



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WNC Historical Association launches 2022 ReadWNC Series to explore fact behind local fiction

ASHEVILLE, North Carolina - The Western North Carolina Historical Association (WNCHA) will kick off its 2022 ReadWNC literary series with Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle's book, *Even As We Breathe*, which received the association's prestigious Thomas Wolfe Memorial Literary Award in 2021.

At the first event, which will be held via Zoom on Tuesday, May 24 at 6:00pm, author Saunooke Clapsaddle and historian Dr. Barbara Duncan will discuss the fact behind the fictional depiction of mid-20th century Cherokee life and culture, the real-life detention of Axis diplomats and their families at Asheville's Grove Park Inn during World War II, and other local historical tidbits that appear in the novel, including a visit from Charles "Ches" McCartney, also known as "The Goat Man" and memories of drinking Cheerwine soda.

July's novel, *Guests on Earth* by Lee Smith, "is set at Highland Mental Hospital in Asheville during the years 1936-1948, the year of the terrible fire in which Zelda Fitzgerald perished along with eight other women patients in a locked ward on the top floor. Her body was identified only by her charred ballet slipper---for the brilliant Zelda was still a talented dancer and choreographer as well as a writer and a visual artist." Executive Director of The Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald Museum in Montgomery, Alabama, Dr. Alaina Doten will sit down with Máire Martello, author of *Stepping Out with Scott and Zelda: Touring the Fitzgerald's Montgomery* to separate true historical events from Smith's imagined fiction. .

In October, author Sharyn McCrumb will discuss the extensive historical research she did to craft her novel, *The Ballad of Frankie Silver*, a fictionalized account of "the true story of Frankie Silver, an 18-year old frontier girl, hanged for murder in Burke County, North Carolina, in 1833, for a crime she might not have committed".

The 2022 ReadWNC Series is a three-part virtual series that will be held via Zoom. Tickets can be purchased for individual events or as a full series at a discount. Though not required, participants are encouraged to read the books in advance and bring questions for discussion.

Tuesday, May 24 from 6:00-7:00pm

Even as We Breathe with author Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle and Dr. Barbara Duncan

Tuesday, July 19 from 6:00-7:00pm

Guests on Earth with Dr. Alaina Doten and Máire Martello

Tuesday, October 4 from 6:00-7:00pm

The Ballad of Frankie Silver with author Sharyn McCrumb

For more information about the series, to purchase the books, or to register please visit:

<https://www.wnchistory.org/events/>