

WHO DONE IT?

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CARIBBEAN MYSTERIES

BY JOHN KEYSE-WALKER

WHAT'S NEXT

February 25
Caribbean Mysteries

March 25
Ruth Ware

April 22
Reporters

May 20 (early due to Holiday) - Lou Berney

June 24
Maine, Vermont and Massachusetts

Vital Details

Meeting Time 2 PM except for special events

Meeting Day 4th Mon. except on holidays

Meeting Place - Community Room of Public Library

Location - 18181 Imperial Highway Yorba Linda, CA

Newsletter Editor
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The golden sands, verdant hills, and crystalline waters of the Caribbean Sea have called to authors since the age of piracy ended. Indeed, one of the first works set there, Robert Louis Stevenson's *TREASURE ISLAND*, was about that most Caribbean of occupations. Following Stevenson's path, the greats (Ernest Hemingway, *ISLANDS IN THE STREAM*), the near-greats (Graham Greene, *OUR MAN IN HAVANA*; James Michener, *CARIBBEAN*), the comic (Herman Wouk, *DON'T STOP THE CARNIVAL*; Carl Hiaasen, *BAD MONKEY*), and the commercial (Ian Fleming, *LIVE AND LET DIE* and *DR. NO*) of the literary world have set their works on its shores.

Mystery writers have also had their protagonists living on or visiting the islands of the Southern Sea. One of the first to do this was also one of the greats of the genre—Agatha Christie in *A CARIBBEAN MYSTERY*.

The tasty climate, lax policing, and revolving door of tourists and scoundrels seeking relaxation and anonymity in the islands have proved fertile ground for many others since Christie. Some have taken a more serious and hardboiled path, such as Timothy Williams in his *THE HONEST FOLK OF GUADELOUPE*, in which Judge-Investigator Amie Marie Laveaud looks into a supposed suicide and tourist murder on the French island. In the same vein is Florida author Don Bruns's island-hopping series (*JAMAICA BLUE*, *BARBADOS HEAT*, *SOUTH BEACH SHAKEDOWN*, *ST. BARTS BREAKDOWN*, and *BAHAMA BURNOUT*), which features rock and roll journalist Mick Sever as its protagonist.

The image of fun, beauty, and ease projected by the tourist economy of many of the Caribbean's islands also lends itself to mysteries that have a somewhat lighter character. For example, Bob Morris's books about former NFL linebacker turned crime-solver Zack Chasteen (*Edgar Award* nominee *BAHAMARAMA*, and *JAMAICA ME DEAD*, among others) feature a cast of quirky characters and a style which elevates humor to the same level as the mysteries Chasteen tries to solve.

All these books contain the key elements which make up the classic mystery—a wily hero, a crime that is usually a murder, adversity, danger, and a satisfying resolution. The setting in the islands and sometimes at sea in the Caribbean adds a final enhancing element—an enticing location. (cont. on page 4)

Inside you will find...

Members reports (Dec.)

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Caribbean at YLPL

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MEMBER REVIEWS

SUSAN FASSNACHT

THE LONG ROAD TO MERCY by David Baldacci 4.75 stars
The first in a new series with Atlee Pine, an FBI field agent, who is called in for a mutilation of a mule at Phantom Ranch at the bottom of the Grand Canyon, part of her FBI territory. The person who rode the mule into the Canyon is now missing. Soon after Atlee begins searching and investigation the disappearance, her superiors call her off the case. A wild ride to an exciting conclusion. I will look forward to the next in the series.

A BORROWING OF BONES by Paula Munier 4.76 stars
Two Afghan war vets, a woman and a dog, return home to Vermont to heal. A walk in the woods on the fourth of July weekend causes the dog to alert for explosives. Nearby they find a healthy, well cared for baby in her carrier, alone in the woods. No mother to be found. These two events force Mercy and her dog, Elvis, to interact with the community, something they have been avoiding.

PAM T.

NIGHTLIFE – Thomas Perry – 3.85
When a cousin of an underworld figure in Los Angeles is murdered in Portland, OR., the investigators find strands of long blond hair near his body and figure that another victim may be involved. Portland detective Catherine Hobbs is determined to solve the case and find the blond killer, despite having to work with Pitt in an uneasy alliance. Meanwhile, the body count is rising and it is realized that the blond is not a victim but the killer.

FIDELITY – Thomas Perry – 3.95

When Phil Kramer, owner of Kramer Investigations in Los Angeles, is murdered, his wife, Emily, decides to find his murderer with the help of his partners. Jerry Hobart, hitman, was hired by a very wealthy man to kill Kramer. Now he is hired to kill Emily. He didn't question the first hit, but has questions about the second hit. He figures there is a bigger underlying secret and a bigger payoff. Both Emily and Hobart question where their loyalties lie and how much they owe to those who have been unfaithful to them.

KAREN

Penny, Louise -KINGDOM OF THE BLIND - #14 - 2018 - 4.9 - Three Pines, etc. When a letter arrives inviting Armand Gamache to an abandoned farmhouse, the former head of the Surete du Quebec discovers that a complete stranger has named him one of the executors of her will. Gamache accepts and soon learns that the other two

executors are Myrna Landers, the bookseller from Three Pines, and a young builder. None know the elderly woman.

Mejia, Mindy - LEAVE NO TRACE - 2018 - 4.5+ - Minnesota
Maya, speech therapist at psychiatric hospital is assigned a young man just found after years in the Boundary Waters who wants to escape to save his sick father. Maya helps him.

Miller, Derek B. - AMERICAN BY DAY #2 - 2018 - 3.5 - Upstate NY
Police Chief Inspector Sigrid Ødegård has to leave her native Norway and actually go to the U.S. where her missing brother is implicated in the mysterious death of a prominent African-American academic.

Littlejohn, Emily - LOST LAKE - #3 - 2018 - 3.5 - Colorado
Gemma Monroe, detective - on a case of a missing woman who was camping with friends near Lost Lake. Second case a missing manuscript. Solid (if slow) police procedural. First person narrative was a bit off-putting Gemma puts herself in major danger hear end - annoying and descriptions in first person off-putting too i

Driscoll, Sara - STORM RISING - #3 - 2018 -4.35 Virginia
In the wake of a hurricane, Meg Jennings and her Labrador, Hawk - have been deployed to Virginia Beach. Amid debris and the buried cries for help, the most alarming discovery is yet to come - a teenage girl hiding in the Great Dismal Swamp. Meg joins forces with Special Agent Walter Van Cleave and uncovers a vast network of abuse rooted

Tracy, P.J. - THE GUILTY DEAD - #9 - 2018 - 4.5
Perhaps a reread but I suspect I didn't get it read in Sept. Gregory Norwood, wealthy businessman and close friend of Minnesota's leading candidate for Governor, is found dead on the first anniversary of his son's drug overdose. It seems clear to Detectives Gino and Magozzi that grief drove him to suicide ..until they find the second body.

Berry, Flynn - A DOUBLE LIFE - 2018 - 3.0 - London
Hard to follow the breaks between Claire's present and her memories of her youth and even the story of her parent's marriage. The missing father is the presumed killer of the household friend of the mother. Based loosely on a current unsolved crime of a Lord.

YVONNE

Massey, Sujata - TH'E TYPHOON LOVER - 3.0
A novel of suspense featuring the sly, sexy Rei -- antiques dealer and part-time sleuth who has gone anywhere that fortune and unruly passions have led her. After a party for her thirtieth birthday, Rei answers a mysterious invitation to a job interview. The task is to search for and authenticate an

ancient Middle Eastern pitcher that disappeared from Iraq's national museum. The piece is believed to be in the hands of a wealthy Japanese collector, whose passion for beauty extends to Rei herself. When a typhoon hits Tokyo, and Rei finds herself trapped along with the object of her investigation, she discovers that much more than the pitcher is at risk.

Higashiro - SALVATION OF A SAINT - 5.0

A crime is committed that seems to be implausible, methodical and perfect but Professor Manabe Yukawa, Detective Kusuangi and his assistant are brilliant in their determination to solve this mysterious and unique murder. Great read, highly recommended

PENNY

Thompson, Victoria - MURDER IN CHINATOWN - 5.0

Sarah Brandt is a midwife in Chinatown where the murder of a young Chinese daughter takes place. Very interesting - with three different plots and filled with history.

Johnson, D.E. - DETROIT BREAKDOWN - 5.0

Will Anderson and Elizabeth Hume are called to the vast Eloise Insane Asylum outside of Detroit, where Elizabeth's cousin Robbie is a patient and now a murder suspect. The victim, like three others before him at the asylum in recent months, was killed with the infamous "Punjab lasso," the murder weapon of the Phantom of the Opera. Mental health and police intervention discussed. Corruption is involved. Fiction but in real historical background.

NANCY

Higashino, Keigo - MALICE - 4.0

Police procedural with Det. Kyeichiro Kaga. Told from 3 viewpoints - victim, friend and detective. Kuknihiko Hidaka and Osamu Nonoguchi were childhood friends and both grew up to become writers. Nonoguchi and Mis Hidaka discover the murdered body of K Hidaka in his locked office in a locked house. Early in the book someone confesses, but Det Kaga feels that the perpetrator is not telling the complete truth.

Matsumoto, Seicho - A QUIET PLACE - 3.75

When Tsuneo Asai learns of his wife's heart attack in a quiet out of the way neighborhood in Tokyo, he has a lot of unanswered questions.

Honda, Tetsuya - THE SILENT DEAD - 4.0

Police procedural featuring 29 year old Lt. Reiko Himekawa who leads an all male team within the homicide division of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police. One dead and mutilated body wrapped in a blue tarp leads Reiko to discover 11 more bodies.

Krueger, Wm Kent - DESOLATION MOUNTAIN - 4.5

Smith, Alexander McCall - THE COLORS OF ALL THE CATTLE - 3.25

Harrison, Mette Ivie - NOT OF THE FOLD - 4.0

BOBBI

Gage, Leighton - BURIED STRANGERS - 2009 - 4.5

A boy walking his dog in the woods discovers a human leg bone outside San Paulo, Brazil. Mario Silva, Chief Inspector and his team discovers 35 more mounds. All bodies have a sternum cut by saw - leading to speculation of heart harvesting.

Stuyck, Karen Hanson - DO YOU REMEMBER ME NOW - 2011 - 4.0 High School reunion proves fatal for a clique of popular bullies. Plastic surgeon Kate Dalton, who was the victim of bullying during high school, is the prime suspect in the murder investigation. Surprise ending.

Massey, Jeremy - THE LAST FOUR DAYS OF PADDY BUCKLEY - 2015 - 4.75 A debut novel. Paddy is a widower of 2 years and works for a funeral company in Dublin. One night, while driving home after an unexpected encounter with a client, Paddy hits a pedestrian crossing the street. He pulls over and gets out of his car, intending to do the right thing. As he bends over to help the man, he recognizes him. It's Donal Cullen, brother of one of the most notorious mobsters in Dublin. And he's dead. I loved this book.

Woo, Ilyon - THE GREAT DIVORCE - 2010 - 4.9

A story of one of nineteenth-century America's most infamous divorce cases, in which a young mother challenged her country's notions of women's rights, family, and marriage itself. In 1814, Eunice Chapman came home to discover that her three children had been carried off by her husband. He had taken them, to live among a celibate, religious people known as the Shakers. Defying all expectations, this famously petite and lovely woman mounted an epic campaign against her husband, the Shakers, and the law. In its confrontation of some of the nation's most fundamental debates—religious freedom, feminine virtue, the sanctity of marriage—her case struck a nerve with an uncertain new republic. And its culmination—in a stunning legislative decision and a terrifying mob attack—sent waves through the Shaker community.

Baldacci, David - THE CHRISTMAS TRAIN - 2015 - 4.5

A feel good story for the Christmas season or all year long.

Farah, Nurudin - HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT - 2014 - 3.5

When Bella, a fashion photographer living in Rome, learns of her beloved half-brother's murder, she travels to Nairobi to care for her niece and nephew. But when their mother resurfaces, reasserting her maternal rights and bringing with her a gale of chaos and confusion that mirrors the deepening political instability in the region, Bella must decide how far she will go to obey the call of sisterly responsibility. A story of extreme kindness by Bella to protect her niece and nephew. More about gays than I cared for.

CARIBBEAN AT YORBA LINDA LIBRARY

(Continued from page 1)

While we all love a city location where the mean streets are populated by hard-bitten types, who among us doesn't need a vacation with sometime in the sun on occasion? The Caribbean mystery is the mystery reader's vacation: the needed change of pace, with a lead character still independent and clever but perhaps not so hardboiled; a setting with any unseemly aspects hidden behind a facade of sun and fun; secondary characters permitted to be more over-the-top by the loose, island lifestyle; exotic and dangerous romance; and violence that is anything but run-of-the-mill.

Anne Tyler said that books allow us to live more than one life in more than one place. Since we get to choose where we live those extra lives, why not pick a location as alluring as the Caribbean? With a side order of murder, of course.

Allende, Isabel –ISLAND BENEATH THE SEA (Haiti)

Barr, Nevada - FLASHBACK (CD) -(Dry Tortugas)

Bruns, Don STUFF TO DIE FOR_ (Cuba)

Christie, Agatha A CARIBBEAN MYSTERY A Miss Marple Mystery

Dovalpage, Teresa DEATH COMES IN THROUGH THE KITCHEN_(Cuba)

Evanovich, Janet METRO GIRL (Cuba)

Fleming, Ian DR. NO A James Bond Novel (Jamaica)
THUNDERBALL (Bahamas)

Francis, Dick SECOND WIND (Caribbean area)

Greene, Graham - OUR MAN IN HAVANA (Cuba)

Haas, Abigail DANGEROUS GIRLS_ (teen book)
(Aruba)

Hart, Carolyn G. RESORT TO MURDER A Henrie O
Mystery (Bermuda Islands)

Hemingway, Ernest ISLANDS IN THE STREAM -
(Bahamas - Bimini - Cuba)

Hoffman, Alice—THE MARRIAGE OF OPPOSITES -(St.
Thomas)

Jackson, Naomi THE STAR SIDE OF BIRD HILL -
(Barbados)

Johansen, Iris - FATAL TIDE -CD - (Marinthe)

Le Carre, John OUR KIND OF TRAITOR -(Antigua -
Barbuda)

Marlon, James - A BRIEF HISTORY OF SEVEN
KILLINGS (Jamaica)

White, Randy Wayne CARIBBEAN RIM

White, Randy Wayne CUBA STRAITS

Woods, Stuart DEAD IN THE WATER (St. Marks)

Yanique, Tiphanie—LAND OF LOVE AND DROWNING -
(U.S.Virgin Islands - Saint Thomas)

Zebrowski, Ernest -THE LAST DAYS OF ST. PIERRE
(Non-Fiction - Martinique)

The Bob Morris series (Zack Chasteen) is available in the Anaheim Library system. Books can be put on request to be picked up at the Anaheim Hills Branch or the Placentia Library.

C. Michele Dorsey has written two mysteries set on St. John featuring Sabrina Salter. NO VIRGIN ISLAND and PERMANENT SUNSET. Available on Amazon—Kindle version is nearly \$10.00. Can be bought as a paperback from other sellers. I may order one as it sounds interesting.

Michael Reisig also has a series available on Amazon (even Kindle for \$3.00 each) His series is called Caribbean Gold—THE TREASURE OF TORTUGA and THE TREASURE OF MARGARITA and THE TREASURE OF TIME This is a historical series.

Or whatever else you might find... but do seek some sun - we don't have much in YL as I am preparing this newsletter.

MORE ABOUT THE CARIBBEAN

Due to the close proximity of many Caribbean islands to their neighbors, many travelers today “island hop” around the region, going from shore to shore to experience a variety of scenery and culture in one trip. The first “island hoppers” were actually the Arawaks, Amerindians who ventured west and north throughout the region, from Cuba to the Bahamas. Little else is known about the Arawaks, who lacked a written language, but one Arawak invention can be seen on the beaches of the Caribbean to this day – the hammock.

Life in the region changed forever when, in October, 1492, Christopher Columbus landed on the shores of the Bahamas. He also island-hopped and developed the first European settlement on the island that today is split between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Columbus and his fellow conquistadores recognized the riches in the region and saw money when they gazed upon the bountiful seas and fertile land. They exploited both the natural resources and the native populations, claiming lands as their own and enslaving the people of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic and other islands.

The English followed suit in the 17th century, claiming St. Kitts, Barbados, Antigua and other lands, and the French soon followed, claiming Guadeloupe and Martinique. The Dutch also wanted a piece of the Caribbean, settling St. Martin, Saba and Sint Eustatius. For the next two centuries, the Europeans battled for control of the islands, and possession frequently changed hands.

The colonial infighting between European powers created an opportunity for locals to fight for their own independence. Haiti led the way, declaring independence from its colonizer in 1804, and Cuba and the Dominican Republic followed, along with other smaller islands in the region. Some islands, such as Puerto Rico and Guadeloupe, still maintain strong neocolonial relationships with their parent nations.

CARIBBEAN CLIMATE

The sun always shines on the region, and many travelers are attracted to the balmy tropical climate when winter strikes their home countries. The temperatures do not vary much throughout the year, with average temps of between 75 and 85 degrees Fahrenheit regardless of season. Trade winds make days and nights relatively comfortable, but humidity can be high year-round. The rainy season arrives in autumn, and hurricane season spans June through November, but satellite forecasts now give plenty of warning so that precautions can be taken during a storm. Truly a year-round destination, there really is never a bad time to visit the Caribbean.

The pleasant weather is one of the reasons that tourism has become a key industry for the Caribbean economy. Millions of people come to the islands every year, but other major industries include textile, clothing and electronics manufacturing and oil refining.

The Caribbean islands are made of 25 independent countries and other territories:

Anguilla (Anguilla is a British overseas territory since 1980)
Antigua and Barbuda
Aruba (Aruba is a constituent country of the Kingdom of the Netherlands)
Bahamas
Barbados
British Virgin Islands (BVI is a British overseas territory)

Tortola
Virgin Gorda
Anegada
Jost Van Dyke

Caribbean Netherlands also known as the BES islands are the three special municipalities of the Netherlands that are located in the Caribbean Sea. Consist of the islands of

Bonaire
Sint Eustatius
Saba

Cayman Islands (Cayman Islands is a British Overseas Territory since 1962)

Cuba

Curaçao (Curaçao is a constituent country of the Kingdom of the Netherlands)

Dominica

Dominican Republic

Grenada

Guadeloupe (France overseas territory since 1946)

Haiti

Jamaica

Martinique (France overseas territory since 1946)

Montserrat (Montserrat is a British Overseas Territory established since 1632)

Puerto Rico (Puerto Rico is a territory of the United States since 1898)

Saint Barthélemy (Saint Barthélemy is an overseas collectivity of France since 2007, having been previously a French colony since 1648, exchanged with Sweden in 1784 and sold back to France in 1878)

Saint Kitts and Nevis

Saint Lucia

Saint Martin (France overseas territory)

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Sint Maarten (Sint Maarten is a constituent country of the Kingdom of the Netherlands)

Trinidad and Tobago

Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI are a British Overseas Territory)

United States Virgin Islands USVI is a territory of the United States. Consist of the main islands of

Saint Croix
Saint John
Saint Thomas

DUE IN FEBRUARY

THE CORONATION [Erast Fandorin #7] by Boris Akunin
WATCHER IN THE WOODS [Casey Duncan #4] by Kelley Armstrong
THE STRANGER INSIDE [NS] by Laura Benedict
THE SYNDICATE [Jonathan Craine #2] by Guy Bolton
THE TRIBUNE [NS] by Doug Burgess
A CASE OF BIER [Bed-and-Breakfast #31] by Mary Daheim
OPEN CARRY [Arless Cutter #1] by Marc Cameron
THE OVERNIGHT KIDNAPPER [Salvo Montalbano #23] by Andrea Camilleri
THAT OLD SCOUNDREL DEATH [Dan Rhodes #25] by Bill Crider
THE MOROCCAN GIRL [NS] by Charles Cumming [1st US edition, APA The Man Between)
THE BOY WHO LIVED WITH THE DEAD [Albert Lincoln #2] by Kate Ellis
THE MARK [Fox & O'Hare #6] by Janet Evanovich & Raymond Benson
EARLY RISER [NS] by Jasper Fforde
THE VANISHING MAN [Charles Lenox prequel #2] by Charles Finch
MURDERS AND METAPHORS [Magical Bookshop #3] by Amanda Flower
CHOCOLATE CREAM PIE MURDER [Hannah Swensen #24] by Joanne Fluke
NEVER TELL [D.D. Warren #10] by Lisa Gardner
A MURDER UNMENTIONED [Rowland Sinclair #5] by Sulari Gentill [1st US edition]
PAST DUE FOR MURDER [Blue Ridge Library #3] by Victoria Gilbert
KILLER THRILLER [Ian Ludlow #2] by Lee Goldberg
MISSION CRITICAL [Gray Man #8] by Mark Greaney
AFTER SHE'S GONE [Hanne Lagerlind-Schön #2] by Camilla Grebe
THE GIRL IN THE GLASS BOX [Jack Swyteck #15] by James Grippando
THE NEXT TO DIE [NS] by Sophie Hannah
THE LOST MAN [NS] by Jane Harper [1st US edition]
HEADLONG [Bill Slider #21] by Cynthia Harrod-Eagles

RUN COLD [Edna Ferber #10] by Ed Ifkovic
THE ACCIDENTAL AGENT [Charles Thoroughgood #6] by Alan Judd
THE WEDDING GUEST [Alex Delaware #34] by Jonathan Kellerman
WHAT WE DID [NS] by Christobel Kent
DEATH IN PROVENCE (Penelope Kite #1) by Serena Kent
STALKER [Joonas Linna #5] by Lars Kepler
A DEADLY DIVIDE [Esa Khatkhat & Rachel Getty #5] by Ausma Zehanat Khan
THE SECRETARY [NS] by Renée Knight
THE SHAKER MURDERS [Will Rees #6] by Eleanor Kuhns
HOUSE ARREST [Joe De Marco #13] by Mike Lawson
DON'T WAKE UP by Liz Lawler
AMERICAN HEROIN [Lola Vasquez #2] by Melissa Scrivner Love
FELICITY CARROL AND THE PERILOUS PURSUIT by Patricia Marcantonio
BRIDGE OF SIGHS [Martha Gunn #7] by Priscilla Masters
BEGGING TO DIE [Katie Maguire #10] by Graham Masterton
PSYCHOTOPIA [NS] by R.N. Morris
THE RECKLESS [Bruno Johnson #6] by David Putnam
THE HUNTRESS by Kate Quinn
BLOOD ECHO [Buring Girl #2] by Christopher Rice
CONNECTIONS IN DEATH [Eve Dallas #48] by J.D. Robb
CARELESS LOVE [Alan Banks #25] by Peter Robinson
DEAD OF WINTER [Mattie Winston #10] by Annelise Ryan
THE HEDGE OF THORNS [NS] by Elizabeth Speller
TRIGGER [Frank Marr #3] by David Swinson
THE BLACK ASCOT [Ian Rutledge #21] by Charles Todd
THE HIDING PLACE [NS] by C.J. Tudor
HUNTING GAME [Embla Nyström #1] by Helene Tursten
THE BONE KEEPER by Luca Veste
DOUBLE TAKE [NS] by S.J. Watson [1st US edition]
THE BURNING ISLAND [Charlotte "Charlie" Cates #3] by Hester Young