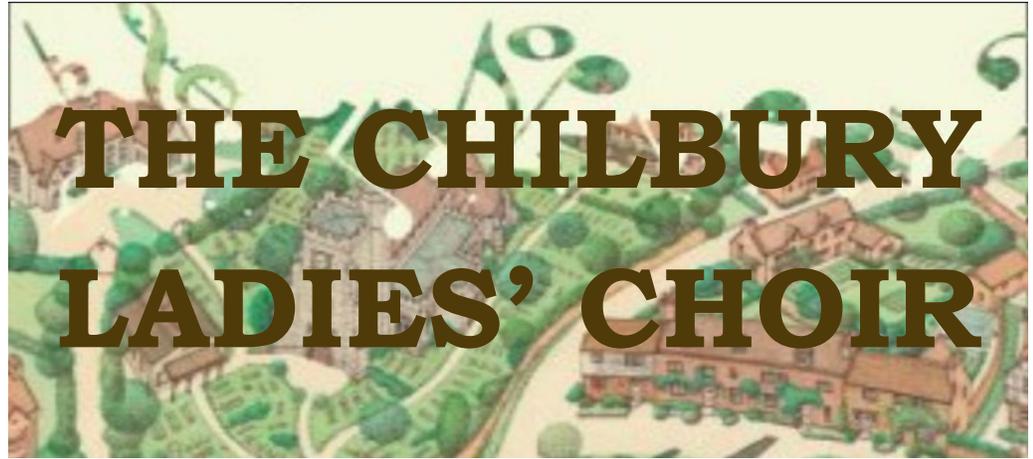


Book Club Kits!



Inside the kit:

(8) book copies

(1) book club guide

About the Book:

(From the author's website)

As England enters World War II's dark early days, spirited music professor Primrose Trent, recently arrived to the village of Chilbury, emboldens the women of the town to defy the Vicar's stuffy edict to shutter the church's choir in the absence of men and instead "carry on singing." Resurrecting themselves as "The Chilbury Ladies' Choir," the women soon use their joint song to lift up themselves, and the community, as the war tears through their lives.

Told through letters and journals, *The Chilbury Ladies' Choir* moves seamlessly from budding romances to village intrigues to heartbreaking matters of life and death. As we come to know the struggles of the charismatic members of this unforgettable outfit—a timid widow wracked with worry over her only son at the front; the town beauty drawn to a rakish and mysterious artist; her younger sister nursing an impossible crush and dabbling in political matters she doesn't understand; a young Jewish refugee from Prague hiding a secret about her family, and a conniving midwife plotting to outrun her seedy past—we come to see how the strength each finds in the choir's collective voice reverberates in her individual life. In turns funny, charming and heart-wrenching, this lovingly executed ensemble novel will charm and inspire, illuminating the true spirit of the women on the home front, in a village of indomitable spirit, at the dawn of a most terrible conflict.

Suggested Reads:

McCall Smith, Alexander
La's Orchestra Saves the World

Blake, Sarah
The Postmistress

Waite, Elizabeth
Never Say Never

Otsuka, Julie
The Buddha in the Attic



About the Author:

Jennifer Ryan was a nonfiction book editor, editing books about politics and economics, travel and health, and biography and memoir, before becoming a novelist. She worked in London before moving to the Washington, DC, area ten years ago with her husband and two children.

She was born in a village in Kent, England, not too far away from the fictional village of Chilbury. The novel is based on the stories of her grandmother who was twenty when the Second World War began, mostly hilarious tales about bumping into people in the blackout, singing in the air raid shelters, and the freedoms women had during the war years--the excitement and romance. She also belonged to a choir, and her choir stories dramatized the camaraderie and support they all took away; the knowledge that they weren't in this alone. *The Chilbury Ladies' Choir* uses her grandmother's stories as its backdrop.

https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/15504358.Jennifer_Ryan

1. What is the main theme of the book? Which of the characters is most changed through the course of the book?
2. Which character do you like most? Why? Which character do you dislike most? Why?
3. Which character do you most relate to? Why?
4. What was the funniest moment of the book? Why do you think it was funny?
5. Do you think Mrs. Tilling made the right choice to help Carrington, even though it would have been illegal for her not to have handed him over to the police? A great deal has happened since the Second World War in this regard. What does that say about the society and culture in which we live?
6. In what way does Venetia alter through the course of the book? What are the biggest moments of change for her?
7. Why doesn't Mrs. Tilling hand Miss Paltry over to the police? Why is she being nice to her?
8. What does it say about the way her character has changed over the course of the book? Would you have handed her in?
9. Are there any recurrent symbols throughout the book? Why do you think they were chosen?
10. Are there any allusions to other books hidden throughout? What are they, and why are they relevant?
11. Did you feel for Venetia's dilemma after Slater left? In what ways would her choice have been easier today? Why do you think that is?
12. Tragically, we already know what will probably happen to Silvie's parents, even though none of the characters does at this point. How does that affect you when reading the book?
13. What impact did the war have on women, work, and society? How do you think women's equality has progressed since the Second World War?
14. And now, a show of hands: Did you shed a few tears while reading *The Chilbury Ladies' Choir*? Be honest now, there are some sad and very moving parts. Which did you find most heartrending and why?