

We met at Maggie's today for lunch and discussion of The Frozen River. Maggie greeted us with a delicious lemonade concoction that included lemonade, pineapple and gingerale. We enjoyed some snacks and views as we sat outside on this beautiful day. Then we went inside for lunch. The table was beautifully set with garden flowers and a bit later the main centerpiece arrived which was Joshua Burgess (Ken doll) frozen in the river (9x13" pan). A genius move on Maggie's part! She served bowls with a variety of Mediterranean dishes inside. All delicious. Dessert was spruced up Rice Krispy treats with pistachio ice cream.

Everyone enjoyed the book. Ariel Lawhon is a great storyteller. Her characters are well developed, and it was noted that she did a superb job of tying up all various lines of the story at the end. It was very interesting to learn that Ariel just happened upon a short article in a Guide Posts magazine that introduced Martha Ballard. She thought it would make a great story. She did much research of a previously written biography of Martha, and she also discovered and deciphered Martha's daily journals. Then she began writing the The Frozen River. It is historical fiction and she took many liberties with the events she uncovered in the journals and when they happened.

We agreed that Ephraim was the most impressive character and Joseph North the most despicable. North definitely deserved the "revenge" that Martha gave him. Thank you Maggie for a delicious luncheon and a truly enjoyable book.

Ariel Lawhon has written other historical fiction novels that would likely be as good as this one. She always writes about subversive women. Other book recommendations are:  
Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer, a Native American botanist.  
The Briar Club by Kate Quinn, also historical fiction.  
The Measure by Nikki Erlick.

We wish Elaine and Charles the best as they journey to Arkansas. Thank you Charles for your final website addition this month. We welcome Abigail Wineland as our new website expert.

We will meet next on Aug. 22 at Barb's at 11:00 (note the change in time for next month) to discuss Saving Vincent by Joan Fernandez. Enjoy the rest of July in Summit County, and see you in August!

*Laura*