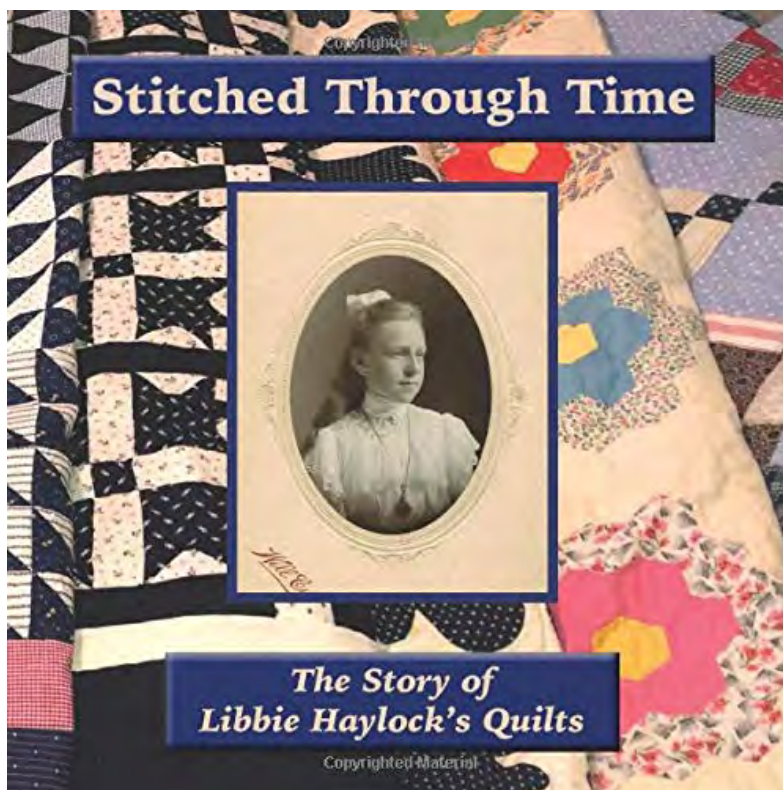
#### **Country Quilts Books**

For the Love of Quilts	(2018)
Lily Girl's Christmas Quilt	(2018)
Quilted Secrets	(2019)
A Christmas Wish Quilt	(2019)
The Quilt Left Behind	(2020)

#### **Door County Quilt Books**

Quilters of the Door	(2020)
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Lucky for us, after she sold her business, she turned her creative talents to writing. Her wildly popular fiction/mystery books feature quilts and the people who love them and make them as her central characters. Although you don't have to be a quilter to enjoy her books, you can be assured that each and every quilt detail is correct and true.



As we all settle in to endure the rest of this long, cold winter, waiting for the vaccine, let yourself curl up with a good book, with sewing as a central theme. The last book recommendation is hot off the presses (November 2020).  
Written by Carol Bodensteiner (author of *Go Away Home*), her latest book is a non-fiction account of her own family's quilt mystery.

***Stitched Through Time: The Story of Libbie Haylock's Quilts***,  
Carol Bodensteiner

The Iowa farmhouse the author grew up in during the 1950s held both a treasure and a mystery. The treasure is a trunk full of unfinished 100-year-old quilt tops. The mystery is why no one knew about these quilts until decades after Grandma died. Why did she never talk about them? Learning about the quilts, then finishing them, became Bodensteiner's family mission. It is very satisfying to see the photographs of the finished quilts, and to see that they all found their rightful homes with Libbie's descendants from all over the country. A unique real-life quilt mystery/journey that spanned a century.

Maybe you have a quilt mystery in your own family. ***The Story of Libbie Haylock's Quilts*** is a great jumping-off point for an event with your own customers. It might be fun to do a Zoom meeting or a Facebook Live event to discuss their own mystery quilts. Ms. Bodensteiner is coordinating a 2021 book tour. Her contact information is: [carol.bodensteiner@gmail.com](mailto:carol.bodensteiner@gmail.com).

✦ — written by Rita Farro



# Needle Points with Rhonda

## ***Do You Know Your Needle Points?***



**Slightly  
rounded  
point**

**Acute  
round  
point**

**Slightly  
rounded  
point with  
special  
taper**

**Light  
ball  
point**

**Medium  
ball  
point  
(SUK)**

**Twist  
point  
(LL)**



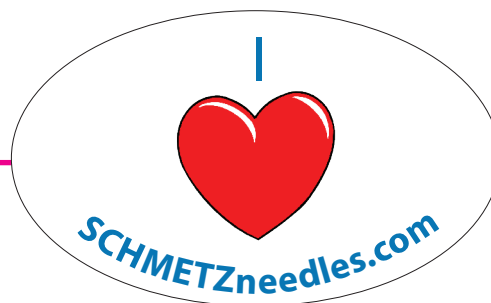
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better with a new needle!*



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