

Reading Group Sets in Isle of Wight Libraries



November 2017

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Only titles from this list are available. Titles from old lists are no longer available

The Abortionist's Daughter by Elizabeth Hyde (11 copies)

Two weeks before Christmas, Diana Duprey, an outspoken abortion doctor, is found dead in her swimming pool. A national figure, Diana inspired passion and ignited tempers, but never more so than the day of her death. Her husband Frank, a long time attorney in the DA's office; her daughter Megan, a freshman in college; the Reverend Stephen O'Connell, founder of the town's pro-life coalition: all of them quarrelled with Diana that day and each one has something to lose in revealing the truth. Meanwhile the detective on the case struggles for the answers — and finds himself more intimately involved than he ever could have imagined.

About a Boy by Nick Hornby (7 copies at Ryde)

Will does not want children, but he does see the point of single mothers, especially if they look like Julie Christie. When he meets Marcus, whose parents have split up and who is being persecuted by bullies, Will finds that he has a lot to learn.

The Accidental by Ali Smith (12 copies at Ryde)

Arresting and wonderful, *The Accidental* pans in on the Norfolk holiday home of the Smart family one hot summer. There a beguiling stranger called Amber appears at the door bearing all sorts of unexpected gifts, trampling over family boundaries and sending each of the Smarts scurrying from the dark into the light.

After the Fall by Charity Norman (15 copies) (Audio Download available)

In the quiet of a New Zealand Winter's night, a rescue helicopter is sent to airlift a five-year-old boy with severe internal injuries. At first his injuries look like a horrible accident. Only his mother knows the truth. And she isn't telling. Not yet. May be not ever.

The Age of miracles by Karen Thompson Walker (6 copies) NEW

It is never what you worry over that comes to pass in the end. The real catastrophies are always unimagined, unprepared for, unknown. What if our 24-hour day grew longer, first in minutes, then in hours, until day became night and night became day? What effect would that slowing have on the world?

Agnes Grey by Anne Bronte (10 copies)

When her family becomes impoverished after a disastrous financial speculation, Agnes Grey determines to find work as a governess in order to contribute to their meagre income and assert her independence. But Agnes' enthusiasm is swiftly extinguished as she struggles first with the unmanageable Bloomfield children and then with the painful disdain of the haughty Murray family; the only kindness she receives comes from Mr Weston, the sober young curate. Drawing on her own experience, Anne Bronte's first novel offers a compelling personal perspective on the desperate position of unmarried, educated women for whom becoming a governess was the only respectable career open in Victorian society.

The Alchemist by Paul Coelho (15 copies)

This is the story of Santiago, an Andalusian shepherd boy who dreams of travelling the world in search of a treasure as extravagant as any ever found. From his home in Spain he journeys to the exotic markets of Tangiers and then into the Egyptian desert, where a fateful encounter with the alchemist awaits him. This is a story which has been compared to the works of Richard Bach, and is aimed at the young and old alike.

All the light we cannot see by Anthony Doerr (11 copies at Ryde) (eBook available)

Marie-Laure has been blind since the age of six. Her father builds a perfect miniature of their Paris neighbourhood so she can memorize it by touch and navigate her way home. But when the Nazis invade, father and daughter flee with a dangerous secret. Werner is a German orphan, destined to labour in the same mine that claimed his father's life, until he discovers a knack for engineering. His talent wins him a place at a brutal military academy, but his way out of obscurity is built on suffering. At the same time, far away in a walled city by the sea, an old man discovers new worlds without ever setting foot outside his home. But all around him, impending danger closes in. Doerr's combination of soaring imagination and meticulous observation is electric.

Amenable Women by Mavis Cheek (11 copies at Ryde)

This novel about two intelligent, accomplished women who lived in the shadow of the men they married, interweaves a fascinating and little-known part of history with a funny, charming contemporary tale.

The Angel's Game by Carlos Ruiz Zafon (11 copies)

In an abandoned mansion at the heart of Barcelona, a young man - David Martin - makes his living by writing sensationalist novels under a pseudonym. The survivor of a troubled childhood, he has taken refuge in the world of books, and spends his nights spinning baroque tales about the city's underworld. But perhaps his dark imaginings are not as strange as they seem, for in a locked room deep within the house letters hinting at the mysterious death of the previous owner. Like a slow poison, the history of the place seeps into his bones as he struggles with an impossible love. Then David receives the offer of a lifetime: he is to write a book with the power to change hearts and minds. In return, he will receive a fortune, perhaps more. But as David begins the work, he realises that there is a connection between this haunting book and the shadows that surround his home...

Assegai by Wilbur Smith (10 copies)

1913. Leon Courtney is in British East Africa guiding rich and powerful men from America and Europe on safaris in the Masai tribal territories. One of his clients a Count, has a company which builds aircraft for the Kaiser's army. Leon hadn't bargained on falling in love with Eva, the Count's mistress.

Atonement by Ian McEwan (8 copies)

On the hottest day of the summer of 1934, thirteen-year-old Briony Tallis sees her sister Cecilia strip off her clothes and plunge into the fountain in the garden of their country house. Watching her is Robbie Turner, her childhood friend who, like Cecilia, has recently come down from Cambridge. By the end of that day, the lives of all three will have been changed for ever. Robbie and Cecilia will have crossed a boundary they had not even imagined at its start, and will have become victims of the younger girl's imagination. Briony will have witnessed mysteries, and committed a crime for which she will spend the rest of her life trying to atone.

Behind the Scenes at the Museum by Kate Atkinson (8 copies at Ryde)

Moving with stark contrast between the Coronation year celebrations and life in the trenches during the First World War, this debut novel tells the story of a family observed by one of its members.

Beloved by Toni Morrison (11 copies)

Afro-Americans -- Social conditions -- 19th century. It is the mid-1800s. At Sweet Home in Kentucky, an era is ending as slavery comes under attack from the abolitionists. The worlds of Halle and Paul D. are to be destroyed in a cataclysm of torment and agony. The world of Sethe, however, is to turn from one of love to one of violence and death - the death of Sethe's baby daughter Beloved, whose name is the single word on the tombstone, who died at her mother's hands, and who will return to claim retribution.

Berlin Cantata by Jeffrey Lewis (6 copies)

A country house is owned successively by Jews, Nazis and Communists. In the country house, an American girl seeks her hidden past. In the girl, a local reporter seeks redemption. In the reporter, a false hero of the past seeks exposure. In the false hero, the American girl seeks a guide.

Birdsong by Sebastian Faulks (9 copies at Ryde)

This is the story of Stephen who arrives in Amiens in 1910. His life goes through a series of traumatic experiences, from the clandestine love affair that tears apart the family with whom he lives, to the unprecedented experience of the war itself.

Blue Shoes and Happiness by Alexander McCall Smith (7 copies)

The seventh instalment of Alexander McCall Smith's series brings more adventures for Precious Ramotswe and her fine assistant Mma Makutsi, including an encounter with a cobra, a sinister blackmail plot, a rather tight-fitting pair of blue shoes, as well as plenty more bush tea and Botswana skies.

Blue Slipper Bay by Wendy Harris (14 copies)

Sophie, bereft after the loss of her mother and her husband's betrayal, walks out of her demanding profession and her home seeking refuge with her friend, Jill, on the Isle of Wight. She doesn't suspect that she is about to be drawn into another crisis.

The Book of Lost Things by John Connolly (11 copies at Ryde)

'Once upon a time, there was a boy who lost his mother . . .' As twelve-year-old David takes refuge from his grief in the myths and fairy tales so beloved of his dead mother, he finds the real world and the fantasy world begin to blend. That is when bad things start to happen. That is when the Crooked Man comes. And David is violently propelled into a land populated by heroes, wolves and monsters, his quest to find the legendary Book of Lost Things.

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak (9 copies) (eBook available)

Narrated in the all knowing matter of fact voice of Death, witnessing the story of the citizens of Molching. By 1943, the Allied bombs are falling, and the sirens begin to wail. Liesel shares out her books in the air-raid shelters. But one day, the wail of the sirens comes too late.

The Bookman's Tale by Charlie Lovett (11 copies)

After the death of his wife, Peter Byerly, a young antiquarian bookseller, relocates from the States to the English countryside, where he hopes to rediscover the joys of life through his passion for collecting and restoring rare books. But when he opens an eighteenth-century study on Shakespeare forgeries, he is shocked to find a Victorian portrait strikingly similar to his wife tumble out of its pages, and becomes obsessed with tracking down its origins. As he follows the trail back to the nineteenth century and then to Shakespeare's time, Peter learns the truth about his own past and unearths a book that might prove that Shakespeare was indeed the author of all his plays.

The Bolter by Frances Osborne (12 copies)

Idina Sackville first met scandal when she left her very rich husband and two small children for a penniless army officer in 1918. She went on to marry and divorce a total of five times and be the founder and 'high priestess' of White Mischief's scandalous Happy Valley of Kenyan settlers.

Here, her great-granddaughter tells her story.

Brick Lane by Monica Ali (11 copies at Ryde)

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.

Burning bright by Tracy Chevalier (14 copies) (eBook available)

Against the backdrop of a city anxious over the bloody French Revolution, a surprising bond forms between Jem whose family have moved from Dorset and streetwise Londoner Maggie Butterfield. Their friendship takes a dramatic turn when they become entangled in the life of their neighbour, the poet and printer William Blake.

Can Anybody Help Me by Sinead Crowley (7 copies) NEW

When one of her new online friends goes offline, Yvonne thinks something is wrong, but dismisses her fears. After all, does she really know this woman? But when the body of a young woman with striking similarities to Yvonne's missing friend is found, Yvonne realises that they're all in terrifying danger.

Case Histories by Kate Atkinson (13 copies)

Cambridge is sweltering, during an unusually hot summer. To Jackson Brodie, former police inspector turned private investigator, the world consists of one accounting sheet - Lost on the left, Found on the right - and the two never seem to balance. Jackson has never felt at home in Cambridge, and has a failed marriage to prove it. Surrounded by death, intrigue and misfortune, his own life haunted by a family tragedy, he attempts to unravel three disparate case histories and begins to realise that in spite of apparent diversity, everything is connected...

The Casual Vacancy by J K Rowling (12 copies at Ryde)

When Barry Fairbrother dies unexpectedly in his early 40s, the little town of Pagford is left in shock. The empty seat left by Barry on the parish council soon becomes the catalyst for the biggest war the town has ever seen. Who will triumph in an election fraught with passion, duplicity and unexpected revelations?

A Cat, A Hat and a Piece of String by Joanne Harris (12 copies at Ryde)

Stories are like Russian dolls; open them up, and in each one you'll find another story. Conjured from a wickedly imaginative pen, here is a collection of short stories that showcases Joanne Harris's exceptional storytelling art.

The Catcher in the Rye by J D Salinger (5 copies at Ryde)

A 16-year-old American boy relates in his own words the experiences he goes through at school and after, and reveals with unusual candour the workings of his own mind. What does a boy in his teens think and feel about his teachers, parents, friends and acquaintances?

The Cellist of Sarajevo by Steven Galloway (9 copies)

Tense and heartbreaking to its last page, 'The Cellist of Sarajevo' shows how life under seige creates impossible moral choices. When the everyday act of crossing the street can risk lives, the human spirit is revealed in all its fortitude - and frailty

A Circle of Sisters by Judith Flanders (12 copies at Ryde)

The Macdonald sisters, Alice, Georgiana, Agnes and Louisa, started life among the ranks of the lower-middle classes, with little prospect of social advancement. But as wives and mothers they made a single family of the poet Rudyard Kipling, the Pre-Raphaelite painter Edward Burne-Jones, Edward Poynter, President of the Royal Academy, and the Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin.

Cloud Atlas by David Mitchell (16 copies)

A reluctant voyager crossing the Pacific in 1850, and a young Pacific Islander witnessing the nightfall of science and civilization - these and the other narrators of 'Cloud Atlas' hear each other's echoes down the corridor of history, and their destinies are changed in ways great and small.

Cold Comfort Farm by Stella Gibbons (13 copies)

When sensible, sophisticated Flora Poste is orphaned at nineteen, she decides her only choice is to descend upon relatives in deepest Sussex. At the aptly-named Cold Comfort Farm, she meets the doomed Starkadders: cousin Judith, heaving with remorse for unspoken wickedness; Amos, preaching fire and damnation; their sons, lustful Seth and despairing Reuben; child of nature Elfine; and crazed old Aunt Ada Doom, who has kept to her bedroom for the last twenty years. But Flora loves nothing better than to organise other people. Armed with common sense and a strong will, she resolves to take each of the family in hand. A hilarious and ruthless parody of rural melodramas and purple prose, "Cold Comfort Farm" is one of the best-loved comic novels of all time.

The Color Purple by Alice White (9 copies at Ryde)

This compelling and cherished classic tells the story of Celie. Raped by the man she calls father, her two children taken from her and forced into an ugly marriage, she has no one to talk to but God, until she meets a woman who offers love and support.

The Cranford Chronicles by Mrs Gaskell (8 copies)

Based on three Elizabeth Gaskell novels, "The Cranford Chronicles" follows the small absurdities and major tragedies in the lives of the people of Cranford, a small Cheshire market town, during one extraordinary year. In this witty and poignant story the railway is pushing its way relentlessly towards the town from Manchester, bringing fears of migrant workers and the breakdown of law and order. The arrival of handsome young Doctor Harrison causes yet further agitation, not just because of his revolutionary methods but also because of his effect on the hearts of the ladies. Meanwhile Miss Matty Jenkyns nurses her own broken heart after she was forced to give up the man she loved when she was a young girl.

Dark Dawn by Matt McGuire (9 copies)

Belfast. January 2005. Acting Detective Sergeant John O'Neill stands over the body of a dead teenager. The corpse was discovered on the building site of a luxury development overlooking the River Lagan. Kneecapped then killed, the body bears the hallmarks of a punishment beating. But this is the new Northern Ireland - the Celtic Tiger purrs, the Troubles are over, the paramilitaries are gone. So who is the boy and who wanted him dead?

Day of The Triffids by John Wyndham (11 copies at Ryde)

The narrator of this novel wakes up in hospital to find that, by missing a freak cosmic event which has blinded most of the population, he has survived to witness a new world. The new world that awaits him however is fantastic, horrific and inhabited by carnivorous walking plants!

December by Elizabeth H. Winthrop (17 Copies)

11-year-old Isabelle hasn't spoken for months, and, as December begins, the situation is getting desperate. As her parents spiral around Isabelle's impenetrable silence, she herself emerges, in a fascinating portrait of an exceptional child, as a bright young girl in need of help yet too terrified to ask for it.

The Dig by John Preston (7 copies)

In the long hot summer of 1939, Britain is preparing for war. But on a riverside farm in Suffolk there is excitement of another kind: Mrs Petty, the widowed farmer, has had her hunch proved correct that the strange mounds on her land hold buried treasure. As the dig proceeds against a background of mounting national anxiety, it becomes clear though that this is no ordinary find...And pretty soon the discovery leads to all kinds of jealousies and tensions. John Preston's recreation of the Sutton Hoo dig - the greatest Anglo-Saxon discovery ever in Britain - brilliantly and comically dramatizes three months of intense activity when locals fought outsiders, professionals thwarted amateurs, and love and rivalry flourished in equal measure.

The Divide by Nicholas Evans (10 copies)

Two backcountry skiers find the body of a young woman embedded in the ice of a remote mountain creek. All through the night police work with arc lights and chainsaws to prise her out. Identifying her doesn't take so long. Abbie Cooper is wanted for murder and her picture is on law enforcement computers all across America. But how did she die? And what was the trail of events that led this golden child of a loving family so tragically astray? In a journey of discovery and redemption, from the streets of New York to the daunting grandeur of the Rocky Mountains, it tells the heart-rending tale of a family fractured by divorce. As both parents and children struggle in search of lost happiness, some devastating truths unravel. THE DIVIDE is the story of a great love betrayed and of the yearnings and needs, and the dashed hopes and disillusionments that connect and separate all men and women.

Down River by John Hart (7 copies)

Going back is never easy ...Adam Chase has spent the last five years in New York trying to forget. When he left North Carolina, Adam left for good. Now he has no choice but to return - and being remembered as a murderer doesn't help. Within hours of arriving, Adam is beaten up, accosted and has to face the hostility of those closest to him, including Grace, the young woman he cannot forget. Nothing has changed. And then people start turning up dead. For a man only just acquitted of murder, Adam's homecoming does not go well. And he has a dark streak, a history of violence. Everyone doubts. No one trusts him. And as the past threatens to overshadow the present, Adam becomes the prime suspect for the new murders. He alone can clear his name ...

Eat, Pray, Love by Elizabeth Gilbert (13 copies at Ryde)

It's three a.m., and Elizabeth Gilbert is sobbing on the bathroom floor. She's in her 30s; she has a husband, a house and they're trying for a baby - but she doesn't want any of it. This is a hilarious travelogue and a quest for spiritual enlightenment in the face of natural scepticism.

The Elegance of the hedgehog by Muriel Barbery (11 copies)

Renee is the concierge of a grand Parisian apartment building, home to members of the great and the good. But beneath this facade lies the real Renee: passionate about culture and the arts, and more knowledgeable in many ways than her employers with their outwardly successful but emotionally void lives.

The End of Mr Y by Scarlett Thomas (10 copies at Ryde)

Ariel Manto has a fascination with a 19th century scientist by the name of Thomas Lumas. His rarest work, 'The End of Mr. Y', was written before his disappearance, and the same fate seems to have befallen all the book's few readers ever since. When Ariel uncovers a copy in a second-hand bookshop, she is launched into an adventure.

Engleby by Sebastian Faulks (9 copies) (Audio Download available)

Mike Engleby says things that others dare not even think. When the novel opens in the 1970's, he is a university student, having survived a traditional school. A man devoid of scruple or self-pity, Engleby provides a witheringly frank account of English education.

Evening Class by Maeve Binchy (13 copies at Ryde)

The people who come to Mountainview every Tuesday and Thursday, for the evening class in Italian, are from every walk of life. By the time they are ready to set out on a journey to Italy, their lives have changed dramatically.

Every Man for Himself by Beryl Bainbridge (11 copies at Ryde)

This book recaptures the four lost days of the Titanic's maiden voyage to New York. The story is told by Morgan, the nephew of the owner of the shipping line. Bainbridge's spare, laconic style of writing has never been used to better advantage.

Far from the Madding Crowd by Thomas Hardy (12 copies at Ryde)

When Bathsheba Everdene inherits her own farm, she attracts three very different suitors: the seemingly commonplace, Gabriel Oak, the young soldier, Francis Troy, and the respectable, middle-aged Farmer Boldwood. Her choice, and the tragedy it provokes, lies at the centre of Hardy's story.

The Farm by Richard Benson (NF) (14 copies)

It was like being the village idiot with O-levels. I jack-knifed trailers, got outwitted by even the dimmest animals and was dragged through a hedge backwards on a tractor.' Richard Benson was never cut out for the family farm, but he returned from London when his dad had to sell up and found that their shared loss was part of a profound change in rural life. In the house after the sale, dad gave a heavy raspy sigh and sank against my mum. Everything seemed to freeze for a moment as the clock kept ticking '

Father's Day by Simon Van Booy (10 copies) NEW

At the age of 6, a little girl names Harvey learns that her parents have died in a car accident. As she struggles to understand, a kindly social worker named Wanda introduces her to her only living relative: her Uncle Jason, a disabled felon with a violent past and a criminal record. Despite his limitations and his resistance Wanda follows a hunch and cajoles Jason into becoming her legal guardian, convinced that each may be the others last chance.

The Fault In Our Stars by John Green (10 copies)

Despite the tumor-shrinking medical miracle that has bought her a few years, Hazel has never been anything but terminal, her final chapter inscribed upon diagnosis. But when a gorgeous plot twist named Augustus Waters suddenly appears at Cancer Kid Support Group, Hazel's story is about to be completely rewritten.

The Followers by Rebecca Wait (11 copies) NEW

On the windswept moors of northern England, a small religious cult has cut itself off from society, believing they have found meaning in a purposeless world. Led by their prophet, Nathaniel, they eagerly await the end times. But when the prophet brings in Stephanie and her rebellious daughter Judith, the group's delicate dynamic is disturbed. Judith is determined to escape, but her feelings are complicated by a growing friendship with another of the children, the naive and trusting Moses, who has never experienced the outside world. Meanwhile, someone else is having doubts, unleashing a horrifying chain of events that will destroy the followers' lives. In the aftermath, the survivors struggle to adjust to the real world, haunted by the same questions: if you've been persuaded to surrender your individual will, are you still responsible for your actions? And is there any way back?

The Forgotten Garden by Kate Morton (13 copies)

On the eve of the First World War, a little girl is found alone after a gruelling ocean voyage from England to Australia. All she can remember is that a woman she calls the Authoress had promised to look after her. But the Authoress has vanished. So starts the haunting second novel from the author of 'The House at Riverton'.

Frankie & Stankie by Barbara Trapido (6 copies) NEW

Dinah and Lisa are growing up in 1950s South Africa where racial laws are tightening. They are two little girls from a liberal family. Big sister Lisa is strong and sensible, while Dinah is weedy and arty. As the shadows of apartheid lengthen, Dinah journeys through childhood and adolescence and the minefields of boys and university 8n this vibrant and irresistible

Frog Music by Emma Donoghue (13 copies at Ryde)

San Francisco, 1876: a stifling heat wave and smallpox epidemic have engulfed the city. Deep in the streets of Chinatown live three former stars of the Parisian circus: Blanche, now an exotic dancer at the House of Mirrors, her lover Arthur and his companion Ernest. When an eccentric outsider joins their little circle, secrets unravel, changing everything and leaving one of them dead.

Funny Girl by Nick Hornby (11 copies at Ryde)

It's the swinging sixties, and Sophie Parker escapes the small-town life of her parents in Blackpool and travels to London to follow her dreams and become an actress. But when she lands the TV role of a lifetime, not everything is as it seems.

Gold by Chris Cleave (19 copies)

Kate and Zoe are friends but also ardent rivals – athletes at the top of their game, fighting to compete in the world's greatest sporting contest. Each scarred by tragedy, and each with a great deal to lose, they must choose between family and glory and ask themselves: what will I sacrifice?

A Golden Age by Tahmima Anam (10 copies)

As Rehana awakes one morning, she might be forgiven for feeling happy. Today she will throw a party for her son and daughter. But none of the guests at Rehana's party can foresee what will happen in the days and months that follow. For this is East Pakistan in 1971, a country on the brink of war. And this family is about to change forever.

The Good Father by Diane Chamberlain (8 copies)

A little girl, all alone, with a note that reads 'please look after me'. What would you do? Four years ago, nineteen-year-old Travis Brown made a choice: to raise his newborn daughter on his own. While most of his friends were out partying and meeting girls, Travis was at home, worrying about keeping food on the table. But so far he's kept her safe, and never regretted his decision for a second. But now he's lost his job, his home and the money in his wallet is all he has. As things spiral out of control Travis is offered a lifeline. A one time offer to commit a crime for his daughter's sake. Even if it means leaving her behind. Even if it means losing her. What would a good father do?

The Good Husband of Zebra Drive by Alexander McCall Smith (7 copies)

Precious Ramotswa is experiencing staffing difficulties. Her relationship with her assistant is strained. But the work of the agency must continue. Mr J.L.B. Matekoni becomes involved in the agency's work when he investigates an errant husband. But can a man investigate such matters as competently as one of the ladies?

Good Omens by Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman (6 copies)

There is a distinct hint of Armageddon in the air. According to The Nice and Accurate Prophecies of Agnes Nutter, Witch (recorded in 1655), the world will end on a Saturday. Next Saturday, in fact. So the armies of Good and Evil are amassing, the Four Bikers of the apocalypse are revving up, and the world's last two remaining witch-finders are getting ready to fight the good fight.

Gorky Park by Martin Cruz Smith (11 copies)

Three corpses have been found in Moscow. But why have they been brutally mutilated? And why have they been buried in the snows of Gorky Park? Chief Inspector Arkady Renko is in charge of the case, but he must also challenge a cruel and corrupt society before he can conclude his investigations.

The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck (11 copies)

Shocking and controversial when it was first published in 1939, Steinbeck's Pulitzer prize-winning epic remains his undisputed masterpiece. It tells of the Joad family who travel West in search of the Promised Land, and find only broken dreams.

The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel society by Mary Ann Shaffer & Annie Barrows (13 copies)

It's January, 1946, and writer Juliet Ashton sits at her desk, vainly seeking a subject for her next book. Out of the blue, she receives a letter from one Dawsey Adams of Guernsey - by chance, he's acquired a second hand book that once belonged to Juliet - and, spurred on by their mutual love of Charles Lamb, they begin a correspondence.

Half of a Yellow Sun by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (11 copies)

This sweeping novel is set in Nigeria during the 1960s, at the time of a vicious civil war in which a million people died and thousands were massacred in cold blood. The three main characters are swept up in the violence during these turbulent years. One is a young boy from a poor village who is employed at a university lecturer's house. The other is a young middle-class woman, Olanna, who has to confront the reality of the massacre of her relatives. And the third is a white man, a writer who lives in Nigeria for no clear reason, and who falls in love with Olanna's twin sister, a remote and enigmatic character. As these people's lives intersect, they have to question their own responses to the unfolding political events. This extraordinary novel is about Africa in a wider sense: about moral responsibility, about the end of colonialism, about ethnic allegiances, about class and race; and about the ways in which love can complicate all of these things.

The Help by Kathryn Stockett (12 copies) [\(Audio Download available\)](#)

Aibileen is a black maid, raising her 17th white child, but with a bitter heart after the death of her son. Minny is the sassiest woman in Mississippi. Skeeter is a white woman with a degree but no ring on her finger. Seemingly as different as can be, these women will come together for a clandestine project that will put them all at risk.

A Horse walks into a Bar (10 copies) **NEW**

An audience that has come expecting an evening of amusement instead sees a comedian falling apart on stage; an act of disintegration, a man crumbling, as a matter of choice, before their eyes. They could get up and leave, or boo and whistle and drive him from the stage, if they were not so drawn to glimpse his personal hell.

The House at Riverton by Kate Morton (15 copies)

Summer 1924: On the eve of a glittering Society party, by the lake of a grand English country house, a young poet takes his life. The only witnesses, sisters Hannah and Emmeline Hartford, will never speak to each other again. Winter 1999: Grace Bradley, 98, one-time housemaid of Riverton Manor, is visited by a young director making a film about the poet's suicide. Ghosts awaken and memories, long-consigned to the dark reaches of Grace's mind, begin to sneak back through the cracks. A shocking secret threatens to emerge; something history has forgotten but Grace never could.

How I live Now by Meg Rosoff (12 copies)

Daisy is sent from New York to England to spend a summer with cousins she has never met. It seems like the perfect summer. Falling in love is just the start of it but their lives are about to explode. War breaks out and lands on their doorstep. Daisy's life is changed forever - and the world is too.

How to Talk to a Widower by Jonathan Tropper (13 copies)

When Doug Parker married Hailey - beautiful, smart and ten years older - he left his carefree Manhattan life behind to live with her and her teenage son, Russ, in the suburbs. Three years later, Hailey has been dead for a year, and Doug, a widower at 29, just wants to drown himself in self-pity and Jack Daniels. But his family has other ideas. Russ is furious with Doug for not adopting him after Hailey died, and has fallen in with a bad crowd. Claire, Doug's irrepressible and pregnant twin sister, has just left her husband and moved in, uninvited, determined to turn his life around. Then there's Debbie, their younger sister, engaged to Doug's ex-best friend and maniacally determined to pull off the perfect wedding at any cost.

Human Traces by Sebastian Faulks (10 copies)

"Human Traces" explores the question of what kind of beings men and women really are. Jacques Rebiere and Thomas Midwinter, both sixteen when the story starts in 1876, come from different countries and contrasting families. They are united by an ambition to understand how the mind works and whether madness is the price we pay for being human. As psychiatrists, they travel on a quest from the squalor of the Victorian lunatic asylum to the crowded lecture halls of the renowned Professor Charcot in Paris; from the heights of the Sierra Madre in California to the plains of unexplored Africa.

The Hunted by Emlyn Rees (7 copies) (Audio Download available)

Danny Shanklin wakes up slumped across a table in a London hotel room he's never seen before. There's a faceless dead man on the floor and he's got a high-powered rifle strapped to his hands. He hears sirens and stumbles to the window to see a burning limousine and bodies all over the street. The police are closing in. He's been set up.

I am Pilgrim by Terry Hayes (8 copies) NEW

Pilgrim was the codename for a world class and legendary secret agent. When NYPD Ben Bradley tracks down Pilgrim, neither man can imagine the terrifying journey they are about to begin, as what begins as an unusual and challenging murder investigation leads them into a direct collision course with the dark forces of jihadist terrorism.

Can't begin to Tell You by Elizabeth Buchan (7 copies)

Denmark, 1940. War has come and everyone must choose a side. For British -born Kay Eberstern, living on her husband Bror's country estate, the Nazi invasion and occupation of her adopted country is a time of terrible uncertainty and inner conflict. With Bror desperate to preserve the legacy of his family home, even if it means co-existing with the enemy, Kay knows she cannot do the same. Lured by British Intelligence into a covert world of resistance and sabotage, her betrayal of Bror is complete as she puts her family in danger.

The Ice Cream Girls by Dorothy Koomson (12 copies)

As teenagers, Poppy Carlisle and Serena Gorrington were the only witnesses to a tragic event. Amid heated public debate, the two seemingly glamorous teens were dubbed 'The Ice Cream Girls' by the press and were dealt with by the courts. Years later, having led very different lives, Poppy is keen to set the record straight about what really happened, while Serena wants no one in her present to find out about her past. But some secrets will not stay buried - and if theirs is revealed, everything will become a living hell all over again ...Gripping, thought-provoking and heart-warming, The Ice Cream Girls will make you wonder if you can ever truly know the people you love.

The Illicit Happiness Of Other People by Manu Joseph (12 copies)

17-year-old Unni has done something terrible. The only clue to his actions lies in a comic strip he has drawn, which has fallen into the hands of his father Ousep - a nocturnal anarchist with a wife who is fantasising about his early death.

The Improbability of Love by Hannah Rothschild (12 copies at Ryde)

Annie McDee, alone after the disintegration of her long-term relationship and trapped in a dead-end job, is searching for a present for her unsuitable lover in a neglected second-hand shop. Within the jumble of junk and tack, a grimy painting catches her eye. Leaving the store with the picture after spending her meagre savings, she prepares an elaborate dinner for two, only to be stood up, the gift gathering dust on her mantelpiece. But every painting has a story - and if it could speak, what would it tell us? For Annie has stumbled across 'The Improbability of Love', a lost masterpiece by Antoine Watteau, one of the most influential French painters of the 18th century.

Innocent Traitor by Alison Weir (7 copies)

Lady Jane Gray was born into times of extreme danger. Child of a scheming father and a ruthless mother, for whom she was merely a pawn in a dynastic power game with the highest stakes, she lived a life in thrall to political machinations and lethal religious fervour.

Instructions for a Heatwave by Maggie O'Farrell (10 copies at Ryde)

London, July 1976. It hasn't rained for months, and Robert Riordan tells his wife Gretta that he's going round the corner to buy a newspaper. He doesn't come back. The search for Robert brings Gretta's children - two estranged sisters and a brother on the brink of divorce - back home, each with different ideas as to where their father might have gone.

The Island by Victoria Hislop (5 copies)

On the brink of a 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. When Alexis decides to visit Crete, however, Sofia gives her daughter a letter to take to an old friend, and promises that through her she will learn more. Arriving in Plaka, Alexis is astonished to see that it lies a stone's throw from the tiny, deserted island of Spinalonga - Greece's former leper colony. Then she finds Fortini, and at last hears the story that Sofia has buried all her life: the tale of her great-grandmother Eleni and her daughters and a family rent by tragedy, war and passion. She discovers how intimately she is connected with the island, and how secrecy holds them all in its powerful grip.

Jacob's folly by Rebecca Miller (7 copies)

In 18th-century Paris, Jacob is a peddler of knives, salt cellars and snuffboxes. Despite a disastrous teenage marriage, Jacob is determined to raise himself up in life, by whatever means he can. In 21st-century America, Jacob's life has twisted in ways he could never have imagined. But even the tiniest of flies can influence the turning of the war.

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte (11 copies at Ryde)

A troubled childhood strengthens Jane Eyre's natural independence and spirit - which prove necessary when she finds a position as governess at Thornfield Hall. But when she finds love with her sardonic employer, Rochester, the discovery of his terrible secret forces her to make a choice.

Jude the Obscure by Thomas Hardy (6 copies)

Jude Fawley, poor and working-class, longs to study at the University of Christminster, but he is rebuffed, and trapped in a loveless marriage. He falls in love with his unconventional cousin Sue Bridehead, and their refusal to marry when free to do so confirms their rejection of and by the world around them. The shocking fate that overtakes them is an indictment of a rigid and uncaring society.

Juliet Naked by Nick Hornby (12 copies)

Annie lives in a washed-up English seaside town where her partner of convenience, Duncan, immerses himself in the esoterica of an obscure American singer-songwriter, Tucker Crow. When Tucker releases a demo version of his album, Juliet, Duncan's and Annie's divergent reactions pull them apart.

The Knife of Never Letting Go by Patrick Ness (10 copies) Young Adult

Imagine you can hear everything the town of men say about you. And they can hear everything you think. Imagine you don't fit into their plans. Todd Hewitt is just one month away from the birthday that will make him a man. But his town has been keeping secrets from him. Secrets that are going to force him to run.

Lacey's House by Joanne Graham (15 Copies)

Lacey Carmichael leads a solitary life. To her neighbours she is the mad old woman who lives at the end of the lane, crazy but harmless. Until she is arrested on suspicion of murder. When Rachel Moore arrives in the village, escaping her own demons, the two women form an unlikely bond. Unravelling in each other tales of loss and heartache.

Ladder of Years by Anne Tyler (8 Copies at Ryde)

On a beach holiday, forty-year-old Cordelia Grinstead, dressed only in swimsuit and beach robe, walks away from her family and just keeps on walking...

The Lady and The Unicorn by Tracy Chevalier (16 copies at Ryde)

From the bestselling author of *Girl with a Pearl Earring* comes a historical tale of love, sex and revenge. Keen to demonstrate his new-found favour with the King, rising nobleman Jean Le Viste commissions six tapestries to adorn the walls of his chateau. He expects soldiers and bloody battlefields. But artist Nicolas des Innocents instead designs a seductive world of women, unicorns and flowers, using as his muses Le Viste's wife Genevive and ripe young daughter Claude.

Last Bus to Coffeville by J. Paul Henderson (9 copies) NEW

On a tour bus once stolen from Paul McCartney, a bank of misfits career towards Mississippi through a landscape of war, euthanasia, communism, religion and race, discovering the true meaning of love, family and – most important of all – friendship. Last Bus to Coffeville is a funny story about sad things, a tale of endings and new beginnings.

The Last Girl by Jane Casey (10 copies)

15-year-old Lydia Kennford returns home to discover the bodies of her mother and twin sister in the family living room, while her father, Philip, lies unconscious and bleeding in an upstairs bedroom. DC Maeve Kerrigan and DI Josh Derwent begin to investigate, discounting a burglary quickly and focusing on Philip Kennford QC himself.

Leaving Time by Jodi Picoult (15 copies)

For more than a decade, Jenna Metcalf has never stopped thinking about her mother, Alice, who mysteriously disappeared in the wake of a tragic accident. Refusing to believe she was abandoned, Jenna searches for her mother regularly online and pores over the pages of Alice's old journals. A scientist who studied grief among elephants, Alice wrote mostly of her research among the animals she loved, yet Jenna hopes the entries will provide a clue to her mother's whereabouts. Desperate to find the truth, Jenna enlists two unlikely allies in her quest: Serenity Jones, a psychic who rose to fame finding missing persons, only to later doubt her gifts, and Virgil Stanhope, the jaded private detective who'd originally investigated Alice's case along with the strange, possibly linked death of one of her colleagues. As the three work together to uncover what happened to Alice, they realise that in asking hard questions, they'll have to face even harder answers. As Jenna's memories dovetail with the events in her mother's journals, the story races to a mesmerising finish. A deeply moving, gripping, and intelligent page-turner, Leaving Time is Jodi Picoult at the height of her powers.

Library of the Dead by Glen Cooper (7 copies)

A murderer is on the loose: nicknamed the Doomsday Killer, he's claimed six victims in just two weeks, and the city is terrified. Even worse, the police are mystified: the victims have nothing in common, defying all profiling, and all that connects them is that each received a sick postcard in the mail before they died.

Life after Life by Kate Atkinson (9 copies at Ryde)

During a snowstorm in England in 1910, a baby is born and dies before she can take her first breath. During a snowstorm in England in 1910, the same baby is born and lives to tell the tale. What if there were second chances? And third chances? In fact, an infinite number of chances to live your life? Would you eventually be able to save the world from its own inevitable destiny? And would you even want to? Life after Life follows Ursula Todd as she lives through the turbulent events of the last century again and again. With wit and compassion, Kate Atkinson finds warmth even in life's bleakest moments, and shows an extraordinary ability to evoke the past. Here she is at her most profound and inventive, in a novel that celebrates the best and worst of ourselves.

Life of Pi by Yann Martel (8 copies)

Pi lives in Pondicherry, India, where his father owns the city's zoo. The family decides to immigrate 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.

The Little Stranger by Sarah Waters (11 copies)

In a dusty post-war summer in rural Warwickshire, a doctor is called to a patient at Hundreds Hall. Home to the Ayres family for over two centuries, the Georgian house, once grand and handsome, is now in decline. But are the Ayreses haunted by something more sinister than a dying way of life?

Longbourn : a novel of pride and prejudice below stairs by Jo Baker and Jane Austen (10 copies at Ryde)

It is wash -day for the housemaids at Longbourn House, and Sarah's hands are chapped and bleeding. Domestic life below stairs, ruled tenderly and forcefully by Mrs Hill the housekeeper, is about to be disturbed by the arrival of a new footman smelling of the sea, and bearing secrets. For in Georgian England, there is a world the young ladies in the drawing room will never know, a world of poverty, love, and brutal war.

The Long Weekend by Veronica Henry (7 copies) NEW

Claire runs a boutique hotel in Cornwall with her tempestuous lover, chef and bon viveur Luca. What happens when her childhood sweetheart, the love of her life, books into the hotel for his stag night? The story also follows the other guests who check in that weekend - for illicit liaisons, anniversaries and romantic rendezvous.

Love in the Present Tense by Catherine Ryan Hyde (10 copies)

"So much of how it was started when that cop got out and came up to me. But I didn't know all this when it first happened. I didn't know there would ever be a Leonard, or that this man would be his father, or that anybody would have to die." Mitch is a 25-year-old with commitment issues. Leonard is a five-year-old kid with asthma and vision problems, who captivates everyone he meets. Pearl is Leonard's teenage mother, who's trying to hide a violent secret from her past. Life has given Pearl every reason to mistrust people, but circumstances force her to trust her neighbour Mitch. And one day, a man from Pearl's past arrives to take her away. She knows that if she is to preserve her dignity, she must go with him. With a heart full of agony, Pearl drops Leonard off with Mitch and never returns. Pearl, Leonard and Mitch each have a story to tell. As their lives unfold, profound questions arise about the nature of love and family. How do you go on loving someone who can't be there for you? The answers are heartbreaking, but ultimately triumphant, as Leonard and Mitch grow up side by side and piece together the layered truths and fictions of their almost magical lives.

Love you more by Lisa Gardner (8 copies)

A split-second decision and Brian Darby lies dead. His wife, state police trooper Tessa Leoni, claims to have shot him in self-defence and for Boston detective D.D. Warren it should be an open-and-shut case. But where is their six-year-old daughter? As D.D.'s homicide investigation ratchets into a frantic state-wide search for a missing child, she must move quickly in order to learn all of Tessa's secrets and understand what has happened to the little girl. But for Tessa, the worst has not yet happened. She is walking a tightrope, with no one to trust and nowhere to turn, as the clock ticks down to a terrifying deadline. She has one goal in sight, and she will use every ounce of her training to do what has to be done. All that matters is her child and no one could love her more... Two women. With one question... How far would you go to save your child?

Lovely Bones by Alice Sebold (12 copies) (Audio Download available)

My name was Salmon, like the fish; first name, Susie. I was fourteen when I was murdered on December 6, 1973. My murderer was a man from our neighbourhood. My mother liked his border flowers, and my father talked to him once about fertilizer. This is Susie Salmon. Watching from heaven, Susie sees her happy, suburban family devastated by her death, isolated even from one another as they each try to cope with their terrible loss alone. Over the years, her friends and siblings grow up, fall in love, do all the things she never had the chance to do herself. But life is not quite finished with Susie yet ..."

The Luminous Life of Lilly Aphrodite by Beatrice Colin (8 copies)

This novel tells the story of an orphaned daughter of a cabaret dancer and her rise from poverty and anonymity to film stardom, all set against the rise and fall of Berlin, the background of WWI, the debauchery of the Weimar era, the run-up to WWII, and the innovations in art and industry that accompanied it all.

Man and Boy by Tony Parsons (13 copies at Ryde) (eBook available)

Harry Silver has it all: a successful job in TV, a gorgeous wife, a lovely child. Then, in one moment of madness, he throws it all away. This is the story of how he comes to terms with his life and achieves a degree of self-respect.

March by Geraldine Brooks (11 copies)

Set during the American Civil War, "March" tells the story of John March, known to us as the father away from his family of girls in "Little Women", Louisa May Alcott's classic American novel. In Brooks' telling, March emerges as an abolitionist and idealistic chaplain on the front lines of a war that tests his faith in himself and in the Union cause when he learns that his side, too, is capable of barbarism and racism. As he recovers from a near-fatal illness in a Washington hospital, he must reassemble the shards of his shattered mind and body, and find a way to reconnect with a wife and daughters who have no idea of the ordeals he has been through. As Alcott drew on her real-life sisters in shaping the characters of her little women, so Brooks turned to the journals and letters of Bronson Alcott, Louisa May's father, an idealistic educator, animal rights exponent and abolitionist who was a friend and confidante of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. The story spans the vibrant intellectual world of Concord and the sensuous antebellum South, through to the first year of the Civil War as the North reels under a series of unexpected defeats.

Memento Mori by Muriel Sparks (10 copies at Ryde) (Audio Download available)

Memento Mori is considered by many to be the greatest novel by the wizardly Dame Muriel Spark. In late 1950s London, something uncanny besets a group of elderly friends: an insinuating voice on the telephone informs each, "Remember you must die." Their geriatric feathers are soon thoroughly ruffled by these seemingly supernatural phone calls, and in the resulting flurry many old secrets are dusted off. Beneath the once decorous surface of their lives, unsavories like blackmail and adultery are now to be glimpsed. As spooky as it is witty, poignant and wickedly hilarious, Memento Mori may ostensibly concern death, but it is a book which leaves one relishing life all the more.

Memorial by Alice Oswald (NF) (10 copies)

To retrieve the 'Iliad's' energy, Alice Oswald has stripped away its story and her account focuses by turns on Homer's extended similes and on the brief biographies of the minor war-dead, most of whom are little more than names, but each of whom lives and dies unforgettably - and unforgotten - in the copiousness of Homer's glance.

The Memory of Love by Aminatta Forna (10 copies) (Audio Download available)

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 1969. On a hot January evening that he will remember for decades, Elias Cole first catches sight of Saffia Kamara, the wife of a charismatic colleague. He is transfixed. Thirty years later, lying in the capital's hospital, he recalls the desire that drove him to acts of betrayal he has tried to justify ever since. Elsewhere in the hospital, Kai, a gifted young surgeon, is desperately trying to forget the pain of a lost love that torments him as much as the mental scars he still bears from the civil war that has left an entire people with terrible secrets to keep. It falls to a British psychologist, Adrian Lockheart, to help the two survivors, but when he too falls in love, past and present collide with devastating consequences. *The Memory of Love* is a heartbreaking story of ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances.

Merivel: a man of his time by Rose Tremain (11 copies)

The gaudy years of the Restoration are long gone and Robert Merivel, physician and courtier to Charles II, sets off for the French court in search of a fresh start. But Versailles – all glitter in front and squalor behind – leaves him in despair, until a chance encounter with the seductive Madame de Flamanville, allows him to dream of a different future. But will that future ever be his? Summoned home urgently and skill tested to their limits.

The Miniaturist by Jessie Burton (18 copies at Ryde)

On an autumn day in 1686, 18-year-old Nella Oortman knocks at the door of a grand house in the wealthiest quarter of Amsterdam. She has come from the country to begin a new life as the wife of illustrious merchant trader Johannes Brandt, but instead she is met by his sharp-tongued sister, Marin. Only later does Johannes appear and present her with an extraordinary wedding gift: a cabinet-sized replica of their home. It is to be furnished by an elusive miniaturist, whose tiny creations mirror their real-life counterparts in unexpected ways. Nella is at first mystified by the closed world of the Brandt household, but as she uncovers its secrets she realizes the escalating dangers that await them all.

Miss Pettigrew Lives for the Day by Winifred Watson (9 copies)

Guinevere Pettigrew, the 40-year-old daughter of a north-country curate, is down on her luck and desperate for a job. Now living in London, all she can offer is domestic and child-care experience, but she's not particularly good at either. Sent by an agency for interview by Miss Dylesia La Fosse, a night-club singer, she finds herself instantly still un-interviewed, embroiled in Dylesia's shockingly Bohemian life-style. Even more disorientating, she takes to it like an ugly duckling to water. Underneath her austere exterior Miss Pettigrew is a secret, subconscious swan - a raver, and bossy with it. In no time at all she's wearing make-up, drinking alcohol, running Dylesia's love-life - and other people's too. And they're grateful. All this can only lead to happy endings.

Mister Pip by Lloyd Jones (16 copies)

Bougainville. 1991. A small village on a lush tropical island in the South Pacific. Eighty -six days have passed since Matilda's last day of school as, quietly, war is encroaching from the other end of the island. When the villagers' safe, predictable lives come to a halt, Bougainville's children are surprised to find the island's only white man, a recluse, re-opening the school. Pop Eye, aka Mr Watts, explains he will introduce the children to Mr Dickens. Matilda and the others think a foreigner is coming to the island and prepare a list of much needed items. They are shocked to discover their acquaintance with Mr Dickens will be through Mr Watts' inspiring reading of *Great Expectations*. But on an island at war, the power of fiction has dangerous consequences. Imagination and beliefs are challenged by guns. *Mister Pip* is an unforgettable tale of survival by story; a dazzling piece of writing that lives long in the mind after the last page is finished.

A Mother's Story by Amanda Prowse (8 copies) NEW

Jessica is expecting her first child. But why isn't she transformed by maternal feelings? Where is the all-consuming love she's supposed to feel for her child? No-one told her you don't always love your baby. Perhaps its best if Jessica keeps that dark secret to herself for now.

Murder on the Thirty-First Floor by Per Wahloo (11 copies)

In an unnamed country, in an unnamed year sometime in the future, Chief Inspector Jensen of the 16th Division is called in after the publishers controlling the entire country's newspapers and magazines receive a threat to blow up their building, in retaliation for a murder they are accused of committing.

Mr Golightly's Holiday by Salley Vickers (7 copies) (eBook available)

Golightly Enterprises is now somewhat in decline and Mr Golightly needs to rethink the whole operation. He decides to take a holiday in the village of Great Calne giving him time to reconsider the dwindling appeal of the international bestseller which made his company what it once was.

My Epileptic Lurcher by Des Dillon (10 copies)

Manny Riley is a recovering alcoholic and struggling scriptwriter with a serious anger management problem. Lately, though, things have started to change for the better. A happy marriage, a move away from Glasgow to an idyllic seaside village and the adoption of Bailey, a lurcher with epilepsy. He'll soon find that these things only open up a whole new world of problems he'll have to face up to. And he has to do it all without losing his temper.

My Sister's Keeper by Jodi Picoult (6 copies)

The only reason Anna was born was to donate her cord blood cells to her older sister. And though Anna is not sick, she might as well be. By age thirteen, she has undergone countless surgeries, transfusions, and shots so that her sister, Kate, can somehow fight the leukemia that has plagued her since she was a child. Anna was born for this purpose, her parents tell her, which is why they love her even more. But now that she has reached an age of physical awareness, she can't help but long for control over her own body and respite from the constant flow of her own blood seeping into her sister's veins. And so she makes a decision that for most would be too difficult to bear, at any time and at any age. She decides to sue her parents for the rights to her own body.

Netherland by Joseph O'Neill (13 copies)

In early 2006, Chuck Ramkisson is found dead at the bottom of a New York canal. In London, a Dutch banker named Hans van den Broek hears the news, and remembers his unlikely friendship with Chuck and the off-kilter New York in which it flourished: the New York of 9/11, the powercut and the Iraq war.

Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro (12 copies)

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?

The 19th Wife by David Ebershoff (6 copies)

Jordan returns to visit his mother in jail. As a teenager he was expelled from his family & community, a secretive Mormon offshoot sect. Now his father has been shot dead & one of his wives is accused of the crime. Over a century earlier, Ann Eliza Young, the 19th wife of prophet & leader of the Mormon Church, tells her story.

Nora Webster by Colm Toibin (12 copies at Ryde)

It is the 1960s and Nora Webster is living with her two young sons in a small town on the east coast of Ireland. The love of her life, Maurice, has just died so she must work out how to forge a new life for herself. As Nora returns to memories of the happiness of her early marriage, something more painful begins to intrude: memories of her own mother and what brought about the terrifying distance between them.

North and South by Elizabeth Gaskell (8 copies)

Margaret's safe existence is turned upside down when she has to move to the grim northern town of Milton. Not only does she have her eyes opened by the poverty and hardship she encounters there, but she is thrown into confusion by stern factory owner John Thornton - whose treatment of his workers brings them into fierce opposition.

Northern Lights by Philip Pullman (5 copies)

When Lyra's friend Roger disappears, she and her daemon, Pantalaimon, determine to find him. The ensuing quest leads them into the bleak splendour of the North, where armoured bears rule the ice and witch-queens fly through the frozen skies.

A Notable Woman by Jean Lucey Pratt (11 copies) NEW

In April 1925, Jean Lucey Pratt began writing a journal. She continued to write until just a few days before her death in 1986, producing well over a million words in 45 exercise books over the course of her lifetime. For sixty years, no one had an inkling of her diaries' existence, and they have remained unpublished until now. Jean wrote about anything that amused, inspired or troubled her, laying bare every aspect of her life with aching honesty, infectious humour, indelicate gossip and heartrending hopefulness. She documented the loss of a tennis match, her unpredictable driving, catty friends, devoted cats and difficult guests. As Jean's words propel us back in time, 'A Notable Woman' becomes a unique slice of living, breathing British history and a revealing private chronicle of life in the 20th century.

Notes from an Exhibition by Patrick Gale (6 copies)

When troubled artist Rachel Kelly dies painting obsessively in her attic studio in Penzance, her saintly husband and adult children have more than the usual mess to clear up. She leaves behind an extraordinary and acclaimed body of work - but she also leaves a legacy of secrets and emotional damage that will take months to unravel.

On Chesil Beach by Ian McEwan (14 copies)

It is July 1962. In a hotel on the Dorset coast, overlooking Chesil Beach, Edward and Florence, who got married that morning, are sitting down to dinner in their room. Neither is entirely able to suppress their anxieties about the wedding night to come.

One Day by David Nicholls (10 copies) (Audio Download available) (eBook available)

15th July 1988. Emma and Dexter meet for the first time on the night of their graduation. Tomorrow they must go their separate ways. So where will they be on this one day next year? And the year after that? And every year that follows?

The One Plus One by Jojo Moyes (8 copies) (Audio Download available)

Suppose your life sucks. Your husband has done a vanishing act, your stepson is being bullied and your daughter has a once in a lifetime opportunity - that you can't afford to pay for. So imagine you found and kept some money that didn't belong to you, knowing it would pay for your daughter's happiness. But how do you cope with the shame? Especially when the man you've lied to decides to help you out in your hour of need. Jo is in hell - Ed has saved her family - but is their happiness worth a lifetime's soul-searching?

Only Time Will Tell by Jeffrey Archer (13 copies) NEW

The epic tale of Harry Clifton's life begins in 1920, with the chilling words, 'I was told that my father was killed in the war'. But it will be another 20 years before Harry discovers how his father really died, which will only lead him to question: who was his father?

The Other Queen by Philippa Gregory (8 copies) (eBook available)

An historical novel from the author of 'The Other Boleyn Girl' and 'The Boleyn Inheritance', in which Mary, Queen of Scots, is placed under house arrest with the newly-married Bess of Hardwick and the Earl of Shrewsbury, but fights to regain her kingdom and more.

The Other Side of the Bridge by Mary Lawson (8 copies) (Audio Download available)

Two brothers, Arthur and Jake Dunn, are the sons of a farmer in the mid-1930s, when life is tough and another world war is looming. Arthur is reticent, solid, dutiful and set to inherit the farm and his father's character; Jake is younger, attractive, mercurial and dangerous to know - the family misfit. When a beautiful young woman comes into the community, the fragile balance of sibling rivalry tips over the edge.

Our Endless Numbered Days by Claire Fuller (12 copies at Ryde)

Peggy is 8 years old when her father takes her to live in a cabin in a remote European forest. There, he tells her that her mother and the rest of the world are gone. Now, the two of them must scratch a living from the earth: trapping squirrels, foraging for berries, surviving winter as best they can.

The Outcast by Sadie Jones (12 copies)

1957, and Lewis Aldridge is travelling back to his home in the South of England. He is straight out of jail and 19 years old. His return will trigger the implosion not just of his family, but of a whole community.

The Outsider by Albert Camus (9 copies)

Set in Camus' native Algeria, this story centres around Meursault. The young French-Algerian leads an apparently unremarkable bachelor life until his involvement in a violent incident calls into question the fundamental values of society.

A Perfectly Good Man by Patrick Gale (6 copies) NEW

In what is more an echo-chamber than a sequel, Patrick Gale returns us to the landscape of 'Notes from an Exhibition', unfurling the complex web of a Cornish community with an empathy that touches clairvoyance and a sure eye for significant mundanity.

The Pirate's Daughter by Margaret Cezair-Thompson (14 copies)

Spanning 30 years of Jamaican history, 'The Pirate's Daughter' is a tale of passion and recklessness, of two generations of women and their battles for love and survival, and of a nation struggling to rise to the challenge of hard-won independence.

A Place Called Winter by Patrick Gale (12 copies at Ryde)

A privileged elder son, and stammering, shy, Harry Cane has followed convention at every step. Even the beginnings of an illicit, dangerous affair do little to shake the foundations of his muted existence - until the shock of discovery and the threat of arrest cost him everything. Forced to abandon his wife and child, Harry signs up for emigration to the newly colonised Canadian prairies. Remote and unforgiving, his allotted homestead in a place called Winter is a world away from the golden suburbs of turn-of-the-century Edwardian England.

A Pleasure and a Calling by Phil Hogan (10 copies)

You won't remember Mr Heming. He showed you round your new home, suggested a sustainable financial package, negotiated a price and called you with the good news. The less good news is that, all these years later, he still has the key. That's absurd, you laugh. Of all the many hundreds of houses he has sold, why would he still have the key to mine?

The Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver (12 copies)

This tells the story of an American family in the Congo during a time of tremendous political and social upheaval. The story is 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. They carry with them all they believe they will need from home, but soon find that all of it - from garden seeds to Scripture - is calamitously transformed on African soil. This tale of one family's tragic undoing and remarkable reconstruction, over the course of three decades in postcolonial Africa, is set against one of history's most dramatic political parables. "The Poisonwood Bible" dances between the darkly comic human failings and inspiring poetic justices of our times. In a compelling exploration of religion, conscience, imperialist arrogance, and the many paths to redemption, Barbara Kingsolver has written a novel of overwhelming power and passion.

Pompeii by Robert Harris (9 copies at Ryde)

Harris recreates in spellbinding detail one of the most famous natural disasters of all time. And by focusing on the characters of an engineer and a scientist, he offers an entirely original perspective on the Roman world.

The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie by Muriel Spark (8 copies at Ryde)

Miss Brodie is a teacher who exerts a powerful influence over the group of 'special girls' at the Marcia Blaine Academy. Each is famous for something & are initiated into a world of adult games & extra-curricular activities they will never forget.

Prime Suspect by Lynda La Plante (15 copies at Library HQ / 10 copies at Ryde)

A woman is murdered and the police have a prime suspect, but cannot prove it. Detective Jane Tennison fights to solve the crime and win the respect of her fellow, male, officers.

The Private Patient by P D James (11 copies at Ryde)

When the notorious investigative journalist Rhoda Gradwyn booked into Mr Chandler-Powell's private clinic for the removal of a long-standing facial scar, she had every prospect of a successful operation and the beginning of a new life. Unfortunately, she was never to leave Cheverell Manor alive.

Public Library by Ali Smith (12 copies at Ryde)

Why are books so very powerful? What do the books we've read over our lives - our own personal libraries - make of us? What does the unravelling of our tradition of public libraries, so hard-won but now in jeopardy, say about us? The stories in Ali Smith's new collection are about what we do with books and what they do with us: how they travel with us; how they shock us, change us, challenge us, banish time while making us older, wiser and ageless all at once; how they remind us to pay attention to the world we make.

Pure by Andrew Miller (13 copies at Ryde)

In the heart of Paris, its oldest cemetery is, by 1785, overflowing. Jean-Baptiste Baratte is a young engineer charged by the king with demolishing it. But he begins to suspect that the destruction of the cemetery might be a prelude to his own

Queen's Gambit by Elizabeth Freemantle (10 copies) NEW

My name is Katherine Parr. I'm 31 years old and already twice widowed. I'm in love with a man I can't have, and am about to wed a man no-one would want - for my husband-to-be is none other than Henry VIII, who has already beheaded two wives, cast aside two more, and watched one die in childbirth. What will become of me once I'm wearing his ring and.

A Quiet Belief in Angels by R.J.Ellory (8 copies)

In 1930s Georgia, 12 year-old Joseph Vaughan hears of the brutal murder of a young girl, the first of a series of killings that will take 10 lives in the subsequent decade. Compelled by fear and duty, Joseph and his friends establish The Guardians, a group of children determined to protect the people of Augusta Falls

The Rabbit Back Literature Society by Pasi Ilmari Jaaskelainen (8 copies) NEW

There is a secret at the heart of a small Finnish town, involving its most famous occupant, the world-renowned children's author Laura White, and a strange literary game. Ella is an unsettled young teacher and aspiring author, who returns to her hometown of Rabbit Back. On the evening that she is initiated as the tenth member of the local Literary Society, White, who was its founder, disappears before everyone's eyes. As Ella makes unsettling discoveries about White's and the Society's past, the novel explores the nature of literature, storytelling and truth itself.

The Rainbow by D H Lawrence (6 copies)

Set in the rural midlands of England, this classic novel recounts the lives of three generations of the Brangwen family. When Tom Brangwen marries a Polish widow, Lydia Lensky, and adopts her daughter Anna as his own, he is unprepared for the conflict and passion that erupts between them. Condemned on publication for its open treatment of sexuality and "unpatriotic" spirit, Lawrence explores themes and characters which he later developed in Women In Love.

Random Acts of Heroic Love by Danny Scheinmann (13 copies)

In this debut novel, Danny Scheinmann paints a dramatic portrait of two men sustaining their lives through the memory of love; two men whose hidden connections are revealed in a stunning climax that lives long in the heart.

Rebecca by Daphne DuMaurier (10 copies)

Du Maurier's famous tale of suspense, mystery and love concerns Maxim de Winter's shy new bride and the house she is to inhabit, but that still reverberates to the haunting presence of his previous wife's influence.

Reckoning by Kerry Wilkinson (9 copies at Ryde)

In the village of Martindale, hundreds of miles north of the new English capital of Windsor, 16-year-old Silver Blackthorn takes the reckoning. This coming-of-age test not only decides her place in society, but also determines that Silver is to become an offering for King Victor. But these are uncertain times and no one really knows what happens to the teenagers who disappear into Windsor Castle. Is being an offering the privilege everyone assumes it to be, or do the walls of the castle have something to hide?

Red Dust Road by Jackie Kay (10 copies) (Audio Download available)

In this revelatory and redemptive book Jackie Kay tells the story of her own life. It is a book about belonging and beliefs, strangers and family, biology and destiny and what makes us who we are.

A Redbird Christmas by Fannie Flagg (9 copies)

A short and poignant Christmas story for all the family. Oswald T. Campbell, aged 52, down-and-out in a Chicago winter, is only given months to live unless he moves south. He finds himself in the small town of Lost River, Alabama, amongst all its eccentric but friendly residents.

Remarkable Creatures by Tracy Chevalier (9 copies) (eBook available)

In the early nineteenth century, a windswept beach along the English coast brims with fossils for those with the eye...From the moment she's struck by lightning as a baby, it is clear Mary Anning is different. Her discovery of strange fossilized creatures in the cliffs of Lyme Regis sets the world alight. But Mary must face powerful prejudice from a male scientific establishment, not to mention vicious gossip and the heartbreak of forbidden love.

Requiem for a Wren by Neville Shute (9 copies)

Wounded and embittered, RAF flyer Alan Duncan comes home to the ancestral manor in Australia seeking peace and solace after the ravages of war - but tragedy welcomes him. For the night before his arrival, the family parlour maid, Jessie Proctor, had committed suicide. In a determined quest to find the reason why, Alan comes across her photograph - and in a devastating shock of recognition, one woman's death triggers a lifetime of powerful, haunting memories.

Restless by William Boyd (12 copies)

It is 1939. Eva Delectorskaya is a beautiful 28-year-old Russian émigré living in Paris. As war breaks out she is recruited for the British Secret Service by Lucas Romer, a mysterious Englishman, and under his tutelage she learns to become the perfect spy, to mask her emotions and trust no one, including those she loves most. Since the war, Eva has carefully rebuilt her life as a typically English wife and mother. But once a spy, always a spy. Now she must complete one final assignment, and this time Eva can't do it alone: she needs her daughter's help.

The Resurrectionist by James Bradley (15 copies) (Audio Download available)

London 1826. Gabriel Swift arrives to study with Edwin Poll, the greatest of the city's anatomists. It is his chance to find advancement by making a name for himself. But instead he finds himself drawn to his master's nemesis, Lucan, the most powerful of the city's resurrectionists and ruler of its trade in stolen bodies.

The Return by Victoria Hislop (11 copies)

Mercedes is a spirited young Spanish girl whose passion is dancing. Her life is turned upside down by the Spanish Civil War & the oppression of Franco's dictatorship. When her brothers and her lover disappear in the night, taken for interrogation by the army, she must find a way to flee, even if that means leaving her home & family forever.

Revolutionary Road by Richard Yates (12 copies at Ryde)

Frank and April Wheeler, a bright, beautiful and talented couple, are desperate to maintain their dreams of greatness and distinction against the inexorable pressure of their suburban life.

The Road by Cormac McCarthy (14 copies) (Audio Download available)

A father and his son walk alone through burned America, heading through the ravaged landscape to the coast. This is the profoundly moving story of their journey. "The Road" boldly imagines a future in which no hope remains, but in which two people, 'each the other's world entire', are sustained by love. Awesome in the totality of its vision, it is an unflinching meditation on the worst and the best that we are capable of: ultimate destructiveness, desperate tenacity, and the tenderness that keeps two people alive in the face of total devastation.

The Road Home by Rose Tremain (6 copies)

Lev is on his way to Britain to seek work, so that he can send money back to eastern Europe to support his mother and little daughter. He struggles with the mysterious rituals of 'Englishness', and the fashions and fads of the London scene. We see the road Lev travels through his eyes, and we share his dilemmas

Rocken Edge by Wendy K Harris (7 copies)

Clare, a traumatised teenager clutching a baby, arrives on the Isle of Wight on a bitter winter's day searching for a friend she met on her journey from Ireland. Rachel, oblivious to the plight of the girl outside, sits in her seafront cafe lamenting her Italian lover for whom she has risked her livelihood and her heart.

Room by Emma Donoghue (8 copies)

It's Jack's birthday and he's excited about turning five. Jack lives with his Ma in Room, which has a locked door and a skylight, and measures 11 feet by 11 feet. He loves watching TV but he knows that nothing he sees on screen is truly real. Until the day Ma admits that there's a world outside.

The Rose of Sebastopol by Katharine McMahon (8 copies)

1855, Rosa Barr, a young Englishwoman, travels to the Crimea determined to work as a nurse. She never returns. Three people have been intimately connected with her: her cousin, a soldier and adventurer; a doctor, traumatised by the war and harbouring a secret passion; and her cousin Mariella, who is left to discover the truth.

Salmon fishing in the Yemen by Paul Torday (14 copies)

This is the story of Dr Alfred Jones, a fisheries scientist - for whom diary notable events include the acquisition of a new electric toothbrush and getting his article on caddis fly larvae published in 'Trout and Salmon' - who finds himself reluctantly involved in a project to bring salmon fishing to the Highlands of the Yemen . a project that will change his life, and the course of British political history forever. With a wickedly wonderful cast of characters - including a visionary Sheikh, a weasely spin doctor, Fred's devilish wife and a few thousand transplanted salmon - Salmon Fishing in the Yemen is a novel about hypocrisy and bureaucracy, dreams and deniability, and the transforming power of faith and love.

The Savage Garden by Mark Mills (9 copies)

A beautiful Tuscan villa, a mysterious garden, two hidden murders - one from the 16th century, one from the twentieth - and a family driven by dark secrets, combine in this evocative, intriguing mystery set in post-War Italy. In 1958, Adam Strickland, a young Cambridge scholar, travels to the Villa Docci in Tuscany to study a sixteenth-century garden. Designed and laid out by a grieving husband to the memory of his dead wife, it is a mysterious world of statues, grottoes, meandering rills and classical inscriptions. But tragedy has hit the Docci family more recently. The German occupation during World War 2 had a devastating impact on them, and the tensions between collaborators and partisans were played out within their own tight circle. Adam is fascinated by the Doccis and increasingly aware that there are dangerous secrets hidden within the family domain. The garden itself starts to exercise a powerful influence over his imagination, its iconography seeming to point to some deeper, darker truth than was first apparent. And what really lay behind a killing at the villa towards the end of the war? Past and present, love and intrigue, intertwine in an evocative mystery which vividly captures the experience of an innocent abroad in the uncertain world of post-War Italy.

The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd (10 copies)

Lily has grown up believing she accidentally killed her mother when she was four. 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. Living on a peach farm in South Carolina with her father, she has only one friend: Rosaleen, a black servant whose sharp exterior hides a tender heart. South Carolina in the sixties is a place where segregation is still considered a cause worth fighting for. When racial tension explodes one summer afternoon, and Rosaleen is arrested and beaten, Lily is compelled to act. Fugitives from justice and from Lily's harsh and unyielding father, they follow a trail left by the woman who died ten years before. Finding sanctuary in the home of three beekeeping sisters, Lily starts a journey as much about her understanding of the world, as about the mystery surrounding her mother.

The Secret River by Kate Grenville (9 copies)

After a childhood of 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 Sal and children in tow, he arrives in a harsh land that feels at first like a death sentence. But among the convicts there is a whisper that freedom can be bought, an opportunity to start afresh.

The Secret Scripture by Sebastian Barry (12 copies)

Nearing her 100th birthday, Roseanne faces an uncertain future, as the mental hospital where she's spent the best part of her adult life prepares for closure. Over the weeks leading up to this upheaval, she talks often with her psychiatrist Dr Grene. This relationship intensifies as he mourns the death of his wife.

Sepulchre by Kate Mosse (13 copies)

Researching a biography of the composer Claude Debussy, Meredith Martin also seeks the key to her own complex legacy. Armed with a piece of piano music and a photograph, she soon becomes immersed in the story of a tragic love, a missing girl, an unquiet soul, and the events of one cataclysmic night more than a century ago.

The Shack by William P. Young (15 copies)

Mackenzie's daughter, Missy has been abducted during a family vacation and evidence that she has been murdered is found in an abandoned shack deep in the Oregon wilderness. Four years later Mack receives a note, apparently from God, inviting him back to the shack.

Shadow and Bone by Leigh Bardugo (10 copies) NEW

The Shadow Fold, a swathe of impenetrable darkness, crawling with monsters that feast on human flesh, is slowly destroying the once-great nation of Ravka. Alina, a pale, lonely orphan, discovers a unique power that thrusts her into the lavish world of the kingdom's magical elite - the Grisha. Could she be the key to unravelling the dark fabric of the Shadow Fold and setting Ravka free?

The Shipping News by E Annie Proulx (12 copies at Ryde) (eBook available)

Annie Proulx's highly acclaimed, international bestseller and Pulitzer Prize-winning novel. Quoye is a hapless, hopeless hack journalist living and working in New York. When his no-good wife is killed in a spectacular road accident, Quoye heads for the land of his forefathers - the remotest corner of far-flung Newfoundland. With 'the aunt' and his delinquent daughters -- Bunny and Sunshine -- in tow, Quoye finds himself part of an unfolding, exhilarating Atlantic drama. 'The Shipping News' is an irresistible comedy of human life and possibility.

The Shock of the Fall by Nathan Filer (11 copies)

'The Shock of the Fall' is an extraordinary portrait of one man's journey through the spinning vortex that is mental illness. It is a brave and groundbreaking novel from one of the most exciting new voices in fiction

A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian by Marina Lewycka (10 copies)

For years, Nadezhda and Vera, two Ukrainian sisters, raised in England by their refugee parents, have had as little as possible to do with each other - and they have their reasons. But now they find they'd better learn how to get along, because since their mother's death their aging father has been sliding into his second childhood, and an alarming new woman has just entered his life

Sister by Rosamund Lupton (5 copies) (Audio Download available)

When Beatrice receives a call to say that her sister, Tess, is missing, she boards the first flight home. But as she learns about Tess's disappearance, she is stunned to discover how little she actually knows of her sister's life. Everyone around her accepts they have lost Tess, but Beatrice refuses to give up, embarking on a dangerous journey to discover the shocking truth, whatever the cost...

The Sisters Brothers by Patrick DeWitt (13 copies) (Audio Download available)

Hermann Kermit Warm is going to die. Across 1000 miles of Oregon desert his assassins, the notorious Eli and Charles Sisters, ride - fighting, shooting, and drinking their way to Sacramento. But their prey isn't an easy mark, the road is long and bloody, and somewhere along the path Eli begins to question what he does for a living - and whom he does it for. The Sisters Brothers pays homage to the classic Western, transforming it into an unforgettable ribald tour de force. Filled with a remarkable cast of losers, cheaters, and ne'er-do-wells from all stripes of life-and told by a complex and compelling narrator, it is a violent, lustful odyssey through the underworld of the 1850s frontier that beautifully captures the humor, melancholy, and grit of the Old West and two brothers bound by blood, violence, and love.

Snapper by Brian Kimberling (10 copies)

Set in rural Indiana, 'Snapper' is a book about birdwatching, a woman who won't stay true, and a pick-up truck that won't start. Here turtles eat alligators for breakfast, Klansmen skulk in the undergrowth, and truckers drop into the diner of a town named Santa Claus to ensure that no child's Christmas letter goes unanswered, while Nathan grapples with the eternal question: should I stay, or should I go?

So many ways to begin by Jon McGregor (4 copies)

David Carter cannot help but wish for more: that his wife Eleanor would be the sparkling girl he once found so irresistible; that his job as a museum curator could live up to the promise it once held; that his daughter's arrival could have brought him closer to Eleanor. But a few careless words spoken by his mother's friend have left David restless with the knowledge that his whole life has been constructed around a lie.

Someone Like You by Roald Dahl (15 copies) NEW

Vendettas and desperate quests, bitter memories and sordid fantasies thwarted - here are 18 reasons why Roald Dahl is the master of the short story

Songs of the Humpback Whale by Jodi Picoult (11 copies) (Audio Download available)

Jane had always lived in somebody's shadow. Escaping a childhood of abuse by marrying oceanographer Oliver Jones, she finds herself taking second place to his increasingly successful career. However, when her daughter Rebecca is similarly treated, Jane's dramatic stand takes them all by surprise. Jane and Rebecca set out to drive across America to the sanctuary of the New England apple orchard where Jane's brother Joley works. Oliver, used to tracking male humpback whales across vast oceans, now has the task of tracking his wife across a continent. To do so he must learn to see the world - and even himself - through her eyes...

The Sorrow of Sisters by Wendy K Harris (7 copies)

Forty-nine year old Jane sits in her glass-walled designer home tapping out lucrative novels. She has accepted her childlessness, adores her comfortable husband, Chas and copes with her irascible father, Henry. But she is feeling dulled by the weight of her own repetitive fiction. Then Aunt Lillian dies and leaves her Wraith Cottage on the Isle of Wight. Jane has never heard of Lillian and Henry refuses to enlighten her. But Jane's curiosity has been aroused and she decides to investigate. Her inheritance reveals a story more extraordinary than she could have imagined.

A Spool of Blue Thread by Anne Tyler (12 copies at Ryde)

'It was a beautiful, breezy, yellow-and-green afternoon...' This is the way Abby Whitshank always begins the story of how she and Red fell in love that day in July 1959. The whole family sits on the porch, relaxed, half-listening as their mother tells the same tale they have heard so many times before. And yet this gathering is different. Abby and Red are getting older, and decisions must be made about how best to look after them and their beloved family home. They've all come - even Denny, who can usually be relied on only to please himself. From that porch the story spools back through three generations of the Whitshanks, and their secrets and unguarded moments that have come to define who and what they are...

A Spot of Bother by Mark Haddon (10 copies at Ryde)

At 57, George is settling down to retirement. Then his daughter announces she is getting remarried, to Ray. Her family is not pleased, and her mother is a bit put out by all the wedding planning, which gets in the way of her love affair with her husband's former colleague. Unnoticed in the uproar, George begins to lose his mind.

Starting Over by Tony Parsons (12 copies)

After suffering a heart attack at the age of 42, George is given the heart of a 19 -year-old. Soon he is acting like a teenager, is a friend - instead of a jailer - to his children, and wants to change the world - just as soon as he shakes off his hangover. But he slowly realises that being young again is not all it is cracked up to be.

The Steep Approach to Garbadale by Iain Banks (6 copies)

Dark family secrets and a long-lost love affair lie at the heart of Iain Banks's novel. The Wopuld family built its fortune on a board game called Empire! - now a hugely successful computer game. So successful, the American Spraint Corp wants to buy the firm out. Young renegade Alban, who has been evading the family clutches for years, is run to ground and persuaded to attend the forthcoming family gathering - part birthday party, part Extraordinary General Meeting - convened by Win, Wopuld matriarch and most powerful member of the board, at Garbadale, the family's highland castle. Being drawn back into the bosom of the clan brings a disconcerting confrontation with Alban's past.

Still Alice by Alice Genova (12 copies at Ryde)

Alice Howland is proud of the life she worked so hard to build. A Harvard professor, she has a successful husband and three grown children. She soon finds herself in the rapidly downward spiral of Alzheimer's Disease. Her short-term memory may be hanging on by a couple of frayed threads, but she is still Alice.

Stoner by John Williams (10 copies)

The son of a Midwestern farmer, William Stoner comes to the University of Missouri in 1910 to study agriculture. Stoner tells of love and conflict, passion and responsibility against the backdrop of academic life in the early 20th century.

Summertime Death by Mons Kallentoft (9 Copies)

As the temperature in Sweden reaches a record-breaking 45, forest fires break out. All those who have failed to escape Linköping take shelter indoors, shocked and paralysed by the heat. However, when a teenage girl is discovered naked and bleeding in the local park, it is clear that the raging heat is not the only plague in town.

The Suspicions of Mr Whicher, Or The Murder at Road Hill House by Kate Summerscale (13 copies)

In the village of Road in Wiltshire during the summer of 1860, a family awakes to discover that a gruesome murder has taken place in their home. The guilty party is surely still among them. Jack Whicher of Scotland Yard, the most celebrated detective of his day, has the unenviable task of conducting the investigation.

Tales of the city by Armistead Maupin (10 copies)

A young secretary forsakes Cleveland for San Francisco, tumbling headlong into a brave new world of laundromat Lotharios, cut throat debutantes, and Jockey Shorts dance contests. The saga that ensues is manic, romantic, and outrageous.

The Tenderness of Wolves by Stef Penney (13 copies) (eBook available)

As winter tightens its grip on the isolated settlement of Dove River, a woman steers herself for the journey of a lifetime. A man has been brutally murdered and her 17 year old son has disappeared. To clear her son's name, she has no choice but to follow the tracks leaving the dead man's cabin.

Then we came to the end by Joshua Ferris (11 copies)

'Then We Came to the End' is about how we spend our days and too many of our nights. It is about being away from friends and family, about sharing a stretch of stained carpet with a group of strangers we call colleagues. The novel is the story of your life, the story of our times

This is How it Ends by Kathleen Macmahon (9 copies)

Bruno, an American, has come to Ireland to search for his roots. Addie, an out-of-work architect, is recovering from heartbreak while taking care of her infirm father. When their worlds collide, they experience a connection unlike any they've previously felt, but soon their newfound love will be tested.

A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini (11 copies)

'A Thousand Splendid Suns' is a chronicle of Afghan history, and a deeply moving story of family, friendship, and the salvation to be found in love.

The Tiger's Wife by Tea Obreht (7 copies)

Remembering stories her grandfather told her, Natalia becomes convinced he spent his last days searching for 'the deathless man', a vagabond who claimed to be immortal. As she struggles to understand why her grandfather would go on such a farfetched journey, she stumbles across a clue that leads her to the story of the tiger's wife.

The Time Machine by HG Wells (10 copies) NEW

In 'The Time Machine', Wells' time traveller journeys to 802701 AD, where humanity has evolved and divided into the effete Eloi and the brutal Morlocks. This science fiction classic raises profound questions about progress and social order.

Today everything changes by Andy McNab (7 copies) quick reads NEW

Abandoned as a baby, Andy McNab's start in life was tough. Growing up in South London with foster parents, and surrounded by poverty, he attended seven schools in as many years, disillusioned and in remedial classes. It wasn't long before his life descended into petty crime. By the age of 16, he was in juvenile detention. Recruited into the Army from there, it soon became apparent that he had the reading age of an 11-year-old. The next six months in the Army education system changed the course of his life forever. 'Today Everything Changes' tells the inspiring story of when life changed for Andy McNab.

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee (12 copies)

'Shoot all the Bluejays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember it's a sin to kill a Mockingbird.' Lawyer Atticus Finch gives this advice to his children as he defends the real mockingbird of Harper Lee's classic novel - a black man charged with the rape of a white girl. Through the young eyes of Scout and Jem Finch, Harper Lee explores with exuberant humour the irrationality of adult attitudes to race and class in the Deep South of the 1930s. The conscience of a town steeped in prejudice, violence and hypocrisy is pricked by the stamina of one man's struggle for justice.

Touching the Void by Joe Simpson (9 copies)

"Touching the Void" is the heart-stopping account of Joe Simpson's terrifying adventure in the Peruvian Andes. He and his climbing partner, Simon, reached the summit of the remote Siula Grande in June 1995. A few days later, Simon staggered into Base Camp, exhausted and frost-bitten, with news that that Joe was dead. What happened to Joe, and how the pair dealt with the psychological traumas that resulted when Simon was forced into the appalling decision to cut the rope, makes not only an epic of survival but a compelling testament of friendship.

Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson (11 copies) NEW

When Jim Hawkins discovers a dead man's map it's not long before he's off to sea in search of distant treasure. But it seems trouble boarded the ship with him, in the shape of the ship's cook, Long John Silver, who is leading a mutinous band of pirates who want the treasure for themselves and will do anything to get it.

True Grit by Charles Portis (13 copies at Ryde)

When Frank Ross is killed by one of his own workers, his daughter Mattie travels to claim his body, and finds that the authorities are doing nothing to find his killer. Then she hears of Rooster, and convinces him to join her in a quest into dark, dangerous Indian territory to avenge her father's murder.

Two Caravans by Marina Lewycka (13 copies)

In a Kent field, and around their caravans, a group of strawberry pickers celebrate a birthday. But what lies behind the buy-one-get-one-free offers at the supermarket and who picks the strawberries? The Ukrainians, the Poles, the Chinese? And although he can't pick strawberries, there's also the dog!

Under the Dome by Stephen King (10 Copies)

It's a bright autumn morning in the small town of Chester's Mill. Claudette Sanders is having a flying lesson and Dale Barbara is hitching a ride out of town. Neither make it to their intended destinations, for an invisible barrier has descended over the town.

Uninvited Guests by Sadie Jones (8 copies) NEW

One evening in 1912, in the kitchens at Sterne, preparations begin for a supper party in honour of Emerald Torrington's 20th birthday. But only a few miles away, an accident propels a crowd of mysterious and not altogether savoury survivors to seek shelter at the ramshackle manor - and the household is thrown into confusion and mischief.

The Unlikely pilgrimage of Harold Fry by Rachel Joyce (28 Copies)

When Harold Fry nips out one morning to post a letter, leaving his wife hoovering upstairs, he has no idea that he is about to walk from one end of the country to the other. He has no hiking boots or map, let alone a compass, waterproof or mobile phone. All he knows is that he must keep walking. To save someone else's life.

The Villa Rouge by Maggie Ross (9 copies) NEW

Morgan Perincall's marriage is already disintegrating when her husband volunteers for service in France. Dazed by his desertion, she sends their children west to safety, and leaves London for the Villa Rouge, by the Thames estuary, to take shelter under her father's roof. Caught between the open hostility of her father's housekeeper and the suffocating affection of her crippled younger brother, Morgan is relieved to find her days brightened by the arrival of an R.A.F. squadron - a chance to relive the romances of her wilder youth. But the fall of Dunkirk puts a dampener on the pilots' social calendar, and before long they are fighting for their lives in earnest. With war drawing ever closer and the secrets of her past looming large, Morgan discovers that sometimes the whitest lies can leave the darkest legacies.

A Virtual love by Andrew Blackman (10 Copies)

For Jeff Brennan, juggling multiple identities is a way of life. Online he has dozens of different personalities and switches easily between them. Offline, he shows different faces to different people: the caring grandson, the angry eco-protester, the bored IT consultant.

The Visible World By Mark Slouka (12 copies)

'My mother knew a man during the war. Theirs was a love story, and like any good love story, it left blood on the floor and wreckage in its wake'. As a boy growing up in New York, his parents' memories of their Czech homeland seem to belong to another world, as distant and unreal as the fairy tales his father tells him. It is only as an adult, when he makes his own journey to Prague, that he is finally able to piece together the truth of his parents' past: what they did, who his mother loved, and why they were never able to forget.

The Visitors by Sally Beauman (8 copies) NEW

Sent abroad to Egypt in 1922 to recover from the typhoid that killed her mother, 11-year-old Lucy is caught up in the intrigue and excitement that surrounds the obsessive hunt for Tutankhamun's tomb. As she struggles to comprehend an adult world in which those closest to her are often cold and unpredictable, Lucy longs for a friend she can love.

The War of the Worlds by H.G. Wells (12 copies) NEW

'The War of the Worlds' is Wells' classic science fiction tale of a Martian invasion of Earth. Having already destroyed London, it seems that no-one can stop the intellectually superior Martians from taking over the whole planet.

The Welsh Girl by Peter Ho Davies (12 copies) (Audio Download available)

In 1944, a German Jewish refugee is sent to Wales to interview Rudolf Hess; in Snowdonia, a seventeen-year-old girl, the daughter of a fiercely nationalistic shepherd, dreams of the bright lights of an English city; and in a nearby POW camp, a German soldier struggles to reconcile his surrender with his sense of honour. As their lives intersect, all three will come to question where they belong and where their loyalties lie.

We are all Made of Glue by Marina Lewycka (8 copies)

Georgie Sinclair's life is coming unstuck. Her husband's left her. Her son's obsessed with the End of the World. And now her elderly neighbour Mrs Shapiro has decided they are related. Or so the hospital informs her when Mrs Shapiro has an accident and names Georgie next of kin. This, however, is not a case of a quick ward visit: Mrs Shapiro has a large rickety house full of stinky cats that needs looking after and that a pair of estate agents seem intent on swindling from her. Plus there are the 'Uselesses' trying to repair it (uselessly). Then there's social worker who wants to put her in a nursing home. Not to mention some letters that point to a mysterious, painful past. As Georgie tries her best to put Mrs Shapiro's life back together somehow she much stop her own from falling apart...

We Need to Talk About Kevin by Lionel Shriver (8 copies)

Two years ago, Eva Khatchadourian's son, Kevin, murdered seven of his fellow high-school students, a cafeteria worker, and a popular algebra teacher. Because he was only fifteen at the time of the killings, he received a lenient sentence and is now in a prison for young offenders in upstate New York. Telling the story of Kevin's upbringing, Eva addresses herself to her estranged husband through a series of letters. Fearing that her own shortcomings may have shaped what her son has become, she confesses to a deep, long-standing ambivalence about both motherhood in general, and Kevin in particular. How much is her fault? Lionel Shriver tells a compelling, absorbing, and resonant story while framing these horrifying tableaux of teenage carnage as metaphors for the larger tragedy - the tragedy of a country where everything works, nobody starves, and anything can be bought but a sense of purpose.

Whatever it takes by Adele Parks (13 copies) (Audio Download available)

Adele Parks' emotionally powerful new novel asks the question: are there limits as to what you'd do for love? Eloise Hamilton is a Londoner born and bred, so it is a momentous day when she agrees to uproot to Dartmouth, leaving behind her perfect world so her husband can finally live in his. Then, when the family is thrust into unexpected turmoil, Eloise finds she is the one holding everything together - and by an ever-weakening thread. As her world implodes with the strain of being responsible for all around her, someone is bound to be overlooked. And the damage might be irreparable...

The White Queen by Philippa Gregory (8 copies)

A woman who won the love of a king and ascended to royalty by virtue of her beauty, Elizabeth Woodville fought tenaciously for the success of her family -- her daughter who would one day unite the warring dynasties, and her two sons whose eventual fate has confounded historians for centuries: the Princes in the Tower.

White Teeth by Zadie Smith (9 copies at Ryde)

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.

The Whole Day Through by Patrick Gale (8 copies)

When forty-something Laura Lewis is obliged to abandon a life of stylish independence in Paris to care for her elderly mother in Winchester, it seems all romantic opportunities have gone up in smoke. Then she runs into Ben, the great love of her student days - and, as she only now dares admit, the emotional touchstone against which she has judged every man since. She's cautious - and he's married - but they can't deny that feelings still exist between them. Are they brave enough to take the second chance at the lasting happiness that fate has offered them? Or will they be defeated by the need to do what seems to be the right thing? good.

Wild by Cheryl Strayed (15 copies at Ryde)

At 26, Cheryl Strayed thought she had lost everything. In the wake of her mother's death, her family disbanded and her marriage crumbled. With nothing to lose, she made the most impulsive decision of her life: to walk 1,100 miles of the west coast of America - from the Mojave Desert, through California and Oregon, and into Washington State - and to do it alone. She had no experience of long-distance hiking and the journey was nothing more than a line on a map. But it held a promise - a promise of piecing together a life that lay in ruins at her feet.

Wolf Hall by Hilary Mantel (9 copies) (Audio Download available)

England, the 1520s. Henry VIII is on the throne, but has no heir. Cardinal Wolsey is his chief advisor, charged with securing the divorce the pope refuses to grant. Into this atmosphere of distrust and need comes Thomas Cromwell, first as Wolsey's clerk, and later his successor.

Cromwell is a wholly original man: the son of a brutal blacksmith, a political genius, a briber, a charmer, a bully, a man with a delicate and deadly expertise in manipulating people and events. Ruthless in pursuit of his own interests, he is as ambitious in his wider politics as he is for himself. His reforming agenda is carried out in the grip of a self-interested parliament and a king who fluctuates between romantic passions and murderous rages.

The Woman in the Fifth by Douglas Kennedy (10 copies)

When Harry Ricks arrives in Paris on a bleak January morning he is a broken man. He is running away from a failed marriage and a dark scandal that ruined his career as a film lecturer in a small American university. With no money and nowhere to live, Harry swiftly falls in with the city's underclass, barely scraping a living.

The Woman in White by Wilkie Collins (5 copies) (eBook available)

Marian and her sister Laura live a quiet life under their uncle's guardianship until Laura's marriage to Sir Percival Glyde. Sir Percival is a man of many secrets - is one of them connected to the strange appearances of a young woman dressed all in white? And what does his charismatic friend, Count Fosco, with his pet white mice running in and out of his brightly coloured waistcoat, have to do with it all? Marian and the girls' drawing master, Walter, have to turn detective in order to work out what is going on, and to protect Laura from a fatal plot...

The Yonahlossee Riding Camp for Girls by Anton Disclafani (10 copies)

Thea Atwell is 15-years-old in 1930, when, following a scandal for which she has been held responsible, she is exiled from her wealthy Florida family to a debutante boarding school. As Thea grapples with the truth about her role in the tragic events of 1929, she finds herself enmeshed in the world of the Yonahlossee Riding Camp.