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MYSTERY BOOK CLUB READING LIST

2024-2025 CALENDAR

The group meets on the last Friday of the month at 10:30 AM - except in November when the date is adjusted for convenience. Club meeting locations may vary. So, stay up to date by subscribing to our email list:

<http://www.mysterybookfan.com/subscribe/>

Meet Day	Book Title	Author	Type
Sep 27, 2024	The House at Sea's End	Elly Griffiths	UK-Forensic Archeologist
Oct 25	Devil's Corner	Lisa Scottoline	US-Legal Thriller
Nov 22	Night Moves	Jonathan Kellerman	US-Forensic Psychologist
Dec 27	The Thursday Murder Club	Richard Osman	UK-Traditional Cozy- Amateur Lead
Jan 31, 2025	Poison	John Lescroart	US-Legal thriller
Feb 28	The Blood Promise	Mark Pryor	France- Traditional; Security Chief at US Embassy
Mar 28	The Law of Innocence	Michael Connelly	US-Legal thriller
Apr 25	The Lost Man	Jane Harper	Australia-Domestic Thriller
May 30	The Last Alibi	David Ellis	US-Legal thriller
Jun 27	The Spy Coast	Tess Gerritsen	US- Spy or Action thriller; Mystery-thriller.
Jul 25	Death in Brittany	Jean-Luc Bannalec	France-Traditional; Police procedural
Aug 29	A Calamity of Souls	David Baldacci	US-Historical 1968; Legal Drama

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MYSTERY BOOK CLUB 2024-2025 READING CALENDAR
WITH MORE DETAILS AND BLURBS

Sep 27, 2024:
The House at Sea's End
 by Elly Griffiths (2012)

Series: #3 of 14

PLACE – TYPE:
 UK, Norfolk,
 England coast –
 Forensic
 Archeologist

Forensic archaeologist Ruth Galloway is just back from maternity leave, and finding it difficult to balance her need for intellectually challenging work and her desire to be with baby daughter Kate. The presence of DCI Harry Nelson—the married father of her daughter, Kate—does not help.

Ruth’s first assignment back on the job is to help identify some human bones found on a remote Norfolk beach at Broughton Sea’s End, near an old house that is threatened by erosion. Sea’s End House is owned by Jack Hastings, Member of the European Parliament, whose father was the captain of the Home Guard.

Ruth determines that the skeletons of six men, buried with their hands tied behind them, are about 50-70 years old, probably from the war years when the Home Guard was protecting this stretch of the Norfolk coast from German invasion. Ruth and DCI Harry Nelson talk to the few remaining Home Guard veterans, who were just barely old enough to be part of the Home Guard 70 years earlier. When one of the old men is killed immediately after telling Nelson there are some things he can’t discuss because he took a blood oath, Nelson suspects that someone is willing to kill to protect a 70-year-old secret. Who else is at risk?

Oct 25, 2024:
Devil's Corner
 by Lisa Scottoline (2005)

Non-Series Book

PLACE – TYPE:
 US, Philadelphia
 – Legal Thriller

“Vicki Allegretti always wondered what it would feel like to look into the barrel of a loaded gun, and now she knew.” So begins an action-packed tale of murder and conspiracy set on the gritty streets of Philadelphia.

This is a stand-alone thriller featuring a gutsy new heroine, Vicki Allegretti.

When prosecutor Vicki Allegretti arrives at a rowhouse to meet a confidential informant, she finds herself in the wrong place at the wrong time—and is almost shot to death. She barely escapes with her life, but cannot save the two others gunned down before her disbelieving eyes. Stunned and heartbroken, Vicki tries to figure out how a routine meeting on a minor case became a double homicide. Then she sets out to see justice done. She can identify the killers—now all she has to do is find them. Vicki’s suspicions take her to Devil’s Corner, a city neighborhood teetering on the brink of ruin—thick with broken souls, innocent youth, and a scourge that preys on both. But the deeper Vicki probes, the more she becomes convinced that the murders weren’t random and the killers were more ruthless than she thought. Agreeing with her is her office crush, golden boy

	<p>Dan Malloy—who is unfortunately too married to give Vicki the kind of support a girl really needs.</p> <p>When another murder thrusts Vicki together with an unlikely ally, she buckles up for a wild ride down a dangerous street—and into the cross-hairs of a conspiracy as powerful as it is relentless. Set against the pulsing, real backdrop of a modern American city, with a storyline driven by the strong female characters and breakneck pace that has become her trademark, Devil’s Corner is Lisa's most satisfying novel yet.</p>
<p>Nov 22, 2024: Night Moves by Jonathan Kellerman (2018)</p> <p>Series: #33 of 39</p> <p>PLACE – TYPE: US, Los Angeles –Forensic Psychologist</p>	<p>Even with all his years of experience, LAPD homicide detective Milo Sturgis knows there are crimes his skill and savvy cannot solve alone. That's when he calls on brilliant psychologist Alex Delaware to read between the lines, where the darkest motives lurk. And if ever the good doctor's insight is needed, it's at the scene of a murder as baffling as it is brutal.</p> <p>There's no spilled blood, no evidence of a struggle, and, thanks to the victim's missing face and hands, no immediate means of identification. And no telling why the disfigured corpse of a stranger has appeared in an upscale L.A. family's home. Chet Corvin, his wife, and their two teenage children are certain the John Doe is unknown to them. Despite that, their cooperation seems guarded. And that's more than Milo and Alex can elicit from the Corvins' creepy next-door neighbor -- a notorious cartoonist with a warped sense of humor and a seriously antisocial attitude.</p> <p>As the investigation ensues, it becomes clear that this well-to-do suburban enclave has its share of curious eyes, suspicious minds, and loose lips. And as Milo tightens the screws on potential persons of interest -- and Alex tries to breach the barriers that guard their deepest secrets -- a strangling web of corrupted love, cold-blooded greed, and shattered trust is exposed. Though the grass may be greener on these privileged streets, there's enough dirt below the surface to bury a multitude of sins. Including the deadliest.</p>
<p>Dec 27, 2024: The Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman (2020)</p> <p>Series: #1 of 4</p> <p>PLACE – TYPE:</p>	<p>The Thursday Murder Club takes place in Coopers Chase Retirement Village, an upscale retirement community in Kent, England, built ten years earlier on the land surrounding the old convent of the Sisters of the Holy Church.</p> <p>The Thursday Murder Club meets weekly in the Jigsaw Room to investigate cold cases. Elizabeth, who doesn't talk about her former top-secret job, formed the club with Penny Gray, a former inspector with the Kent Police, who provided files of unsolved cases. Ibrahim Arif, a psychiatrist, and Ron Ritchie, former trade union leader and rabble rouser, joined the weekly meetings that hosted experts of all</p>

<p>UK, Kent, England – Traditional Cozy with Amateur Lead</p>	<p>kinds to help them analyze the cold cases. After Penny’s health necessitated a move to the attached nursing home, Elizabeth asked Joyce, a former nurse, some questions about how long it would take to die from stab wounds. Pleased with her response, Joyce was invited to the next meeting, along with Police Constable Donna De Freitas, there to present “Practical Tips for Home Security,” which the murder aficionados have no interest in, instead peppering her with questions about her job.</p> <p>The following day Coopers Chase owner Ian Venthan, hosts a community meeting to talk about the expanded development he is planning, which will require removal of trees and relocating the convent graveyard, not a popular idea with the residents or Father Matthew Mackie. After the meeting Ian severs his relationship with his builder Tony Curran, a former drug boss, who immediately plans to kill Ian. Instead, Curran is bludgeoned to death in his own kitchen, giving the Thursday Murder Club their first real-life case to investigate.</p> <p>Detective Chief Inspector Chris Hudson brushes off the septuagenarian sleuths, but Donna is eager for her first murder investigation, and goes along when they manage to get her added to his team. This clever and funny debut mystery is a finalist for the 2021 Barry, Edgar, Lefty, and Thriller Awards.</p>
<p>Jan 31, 2025: Poison by John Lescroart (2018)</p> <p>Series: #19 of 21</p> <p>PLACE – TYPE: US, San Francisco – Legal thriller</p>	<p>San Francisco attorney Dismas Hardy is looking forward to easing into retirement and reconnecting with his family after recovering from two glancing gunshot wounds courtesy of a recent client. But this plan is cut short when, against his wife’s wishes, he is pulled back into the courtroom by the murder of Grant Wagner, the wealthy owner of a successful family business.</p> <p>The prime suspect is Wagner’s bookkeeper, Abby Jarvis, a former client of Hardy’s who had been receiving large sums of cash under-the-table from the company—but she insists that she’s innocent and Dismas wants to believe her.</p> <p>As he prepares for trial, Dismas probes deeply into the Wagner clan’s history, discovering dark secrets, jealous siblings, gold-digging girlfriends, startling betrayals, and menacing blackmailers. Suspense builds as the trial date looms, and the closer Dismas gets to the Wagners, the clearer it becomes that he has a large target painted on his back.</p> <p><i>Poison</i> is a nail-biter that will keep you guessing until the very last page.</p>

<p>Feb 28, 2025: <i>The Blood Promise</i> by Mark Pryor (2014)</p> <p>Series: #3 of 9</p> <p>PLACE – TYPE: <i>France, Paris – Traditional; Security Chief at US Embassy</i></p>	<p>In post-Revolution Paris, an old man signs a letter in blood, then hides it in a secret compartment in a sailor's chest. A messenger arrives to transport the chest and its hidden contents, but then the plague strikes and an untimely death changes history.</p> <p>Two hundred years later, Security Chief Hugo Marston is safeguarding an unpredictable but popular senator who is in Paris negotiating a France/U.S. dispute. The talks, held at a country chateau, collapse when the senator accuses someone of breaking into his room.</p> <p>Theft becomes the least of Hugo's concerns when someone discovers the sailor's chest and the secrets hidden within, and decides that the power and money they promise are worth killing for. But when the darkness of history is unleashed, even the most ruthless and cunning are powerless to control it.</p>
<p>Mar 28, 2025: <i>The Law of Innocence</i> by Michael Connelly (2020)</p> <p>Series: #6 of 7</p> <p>PLACE – TYPE: <i>US, Los Angeles – Legal thriller</i></p>	<p>Defense attorney Mickey Haller is pulled over by police, who find the body of a client in the trunk of his Lincoln. Haller is charged with murder and can't make the exorbitant \$5 million bail slapped on him by a vindictive judge.</p> <p>Mickey elects to defend himself and must strategize and build his defense from his jail cell in the Twin Towers Correctional Center in downtown Los Angeles, all the while looking over his shoulder—as an officer of the court he is an instant target.</p> <p>Mickey knows he's been framed. Now, with the help of his trusted team, including his half-brother Harry Bosch, he has to figure out who has plotted to destroy his life and why. Then he has to go before a judge and jury and prove his innocence.</p>
<p>Apr 25, 2025: <i>The Lost Man</i> by Jane Harper (2018)</p> <p>Non-Series Book</p> <p>PLACE – TYPE: <i>Australia, Queensland, Outback – Domestic Thriller</i></p>	<p>The body of Cameron Bright is discovered at an old stockman's grave in the middle of the family's remote cattle property in Queensland, Australia. Eldest brother Nathan and youngest brother Bub are shocked by the death, and no one can understand why Cameron left his Land Cruiser eight kilometers away to walk to certain death from exposure in the brutal December heat. The Land Cruiser is fully operable, so Cameron's death is assumed to be suicide, though Nathan can't believe his brother would choose this awful death over a quick shot to the head from one of the many ranch weapons. Cameron had been running the family ranch since their father's death with the help of Bub and Uncle Harry, a non-relative who has worked on the ranch since the three brothers were small.</p> <p>Also living in the family home are their widowed mother, Cameron's wife and two small daughters, and a young couple working as nanny and seasonal ranch hand. Nathan lives a three-hour drive away on a much smaller adjacent ranch, a wedding gift from his father-in-law. Nathan's teenage son Xander is visiting for the holidays, a reluctant</p>

	<p>concession from his angry ex-wife. As the days pass, Nathan begins to suspect that someone had a hand in Cameron’s death, but no one is happy with his questions, which bring long buried secrets and resentments to the surface. Suspects are few in the isolated outback area, and Nathan has misgivings about everyone on the family ranch.</p>
<p>May 30, 2025: <i>The Last Alibi</i> by David Ellis (2013)</p> <p>Series: #4 of 4</p> <p>PLACE – TYPE: US, Chicago – Legal thriller</p>	<p>Jason Kolarich's newest client, James Drinker, is a bit of an oddball. A funny-looking, geeky loner, he walks into Jason’s office one day with a preemptive concern: two women have recently been murdered, seemingly by the same killer, and Drinker thinks he will be the police’s main suspect. One woman was his ex-girlfriend, he says, and the other was a friend. He’s the only link between the victims and he has no alibi for the night of either murder—surely the police will realize it soon. Believing he’s the target of a frame-up, Drinker hires Kolarich for his defense.</p> <p>Something about James Drinker seems off from the start, but Kolarich doesn’t give it too much thought. Until another murder occurs. And then another.</p> <p>Unable to stop a serial killer—and prove his own innocence—without breaking his sworn attorney-client privilege, Jason Kolarich must hunt for the truth about James Drinker, the series of brutal murders, and why he’s been set up to take the fall. The answers will be beyond anything he could have imagined.</p>
<p>Jun 27, 2025: <i>The Spy Coast</i> by Tess Gerritsen (2023)</p> <p>Series: #1 of 2</p> <p>PLACE – TYPE: US, Maine, Mid-Coast – Spy or Action thriller; Mystery-thriller.</p>	<p>Former spy Maggie Bird came to the seaside village of Purity, Maine, eager to put the past behind her after a mission went tragically wrong. These days, she’s living quietly on her chicken farm, still wary of blowback from the events that forced her early retirement.</p> <p>But when a body turns up in Maggie’s driveway, she knows it’s a message from former foes who haven’t forgotten her. Maggie turns to her local circle of old friends—all retirees from the CIA—to help uncover the truth about who is trying to kill her, and why. This “Martini Club” of former spies may be retired, but they still have a few useful skills that they’re eager to use again, if only to spice up their rather sedate new lives.</p> <p>Complicating their efforts is Purity’s acting police chief, Jo Thibodeau. More accustomed to dealing with rowdy tourists than homicide, Jo is puzzled by Maggie’s reluctance to share information—and by her odd circle of friends, who seem to be a step ahead of her at every turn.</p> <p>As Jo’s investigation collides with the Martini Club’s maneuvers, Maggie’s hunt for answers will force her to revisit a clandestine career that spanned the globe, from Bangkok to Istanbul, from London to Malta. The ghosts of her past have returned, but with the help of her</p>

	<p>friends—and the reluctant Jo Thibodeau—Maggie might just be able to save the life she’s built.</p>
<p>Jul 25, 2025: <i>Death in Brittany</i> by Jean-Luc Bannalec (2015)</p> <p>Series: #1 of 8</p> <p>PLACE – TYPE: <i>France, Brittany – Traditional; Police procedural</i></p>	<p>Georges Dupin, a former Paris detective, has been exiled to Pont-Aven, the idyllic seaside village in Brittany, France. Dupin has mostly adjusted to his exile, especially now that he has located all the places to get good coffee, and has vowed to control the out-spoken tendencies that caused his reassignment to the remote Breton coast.</p> <p>Tourist season has begun when the body of Pierre-Louis Pennec, the 91-year-old owner of the legendary Central Hotel, is found stabbed to death in the bar of his hotel. Dupin is pressured to bring the case to a quick conclusion before the tourists are frightened away, but Dupin moves at his own pace, with frequent breaks to linger over coffee, wine, and good food. The more questions Dupin asks, the more hidden aspects he uncovers about Pennec’s history. The suspect list grows, and as secret after secret is revealed, Dupin realizes that little was actually unknown in the insular village. Dupin is an old-fashioned detective, relying on observation and analysis of the facts to narrow his pool of suspects and identify the killer. This mystery was written by Jörg Bong, a German publisher, critic, editor, and writer and subsequently translated into English.</p>
<p>Aug 29, 2025: <i>A Calamity of Souls</i> by David Baldacci (2024)</p> <p>Non-Series Book</p> <p>PLACE – TYPE: <i>US, Virginia, Historical 1968 – Legal Drama</i></p>	<p>In 1968-southern-Virginia, a racially-charged murder case sets a duo of white and Black lawyers against a deeply unfair system as they work to defend their wrongfully-accused Black defendants.</p> <p>Jack Lee is a white lawyer from Freeman County, Virginia, who has never done anything to push back against racism, until he decides to represent Jerome Washington, a Black man charged with brutally killing an elderly and wealthy white couple. Doubting his decision, Lee fears that his legal skills may not be enough to prevail in a case where the odds are already stacked against both him and his client. And he quickly finds himself out of his depth when he realizes that what is at stake is far greater than the outcome of a murder trial.</p> <p>Desiree DuBose is a Black lawyer from Chicago who has devoted her life to the causes of justice and equality for everyone. She comes to Freeman County and enters a fractious and unwieldy partnership with Lee in a legal battle against the best prosecutor in the Commonwealth. Yet DuBose is also aware of powerful outside forces at work to blunt the victories achieved by the Civil Rights era.</p> <p>Lee and DuBose could not be more dissimilar. But together, the pair fight for a chance for a fair trial and true justice.</p> <p>Over a decade in the writing, <i>A Calamity of Souls</i> breathes richly imagined and detailed life into a bygone era, taking the reader through a world that will seem both foreign and familiar.</p>