

The Reader



25 Years of Literary Leftovers Bookstore

Issue 13

July/August 2026

LETTER FROM THE PROPRIETRESS

3 Anniversaries

Heather Erwin, proprietress



This summer feels like a celebration of milestones. As we publish the second anniversary edition of *The Reader*, we're also celebrating 25 years of Literary Leftovers and 250 years of our beloved country. Three anniversaries, each different in scale, but all rooted in the same enduring idea: what we choose to preserve matters.

For 25 years, Literary Leftovers has been a place where stories find second lives. We love helping our readers discover unexpected treasures, and every book on our shelves reminds us that literature is worth passing from one generation to the next. Two years ago, *The Reader* was born from that same belief. We wanted to create something that celebrated books, highlighted our community, and communicated special events or other information to you.

This year also marks the 250th anniversary of the United States. Whether your family has been here for generations or arrived more recently, we all inherit something remarkable: a nation founded on the bold conviction that liberty, self-government, and human dignity are worth protecting. Like any great story, our history includes triumphs, failures, sacrifices, and hope. Remembering all of it honestly is one of the ways we continue to grow.

Books preserve the wisdom of the past. Communities preserve the best of one another. Nations preserve ideals that inspire future generations. When we care for these things intentionally, we become stewards rather than simply consumers.

Thank you for making Literary Leftovers part of your lives, for welcoming *The Reader* into your homes and businesses, and for continuing to believe that books, community, and shared history still matter.

Here's to the next chapter.

POETRY CORNER

Stuff of Heaven

Carol Hayes

Carol Hayes is a life-long writer and poet. She currently lives in the Pacific Northwest.



Walking through my dream of days,
surrounded by the stuff of heaven;
I marvel at that exquisite moment
where dreams and reality merge.

The wonder of the one
becomes the tangible of the other
like the invisible life
that resides
in the dirt beneath my fingernails.

"A cause for celebration." —Ann Patchett

The Correspondent

VIRGINIA EVANS



BOOKSELLER'S REVIEW

The Correspondent by Virginia Evans

reviewed by
Eily McIlvain, bookseller



"It takes patience to say exactly what one means, to think of the right word."

Sybil Van Antwerp, once the chief clerk to a high-profile judge, is now the witty, frustrating, letter-bound septuagenarian correspondent of this epistolary novel. Sybil writes to everyone, from her neighbor to authors like Joan Didion, and has spent years writing an unsent letter to a mysterious addressee. Her correspondence reveals a grieving woman and the other wounded people whose lives touch hers.

The epistolary novel presents unique challenges for readers and writers—chiefly, I think, that the author has to communicate through what is essentially a form of character dialogue. Maybe because of this, epistolary novels require restraint; while reading *The Correspondent*, some of the narrative gaps between letters, the significance of a few words in a short note, made me catch my breath.

Shelves are currently awash with books eager to explain themselves and tell readers what to think of their characters. *The Correspondent* tells a story, and leaves room for the reader's imagination to take care of the rest. This is the new classic epistolary novel. I foresee a season of criticism in its future as public contrarianism reacts to its increasing popularity, but I think that it will and should continue to become quietly important to many readers.

BOOKSELLER'S COLUMN

Traveling Companions

Eily McIlvain,
bookseller



Remember: words, especially those written, are immortal.

—Virginia Evans, *The Correspondent*

In late June, I bought *The Correspondent* in a bookshop on the corner of a hot, close, old street in Alexandria, VA. I don't buy new books often, if ever, but it was first recommended to me months ago by a trusted book club friend. Slowly following that recommendation, I seemed to hear about it from everyone. Also, I needed a book for the plane.

I was on the East Coast visiting my sister at a work conference, staying in National Harbor, MD and crossing the bridge into Washington D.C. multiple times a day. Alexandria was the last stop before our return flight, and so it ended up that I read *The Correspondent* on the airplane leaving Washington National Airport, realizing only as I began that the book takes place in D.C. and Annapolis, MD.

This little coincidence lent something to my experience of the book. Great books find you at the right time, but they also make the time you read them feel like the right time.

This was a good time for me to read *The Correspondent*. I am getting (a bit) older, and so is this little letter, and so is our country. While we are all pressing forward into the unknown future, we aren't alone on this journey.

I spent that weekend in the capital surrounded by words and artifacts from writers who have meant a lot to me (like Thomas Paine, who actually lived in Philadelphia) thinking about the relative immortality and ongoing tenderness and guidance we can glean from books, and their writers. My reverence for books obviously verges on something clinical, but I believe that books, documents, and words have always been at the heart of community and history for a reason. Words and stories probably can't be everything to us, but without them we would certainly be nothing.

I look forward to selling many copies of *The Correspondent* not because it told me what those reasons are, but because it reminded me of my own reasons for thinking so, at an important time in my life, and a moment in history that has been slightly surreal to witness.

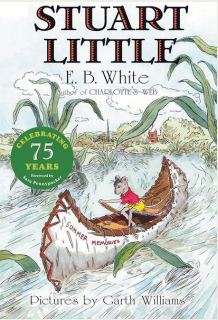


The Little Reader

live in the sunshine. Swim in the sea. Drink the wild air.

Elizabeth Lawrence

THE LUCY CHRONICLES



Stuart Little
by E.B. White

reviewed by Miss Lucy,
as related to, Corrie Albertson,
Children’s Program manager

Lucy is a cat, and she loves all the things a typical cat loves: sleeping, eating, playing, basking in warm patches of sun, tricking people into feeding her a second breakfast, and being adored. But Lucy is not just your typical cat. She’s a bookstore cat, and that means she loves books, especially children’s books. Ever since she discovered that she could transport herself into a story by curling up on a book’s pages, she has become very adventurous. Would you like to go with her? Just keep reading. . .

It was dusk, that time when the sun is going down but there’s still enough light to see, and Lucy found herself sitting on a sidewalk, in front of a house in a friendly-looking neighborhood. She could hear voices on the other side of a bush—she knew it was impolite to eavesdrop, but cats are naturally curious, so she crept closer and peered through the branches to see who was talking. Much to her surprise, it was two cats!

One was all white, and another was an Angora. They were discussing the white cat's roommate situation. It was hard to hear, but from what Lucy could understand, it lived with a mouse! The mouse’s name was Stuart, and he was a member of the family, a human family. Lucy didn’t think that was strange. After all, she felt like her humans were her family, despite their obvious differences. What she did find strange was the fact that a cat and a mouse were living together. Everyone knows cats and mice don’t get along. This cat also had a bird as a houseguest! Cats love birds, but not as houseguests. (I won’t elaborate because I don’t want to prejudice you against cats.)

“However, I sometimes think I’ve got too much self-control for my own good. I’ve been terribly nervous lately, and I think it’s because I’m always holding myself in,” Lucy heard the white cat say. The Angora sympathized, and began to hatch a scheme to come back tomorrow night, crawl into the house while the bird was sleeping and...well...take care of the situation. (Again, I don’t want to prejudice you against cats.)

Lucy felt bad for the white cat’s situation too, but she felt uneasy because eating—I mean, getting rid of—a guest didn’t seem like the right answer, either.

Just then something caught Lucy’s eye. She wasn’t the only one listening in on their conversation. There was a pigeon listening in as well, and for obvious reasons it looked concerned. Lucy was so distracted by the pigeon that she missed hearing the rest of the plan. The cats said their goodbyes and then wandered off.

Lucy turned her attention back to the pigeon and saw that it was writing something. She didn’t know pigeons could write. She wondered if she could write. (Have I mentioned that cats are easily distracted?) Being curious, she called over to the pigeon, “Hey, you. What are you writing?”

The sight of another cat startled the bird. “Wouldn’t you like to know,” replied the pigeon, who then quickly flew off.

She really did want to know, but then she woke up back in the bookstore, without any answer to her question. Do you know what the pigeon was writing, or would you like to know?

If you’ve read *Stuart Little* by E.B. White, please come tell Lucy what happens next.



BOOK INVESTIGATION

Junior Book Club &
the Tale of Two Pippis

by Pearl Angelo Back,
investigative book reporter

At a recent meeting of the junior book club, we discovered that we hadn’t all read the same book. Well, for the most part we did, but we found there were parts that had been changed or removed all together in some of the copies of *Pippi Longstocking*. Most of the changes were subtle and we didn’t really notice at first, but when we began to discuss the ghost in the attic and the pistols given out as party favors, some of the kids had no idea what we were talking about. That chapter didn’t even exist in some of the copies. One of the delights of being a used bookstore is we receive different editions of the same book. Usually it is the cover art or other illustrations that are different, but not in this case.

One of our members decided to go back through the book and document all the changes she could find.

—Miss Corrie

Pippi book 1 is the original and *Pippi* book 2 is the edited one. Here are some differences between Pippi book 1 and Pippi book 2:

Original text		Edited text
Pippi calls her dad the “Cannibal King”	→	Pippi calls her dad South Sea Island King
Ibex	→	Igloo
Fly speck	→	Fly poo
How-do-you-do	→	(omitted)
Caramel candy	→	Candy
Sat on a gate	→	Sat on her horse
Schottische	→	Polka
		The last chapter is missing!



YOUTH POETRY

Untitled

by Dilly R, age 7



Grass and trees
On my knees
All the tasty berries to feast
And I will share them too
Because I am with you

BOOKSTORE REVIEW

Literary Leftovers

by Poppy H.



On 813 W. Main St. #105, you will find a small-town bookshop called Literary Leftovers. The smell of books and excitement are everywhere. A few books they have are *Warriors*, *Narnia*, *Ella Enchanted*, *The Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*, and a WHOLE lot more. There is also a kitty there named Lucy. She’s black and white, is very soft, and loves living in a bookshop.

So, what are you waiting for?!? Come on over to Literary Leftovers and grab a book. Lucy and your adventure are waiting.

Schedule

LEGO CLUB
at 10am Tuesdays & 4pm Thursdays.

STORYTIME WITH CORRIE
with special guests once a month
at 11am Tuesdays, right after Lego Club.

JUNIOR BOOK CLUB
please sign up online
at 3-3:30pm each 3rd Thursday of the month

Upcoming

CHRISTMAS IN JULY SALE
July 21-25

BOOKMANAGER FUNDRAISER!
July 30. 5-6pm

BI-ANNUAL HOMESCHOOL SALE
August 1. 10am-6pm

THE BOTTLED BOOK CLUB
sign up online to receive address
July 9, 6pm, \$5
August 13, 6pm, \$5

OVERSTACKED BOOK CLUB
July 23, 6pm at the shop, \$5
August 27, 6pm at the shop, \$5

Accepting submissions!

Tues.-Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-5
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