

A Vermont summer reading smorgasbord

Recently released books offer enjoyment galore

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Burlington Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Do Vermont authors have a story to tell or what?

This little state is known for a large number of writers with seemingly endless supplies of stories to tell. Vermont also has a lot of interesting stories to be told about it, as the number of books giving the state a mention is pretty impressive as well.

With the summer-reading season within reach, let's go over some of the books by Vermont authors or about Vermont that have come out in recent weeks or will be out before summer is over. As we all know, summer ends quickly around here, so grab a book, sit under a shady tree and dive in.

Fiction

Chris Bohjalian, "Hour of the Witch" – The bestselling author and former Burlington Free Press columnist embarks upon what's become an annual event: the release of a new novel. "Hour of the Witch" tells of Mary Deerfield, a young woman contemplating a divorce from her husband who in puritanical 17th-century Boston might just find herself the object of deep suspicion.

Katie Crouch, "Embassy Wife" – A Vermont resident who teaches across the Connecticut River at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, Crouch has written a novel (due out July 13) about two American women in Namibia — one whose husband has accepted a Fulbright scholarship and another whose spouse is an American diplomat, or possibly a secret agent.

Katherine Forbes Riley, "The Bobcat" – Though the Vermont author's debut novel came out in 2019, it was published in paperback this month. "The Bobcat" tells the story of a student who has transferred to a college in rural Vermont following a sexual assault.

Jennifer McMahon, "The Drowning Kind" – The Vermont author who has penned nine novels writes in her latest work of fiction about a woman whose troubled older sister is found drowned at a Vermont estate. Then the novel takes on the tone of a thriller.

Richard Alther, "Bedside Matters" – Alther, who's also a painter, lives in Ferrisburgh. His fifth novel is about a once-successful businessman who's reading 13th-century Persian poetry as he approaches death and begins to reconsider what matters most in life.

Melanie Finn, "The Hare" – The Northeast Kingdom writer has penned a thriller that fellow author Claire Fuller calls "A powerful story of female perseverance, strength, and resilience." Finn's 2016 book, "The Gloaming," was a New York Times Notable Book selection.

Richard McKeown, "State of Redemption" – A St. Albans native, McKeown sets his novel in the fictional Vermont town of Milford. "State of Redemption" traces the lives of two men, a prosecutor running for governor and a man whose life is adrift, who shared a dramatic moment in their lives 30 years earlier.

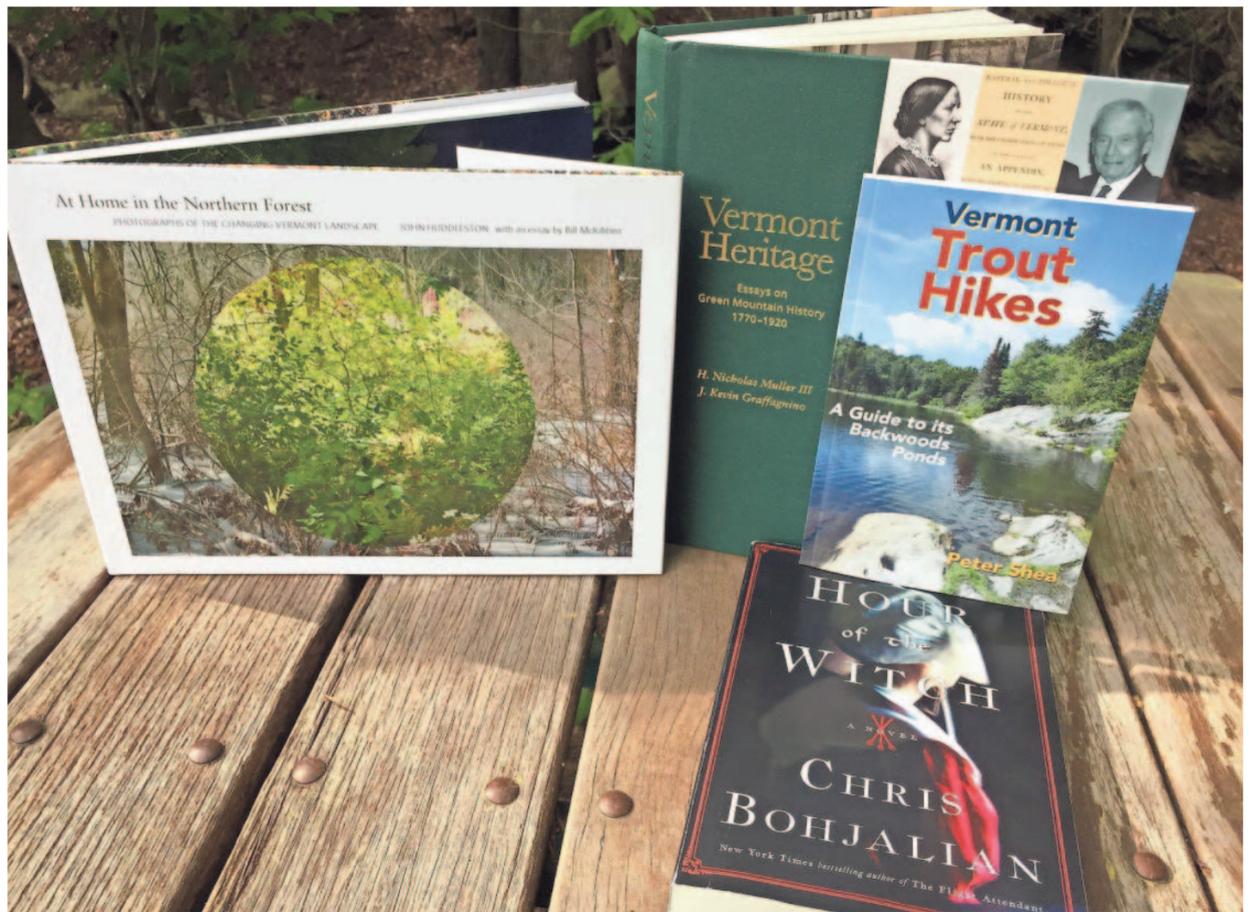
Leslie Morris Noyes, "Willing" – This Vermont author tackles the familiar genre of romance fiction, but with a twist: Her featured heroine is 45 years old, just sent her daughter off to college and finds herself dating a younger man.

Seth Mullins, "The Authors of This Dream" – A Vermont-based author and musician, Mullins writes about a musician named Brandon Chane whose life starts to unravel following a fight outside a music venue.

Tracey Campbell Pearson, "Girls and Boys Come Out to Play" – The Vermont author has Mother Goose inviting children to join her on an adventure, where they meet characters from well-known nursery rhymes. "Girls and Boys Come Out to Play" is intended for children ages 4 to 6.

Ann Braden, "Flight of the Puffin" – Braden, a southern Vermont-based author, pens a novel for ages 10 and up. "Flight of the Puffin" deals with a girl named Libby who starts a chain reaction of encouraging messages that help young people deal with problems such as bullies, family problems and grief.

Katherine Arden, "Dark Waters" – Due to be published Aug. 3, this book is by a Vermont author who has written books for adult and young-adult audi-



These are some of the books with Vermont ties that were published in early 2021. BRENT HALLENBECK/FREE PRESS

ences. This one is geared toward readers of middle-grade age looking for a few scares set in the depths indicated by the title.

Sports, nature, fitness and wellness

Bernd Heinrich, "Racing the Clock" – The professor emeritus of biology from the University of Vermont, now based primarily in Maine, combines memoir and scientific exploration in a book that looks at running, aging and the body and the connections between metabolism, diet, exercise and age.

Jessica Lahey, "The Addiction Inoculation: Raising Healthy Kids in a Culture of Dependence" – A recovering alcoholic and mother of two sons, the Vermont author looks at the roots of substance abuse and offers parents and educators tips on prevention.

Larry Olmsted, "Fans: How Watching Sports Makes Us Happier, Healthier, and More Understanding" – Olmsted, who lives in Hartland, notes that sports helped build bonds in his family. "Scores and scores of people have told me similar stories of how being a sports fan has made their lives better in so many different ways," according to Olmsted.

John Huddleston, "At Home in the Northern Forest: Photographs of the Changing Vermont Landscape" – Huddleston, a professor emeritus of studio art at Middlebury College, presents intimate images of the trees, streams and fields that make Vermont Vermont. Middlebury College instructor and environmental activist Bill McKibben contributes an essay.

Celia Ryker, "Walking Home: Trail Stories" – "Reminiscent of Cheryl Strayed's 'Wild,' Ryker's mind wanders as her legs carry her forward, beyond a woodland path, to places and people she thought she had forgotten," the book's publisher, Rootstock Publishing of Montpelier, says of the Windsor author's memoir that's due June 25.

Peter Shea, "Vermont Trout Hikes: A Guide to its Backwoods Ponds" – Not every fishing hole is conveniently located next to a state fishing access. This book gives advice on where to get a little exercise on the way to and from some of Vermont's top angling spots.

History and current events

Jack Kelly, "Valcour: The 1776 Campaign That Saved the Cause of Liberty" – Though this Revolutionary War battle took place on the New York side of Lake Champlain, it does have Vermont connections. "Most of Benedict Arnold's fleet ended up at Arnold's Bay in Pantou (the only place named for him)," Kelly told the Burlington Free

Press in an email.

The Brattleboro Words Project, "Print Town: Brattleboro's Legacy of Words" – This compilation delves into the southern Vermont town's printing, publishing and literary life, including its role in designing the Watergate-era book "All the President's Men."

Julia Cooke, "Come Fly the World: The Jet-Age Story of the Women of Pan Am" – The Woodstock author speaks with several stewardesses who worked for the now-defunct, once-glamorous airline between 1966 and 1975.

Glenn Stout, "Tiger Girl and the Candy Kid" – This is the Alburgh author's 100th (!) book. "Tiger Girl and the Candy Kid" tells a Bonnie-and-Clyde-like real-life tale of a young couple finding fame and admiration as they make a killing (literally and figuratively) robbing from the rich during the Jazz Age.

H Nicholas Muller III and J. Kevin Graffagnino, "Vermont Heritage: Essays on Green Mountain History, 1770-1920" and Gary G. Shattuck, "By the Wand of Some Magician: Embracing Modernity in Mid-Nineteenth Century Vermont" – These two new titles were ushered along with student and staff help from the Center for Research on Vermont at the University of Vermont.

Richard Wolfson, "Nuclear Choices for the Twenty-first Century: A Citizen's Guide" – A professor emeritus of physics and environmental studies at Middlebury College, Wolfson in his book looks at safety issues of CT scans, food irradiation and international nuclear-weapons treaties.

Angela Berkfield with several co-authors, "Parenting 4 Social Justice: Tips, Tools, and Inspiration for Conversation and Action with Kids" – In 2015, Berkfield led a workshop in Brattleboro on parenting for social justice. That led to this book that includes contributions from authors including southern Vermont resident Abigail Healey.

Memoir

Alison Bechdel, "The Secret to Superhuman Strength" – The Bolton resident and wry illustrator of "Fun Home" delves into her lifelong obsession with fitness crazes and the resulting search for deeper enlightenment.

Alexander Wolff, "Endpapers: A Family Story of Books, War, Escape, and Home" – Best known as a former staff writer for Sports Illustrated, Wolff, who lives in Cornwall, tells the tale of his father and grandfather. Wolff spent a year living in Germany doing research for the book.

Megan Baxter, "Farm Girl" – This memoir set in Vermont, according to its publisher, "is about two love affairs that force a decision: the love between two people and the love between Megan and the landscape." Baxter has degrees from two Vermont schools, Goddard College and the Vermont College of Fine Arts.

Michael Tougias, "The Water's Between Us: A Father, Outdoor Misadventures, and the Healing Power of Nature" – A part-time resident of Woodbury, Tougias writes a memoir based on his youth and the start of his passion for the outdoors.

Howard Ball, "Taking the Fight How: Chronicle of a Jew's Battle for Civil Rights in Mississippi" – Ball, a pro-

fessor emeritus of political science at the University of Vermont, writes of his time in the political-science department at Mississippi State University and his family's commitment toward racial justice.

Kimberly B. Cheney, "A Lawyer's Life to Live" – The former attorney general for Vermont, Cheney writes about his law career that began in the Green Mountain State when he moved from Connecticut in 1967. "I hope readers will feel they have learned about a life well lived personally

while making positive social changes," Cheney said in a news release from his publisher, Montpelier-based Rootstock Publishing.

Gerette Buglion, "An Everyday Cult" – As described by the book's publisher, Montpelier-based Rootstock Publishing, the Morrisville author uses her own story to explore "the hallmarks of cultic manipulation—mind control that flies under the radar of human awareness—and implores society to wake up to its ever-present abuses of power."

Food and self-help

David Page, "Food Americana" – The creator of the popular Food Network show "Diners, Drive-ins and Dives" takes to the written word to highlight pioneers in the U.S. food industry, including Jerry Greenfield of that iconic Vermont-born ice-cream brand, Ben & Jerry's.

Barbara Floersch, "You Have a Hammer: Building Grant Proposals for Social Change" – The Berlin writer helps non-profit organizations and grant writers put their skills toward finding funding for projects that can make a difference.

Poetry

Madeleine May Kunin, "Red Kite, Blue Sky" – How many other states can claim a poetry-writing ex-governor? The state's top official from 1985-91, who was also ambassador to Switzerland and U.S. deputy secretary of education, has released her debut poetry collection drawn from poems created as she transitioned into retirement from public life.

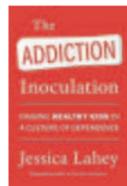
Eva Zimet, "The Lost Grip" – "In 'The Lost Grip,' I write about my struggles with loss and mourning, the trauma of those feelings, and what to do with the experience," the Montpelier author says in a news release from Rootstock Publishing, the Montpelier company that issued her debut poetry collection.

Elizabeth A.I. Powell, "Atomizer" – Powell, who lives in Underhill, is an associate professor of creative writing at Northern Vermont University. "Atomizer" is her third book of poems.

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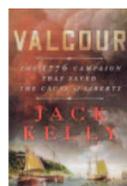
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