UNEVEN GROUND

This book tells the story of the political, economic, social, and religious development of the Appalachian region since 1945. From an outsider’s point of view, it really gives an interesting picture of the constant usury and dilemmas facing this region and its peoples. Travel with the author through the various local governments and larger presidential administrations during this time period and the changing beliefs and subsequent policies which changed this region forever. The description of the impacts of these decisions on the local citizens is both heart-wrenching and maddening. This book is a must-read for anyone living or working in this bountiful and beautiful region!

—Sabra Jacobs

UNEVEN GROUND
APPALACHIA SINCE 1945
RONALD D. ELLER

GO SET A WATCHMAN

When I decided to read Go Set A Watchman by Harper Lee, my first thought was Atticus Finch was not who I thought he was. Then I reread To Kill A Mockingbird. I felt to give Go Set A Watchman a fair chance I needed to remind myself of the details of the story. As we join Scout, Jean Louise Finch, on the train to Alabama, she is all grown up. Jean Louise has been living in New York for a few years and comes back to visit her family. This family visit takes a turn for the negative when Jean Louise finds a flyer about a local community watch group. She listens to the community meeting from the upper balcony of the same court room that she watched Atticus from as a child. In this meeting, she finds that Atticus, in her perception, is not the man she thought he was. I was very sad for Jean Louise because she was facing something that we all eventually do. Our parents are not infallible. Reading Go Set A Watchman was like watching through the window of Jean Louise Finch’s house as she truly grows up and realizes that she may not know her small town as well as she thought she did. It’s a very interesting read and allows us to get to know Jean Louise as twenty-six year old woman.

—Judy Howell

GO SET A WATCHMAN

BEL CANTO

Bel Canto by Ann Patchett takes place in South America when a birthday party for a powerful Japanese businessman, who is being courted to invest in the country, is invaded by a ragged bunch of gun-wielding terrorists. The businessman came to the event, not for business, but for a private performance by opera soprano Roxane Coss. The terrorists targeted the party with the goal of taking the country’s president as hostage to negotiate the release of political prisoners. Unbeknownst to them, the president ditched the party in favor of the weekly broadcast of his favorite soap opera. So begins a months’ long standoff during which unlikely bonds are forged between hostages and terrorists.

—Sandra Saad

GARDEN SPELLS

The Waverleys have always been a curious family, endowed with peculiar gifts that make them outsiders even in their hometown of Bascom, North Carolina. Claire Waverley stayed in Bascom after high school, while her sister Sydney ran from their hometown. When Sydney suddenly returns with a young daughter, Claire’s quiet life is turned upside down. Sarah Addison Allen draws the reader in with screwed-up family relations, Southern society, and magical realism. It is a fun, whimsical, and magical novel. — Bethany Turner


THE CHILDREN’S BOOK

My favorite read of February took me by surprise. I’ve always liked Byatt’s work, but other than her early masterpiece, Possession, none of it had really blown me away. The Children’s Book crept up on me slowly and quietly revealing its meticulous layers in its own time. By the time I was half way done with this epic, though I was caught off-guard by how emotionally involved I was with the characters. As befits a tribute to Victorian literature, the novel is lengthy and swollen with characters. Byatt deals with art, literature, politics, economics, and miserably terrible fathers with breathtaking sweep. Not a novel for the faint-hearted, nevertheless The Children’s Book was absorbing, maddening and rewarding. — Michelle Fields


PRISONER OF THE QUEEN

Katherine Grey was a peaceful child who loved to use plants for medicine and hoped for a quiet and peaceful country life. Unfortunately, Katherine Grey was Henry VIII’s granddaughter and her sister Jane tried to assume the throne of England for herself. Jane was not able to hold the throne and Katherine was perceived as a threat to the stability of Elizabeth I. Instead of enjoying a quiet country life, Katherine suffers at the hand of her first cousin. Always suspected of treason or treasonous behavior. Katherine's poignant story is told from her own perspective. — JH

Prisoner of the Queen by E. Knight. (386 Pages) Available in Paperback, Kindle, Nook, iBook