



*Cheyenne Genealogical &
Historical Society*

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Cheyenne Genealogy Journal

A note from Judy...

(Adapted from Judy Engelhart's talk at the society meeting May 2022)...

Looking back on the past couple of years I am just impressed with how well our society came out of the pandemic. Partly because the State of Wyoming did not shut down completely and because our library opened as quickly as it could. However, the main reason is just "us."

There were glitches but we kept coming back together to deal with them and every time I felt overwhelmed there was always someone to lean on, and I hope I was able to do that for others as well. Kay Barnes, thanks for working on the directory. Wendy Douglass for her publicity skills and keeping the newsletter going and for writing up minutes when asked. Sue Seniawski for a generous sharing of her expertise as a leader. Sharon Field for working with Dan Lyon to keep the Cemetery Walk alive and well and finding great books for the library. Jo Butler for a Treasurer's Report that was always timely and for keeping on track with the budget. Wanda Wade for monitoring our website emails and working on research requests. I haven't mentioned everyone, of course, but my greatest thanks is for the continuing support of our members through dues, attending meetings, bringing refreshments and bringing in new members.

I do have some special thank-you's, though, that I believe you will also agree with me on, so without further ado:

We had great programs, period. Kris Smith, then Vice President and later President worked hard to find great speakers on interesting topics and worked with the speakers to present to us; but this would not have been possible without a generous donation from member Robin Everett. Speakers did go online but still needed to make a living and we were able to pay them. Some

were free from generous historians and genealogists and were fantastic as well; **but and this is a big but**, none of this would have been possible without the expertise and generosity of our webmaster, Otis Halverson. Otis not only kept our website current but actually knew and understood what Zoom was. Without him we might have had some programs but I am pretty sure we would have foundered for a long while. He shared his private Zoom site with us and showed us how to maneuver it as participants and also as leaders when necessary.

Thanks to everyone who continues to participate, volunteer and provide suggestions. The year 2022-2023 will start on this great foundation of cooperation between us. —Judy



FamilySearch Announces the 12 States Now Available for Name Searching in the Newly Released "1950 United States Census"

More than 175,000 volunteers have helped review 151 million names in the 1950 U.S. Census, and the name review is complete. Now, to be able to publish each remaining state, FamilySearch needs to continue reviewing each family to ensure they are grouped together correctly and that additional fields are accurately indexed.

While this effort is taking place, FamilySearch will continue to find new ways to expedite the review process. The searchable index for one-quarter of all states from the 1950 census is now available (12 of the 48 states in 1950). Visit the 1950 U.S. Census collection page to keep up-to-date on which states are available. If a state you want to search is not yet available, you can help preview the families of that state through the 1950 US Census Community Project. **These 12 states are now searchable: Arizona, Delaware, Idaho, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Nevada, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, and Wyoming** and real soon Florida. Get started searching the [1950 U.S. Census on FamilySearch](#).



Upcoming Events:

7 July 2022
"Researching War of 1812 Veteran Ancestors"
New England Historic Genealogical Society
[AmericanAncestors.org](https://www.americanancestors.org)
1 p.m. mdt **Free** Webinar
by David Allen Lambert

7 July 2022
"Searching in the Trenches: Introducing U.S. Military Records"
Family Search Webinar,
10 a.m.

12 July 2022
"Using the Family Search Family Tree App/OIS"
Family Search Webinar,
10 a.m.

14 July 2022
A series of using French Records on Family Search
Family Search Webinars,
8 a.m.-1 p.m.

19 July 2022
A series of using Swedish & Norwegian Records on Family Search
Family Search Webinars,
9 a.m.-1:15 p.m.

21 July 2022
"Counting the Canucks: Combing Through Canadian Censuses"
Family Search Webinar,
10 a.m.

26 July 2022
"Using the Family Search Family Tree App/Android"
Family Search Webinar,
10 a.m.

3 Aug 2022
"FamilySearch Tips & Tricks" Family Search Webinar, 10 a.m.

18 Aug 2022
"Beyond the BrickWall: Strategies for Pre-1850 U.S. Research" Family Search Webinar, 10 a.m.

For a complete listing & registration links for the FamilyHistory Webinars, go to: [Family History Library Classes & Webinars](#)

The Pack Horse Library Project Employed People in Rural Kentucky During the Depression

Information in this article is from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia—
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pack_Horse_Library_Project See the article for footnotes.

The Pack Horse Library Project was a [Works Progress Administration](#) (WPA) program that delivered books to remote regions in the Appalachian Mountains between 1935 and 1943. Women were very involved in the project which eventually had 30 different libraries serving 100,000 people. Pack horse librarians were known by many different names including "book women," "book ladies," and "packsaddle librarians." The project helped employ around 200 people and reached around 100,000 residents in rural Kentucky. Because of the Great Depression and a lack of budget money, the American Library Association estimated in May 1936 that around a third of all Americans no longer had "reasonable access" to public library materials.

Eastern, rural Kentucky is a geographically isolated area, cut off from much of the country. Prior to the creation of the Pack Horse Library Project, many people in rural Appalachian Kentucky did not have access to books. The percentage of people who were illiterate in eastern Kentucky was at around 31 percent. People who lived in rural, mostly inaccessible areas wanted to become more literate, seeing education as a way to escape poverty. While there were traveling libraries, which were created by the Kentucky Federation of Women's Clubs starting in 1896, the lack of roads and population centers in eastern Kentucky discour-

aged the creation of most public library services in those locations. The traveling libraries were discontinued in 1933. In Kentucky, 63 counties had no library services at all during the early 1930s.

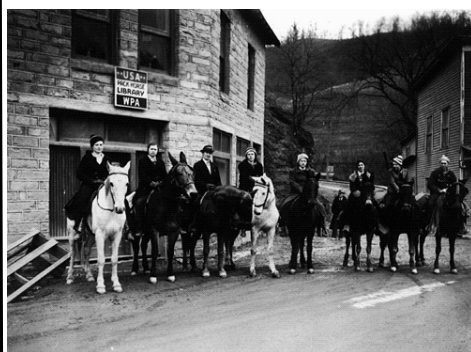
The first Pack Horse Library was created in [Paintsville](#) in 1913 and started by May F. Stafford. It was supported by a local coal baron, John C. Mayo, but when Mayo died in 1914, the program ended because of lack of funding. Elizabeth Fullerton, who worked with the women's and professional projects at the WPA, decided to reuse Stafford's idea. In 1934, a Presbyterian minister who ran a community center in [Leslie County](#) offered his library to the WPA if they would fund people to carry the books to people who could not easily access library materials. That started the first pack horse library, which was administered by the [Federal Emergency Relief Administration](#) (FERA) until the WPA took it over. The Pack Horse Library Project was headed by [Ellen Woodward](#) at a federal level. The project ran between 1935 and 1943. "Book women" were hired by the WPA and worked for around \$28 a month delivering books in the Appalachians via horseback or on mules. They delivered both to individual homes and to schoolhouses. The WPA paid for the salaries of the supervisors and book carriers; all books were donated to the program. Members of the community had to not only donate books but also provide facilities to store the books and other supplies needed by the librarians on horseback. Each local pack horse library had a clerk, or head librarian, who handled various library duties and four to ten book carriers who delivered books to mountain schools and home-steads. The head librarian would process donations at the headquarters, repair books and get items ready to deliver. Librarians repurposed items like cheese boxes into card catalog files or license plates bent into shapes for bookends. Monthly, the librarians would meet at their central facility



Pack Horse Librarians made regular calls at mountain schools. The little native stone school shown here was built by the WPA in Kentucky and replaced an antiquated log building.

in what they called "conferences." Most of the people involved in the Pack Horse Library Project were women. Most of the pack horse librarians were the only person in their family who was then earning an income. Book carriers provided their own horses or mules, some of which were leased from local farmers. Some routes were so steep that one book woman, Grace Caudill Lucas, had to lead her horse across the cliffs. Other areas had deep water and her feet sometimes "froze to the stirrups." Another librarian chose to hike her 18 mi route on foot after the death of her mule. One librarian had a very old mule and so walked with her animal part of the route instead of riding. Over the course of a month, women would ride and walk their route at least twice, each route covering 100 to 120 miles a week, totaling an average of 4,905 miles. The book packs that the librarians carried could hold around 100 books. Books were rotated between locations and were chosen based on the preferences of the library patrons. The collection of the libraries were focused on children's books. Maggie Mae Smith, a supervisor at the [Whitley County](#) Pack Horse Library wrote that the children all ran to meet the book women, saying, "Bring me a book to read!" For adults, the collection focused on current events, history, religion and biographies.

(continued on page 3)



Book Women in Hindman, Kentucky; photo by Works Progress Administration.

One Third of Americans Had No Access to Library or Reading Materials During The Great Depression



Trails could be difficult and dangerous for Book Women, except where the WPA completed its farm-to-market road program.

(continued from page 2)

The Bible was one of the most requested books, along with instructive literature. Other popular books were *Robinson Crusoe* and literature by Mark Twain. Women enjoyed reading illustrated home magazines and books about health and parenting. Another unique aspect of the collection was the recipe and quilting pattern books that women created, writing down their favorites into binders which were shared throughout the area.

The scrapbooks also contained cuttings from other books and magazines and eventually, there were more than 200 different books generated by patrons and librarians. In 1938, four [Tru-Vuers](#) with 40 films were purchased to circulate through the different libraries so that people could see their first moving pictures. The books were in such demand that one young man walked 8 miles to the closest pack horse library to get new books. In 1936, around 33,000 books were circulat-



Soon-to-be-mother receiving books from a Pack Horse librarian.—National Archives image

ed to around 57,000 families. The lending period for books was usually about a week. Parent Teacher Associations and women's clubs in Kentucky were key to helping raise money to purchase new books. Lena Nofcier, who was involved in promoting the book donation program through the PTA, helped raise money by book drives and penny donations. In [Paintsville, Kentucky](#), the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) helped pay shipping expenses for the books donated. The head of the library in Paintsville, May Stafford, also solicited books by writing to the editor of *The Louisville Courier-Journal*. PTAs in Kentucky helped promote the Pack Horse Library Project. Local communities held book drives and open houses to support libraries. The Pack Horse Library Project not only distributed books but also provided reading lessons. Librarians and book women would also read aloud to families. Librarians were also seen as ed-

ucators, bringing new ideas into isolated areas. In order to do so, librarians had to deal with their community's suspicion of strangers and deal with a "hostility toward any outside influence." The librarians managed to overcome the attitude to such a degree that one family was reported as refusing to move to a new county because it lacked a packhorse library service. The project ended in 1943, when the WPA stopped funding the program. While local communities tried to keep the libraries going, they were unable to continue without funding. It was only in the 1950s that the remote communities would have access to bookmobiles. There were around 30 different pack horse libraries who served around 100,000 different people in the mountain areas. The libraries also served around 155 schools in these counties by 1937.

Kentucky Blue-Skinned Family Baffled Science for 150 Yrs

The Fugates, a family who lived in the hills of Kentucky, commonly known as the "Blue Fugates" or the "Blue People of Kentucky", are notable for having been carriers of a genetic trait that led to the blood disorder [methemoglobinemia](#), which causes the appearance of blue-tinged skin. Martin Fugate and Elizabeth Smith Trost, "[The Blue People of Troublesome Creek](#)" (archived PDF from the original on 2015-09-27, *Science* 82, November 1982) who had married and settled near [Hazard, Kentucky](#), around 1820, were both carriers of the recessive methemoglobinemia (met-H) gene. As a result, four of their seven children exhibited blue skin, and continued progenation within the very limited local gene pool ensured that many descendants of the Fugates were born with met-H. The disorder can cause heart abnormalities and seizures if the amount of methemoglobin in the blood rises above 20 percent. But the ranges between 10 and 20 percent can cause blue skin without other symptoms. Most of the Fugates lived long and healthy lives. The 'bluest' of the blue Fugates, Luna Stacey, had 13 children and lived to age 84. Descendants with the gene continued to live in and around [Troublesome Creek](#) and Ball Creek into the 20th century, eventually coming to the attention of the nurse Ruth Pendergrass and the hematologist Madison

Cawein III, who made a detailed study of their condition and ancestry. He found that a report from 1960 by a public health doctor, E. M. Scott, who published in the *Journal of Clinical Investigation* his research on the phenomenon among native Alaskans, based on the theory that a deficiency of the enzyme [diaphorase](#) is the cause of the oxygen deficiency in the red blood cells, causing the blood to appear brown, which in turn made the skin of those affected appear blue. Cawein treated the family with methylene blue, which eased their symptoms and reduced the blue coloring of their skin, eventually published his research in the [Archives of Internal Medicine](#) in 1964. Benjamin Stacy, born in 1975, is the last known descendant of the Fugates to have been born exhibiting the characteristic blue color of the disorder, though he quickly lost his blue skin tone, exhibiting only blue tinges on his lips and fingertips if he was cold or agitated. It has been speculated that some other Americans who inherited methemoglobinemia may also have had Fugate ancestors, but searches for direct links have so far proved inconclusive.

U.S. Census Bureau Says Americans Are Growing Older and More Diverse

Information in this article is from Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter, the [Washington Post](#) and the U.S. Census Bureau.

According to a recent report from the U.S. Census Bureau, the national median age of Americans has increased by 3.4 years to 38.8, with the largest single-year gain of 0.3 years coming in 2021, the year after the coronavirus pandemic hit. The birthrate nationwide has been declining, and decreased immigration levels have accelerated the decline. Between 2020 and 2021, 47 states and the D.C. saw an increase in median age; Montana (40.1), New Hampshire (43.0) and West Virginia (42.8) were the only states that had no change in median age.

The Northeast was the oldest region in 2021, with a median age of 40.4, followed by the Midwest (39.0), the South (38.6) and the West, which saw the largest increase, up 0.3 years to 37.7, the bureau said.

The new data also reflects the continuing diversification of the country: All race and ethnicity groups grew between 2020 and 2021 except for the White population, which declined by 0.03 percent. The Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander population was the fastest-growing category, increasing by 1.54 percent. The Hispanic category (which can be any race) had the largest numerical gain and was the second-fastest-growing, increasing by 767,907 people, or 1.24 percent.

"The states with the lowest median ages saw the largest increases between 2020 to 2021. While Utah remained the youngest state in the nation, the state's median age increased by 0.3 years from 31.5 to 31.8. Similarly, the District of Columbia had the second-lowest median age but saw the largest increase of 0.5 years from 34.4 to 34.9," said Kristie Wilder, a demographer in the Census Bureau's Population Division. "With birth rates trending downwards and the aging of the Baby Boom and Generation X cohorts, the median age will likely continue to rise in the coming years." Only one state's population - Maine - became slightly younger, as its median age decreased from 44.8 in 2020 to 44.7 in 2021. Although its median age decreased, Maine remained the state with the oldest median age in the nation, after more than two decades of getting older each year. During that same period, 47 states experienced an increase in median age.

The White population in the United States was 260,183,037 in 2021, a decrease of 0.03% or 79,836 people since 2020. California had the largest White population, totaling 29,365,260 - fol-

lowed by Texas with a White population of 23,593,392. Texas also had the largest-gaining White population, which grew by 184,747 in 2021.

Idaho had the fastest growth (2.8% or 49,918) in its White population from 2020 to 2021.

Among counties, Los Angeles County, California, had the largest White population at 7,184,792, while Maricopa County, Arizona, had the largest increase in its White population (40,378 or 1.1%) between 2020 and 2021.

The Black population in the United States in 2021 totaled 49,586,352, up 0.7% from July 2020. The Black population in 2021 comprised 14.9% of the nation.

Texas had the largest Black population in 2021, totaling 4,190,554 - an increase of 83,478 (2.0%) since July 2020. Idaho had the fastest-growing Black population, expanding 5.7% between 2020 and 2021.

The Asian population in the United States was 23,962,215 in 2021, up 281,167 or 1.2% from 2020. California had the largest Asian population (7,139,394), followed by New York (2,032,935) and Texas (1,842,911), respectively.

Idaho, with an increase of 5.4%, had the fastest-growing Asian population in 2021.

The American Indian and Alaska Native population reached 7,206,898 between July 2020 and July 2021, an increase of 74,291 or 1.0%. California had the largest American Indian and Alaska Native population at 1,121,423, followed by Oklahoma at 574,171. Idaho had the fastest-growing American Indian and Alaska Native population in the nation, with a 3.3% increase, while Texas was the largest gaining among this population that increased by 11,328 to 510,537.

The Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander population rose to 1,709,860, an increase of 1.5% or 25,989 individuals in 2021.

Hawaii had the largest Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander population with 399,045, followed by California (375,388) and Washington (105,305). Iowa had the fastest-growing Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander population that increased 11.1% from 2020 to 2021 - while Texas was the largest gaining, increasing by 2,652.

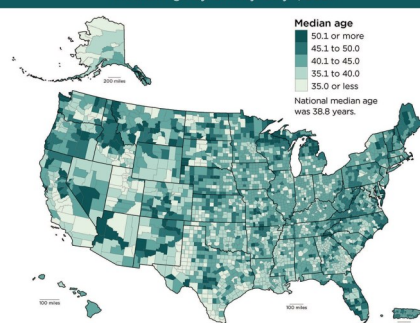
The Hispanic population grew by 767,907 in 2021, an increase of 1.2%. California (15,754,605), Texas (11,857,401) and Florida (5,830,908) were the states with the largest His-

panic populations in 2021. New York (-1.1%) and the District of Columbia (-2.5%) were the only state and equivalent that experienced drops in their Hispanic populations in 2021. Maine (5.4%) and Montana (5.4%) were the states with the fastest-growing Hispanic populations.

This is the last release of the vintage 2021 population estimates. Previous estimates are available on the [Population Estimates page](#). In December, the Census Bureau will release 2022 Population Estimates by components of change and the population ages 18 and over for the nation, states and Puerto Rico.

An Aging Nation

Median Age by County: July 1, 2021



New York City Vital Records Now Digitized Online for Free

The largest collection of publicly available New York City birth, marriage, and death records is now online and free to access. The New York City Municipal Archives has been working to digitize the millions of birth, marriage, and death records it holds since 2013. With the project now 70% complete, 9,318,625 digitized records from the late 1800s to the early 1900s are now available online as of March 2022. Visit the [NYC Department of Records & Information Services](#) website for a complete listing of [records](#) available online. If you know the certificate number and year, it is easy to search, view and download the color copy. A search by name is also available if you know the exact name and year (please note that the site does not currently account for spelling variations in names). Some records are still in the process of digitization, so are not included in digitized access. To browse records, select "Browse All" from the main menu, and enter the record type (birth, marriage, or death), borough (Manhattan, (Kings) Brooklyn, Queens, Bronx, Richmond (Staten Island) and year. The slider makes it easy for you to search for a year or a range of years. If you are unable to find the materials you need using the name search, other indexes exist to help you identify the certificate number.

Genealogy News You Can Use...

From Divorcees to Fuller Classrooms, the 1921 Census of England and Wales depicts an Era of Great Change

Portions of this article are by Michala Hulme from theconversation.com, 20 Jan 2022 and findmypast.com/blog 6 Jan 2022.

Nobody is more excited for the release of a census than a genealogist. But no documents have received the same hype as the 1921 census of England and Wales, which is now [accessible online](http://findmypast.com) (for a fee from Findmypast). Alternatively, if you visit the National Archives in London, the Manchester Central Library on St Peter's Square in Manchester or the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth, you can access it for free. It contains information on more than 38 million people from more than 8.5 million households. And it is particularly significant because, as historian David Olusoga [highlights](http://findmypast.com), it is the last many of us will be able to peruse. Census data is only made public after 100 years. The 1931 census was destroyed [in a fire in 1942](http://findmypast.com) at a store in Middlesex. And obviously, no count was undertaken in 1941 due to the second world war, so the next will be that of 1951, to be released in 2052. The modern census has been taken every ten years since 1801, the only exception being in 1941. Between 1801-1840, it was little more than a head-count, taken on a specific night, so that nobody could be counted twice. The first detailed census that named individuals [was released in 1841](http://findmypast.com). People were asked to specify their name, address, sex, occupation and birth. For those over 15 years, their age was rounded to the nearest five years; children's ages were recorded correctly. The [1911 census](http://findmypast.com) asked how many years a couple had been married, how many children were born alive and how many children had died, and it also asked how many rooms were in the house. These data are really helpful for family historians because they assist in finding birth, marriage and death records and can shed new light on family mortality. Knowing the size of a house is also useful because it can give an indication of the financial position of the head of the household. It also helps to identify the type of house it is. The questions any census contain tend to align with broader social issues. In 1911, there was concern in government [about declining birth rates](http://findmypast.com), at a time when Britain needed a strong workforce to maintain its position within Europe. In 1921, meanwhile,

the focus was on the impact the first world war had had on children. The census asks for the living status of parents, to see how many children were orphaned. The broader impact of the conflict is clear, with 1.7 million more women registered than men and more than 730,000 fatherless children. And the [post-war recession](http://findmypast.com) is made visible too, in many families' records, including my own. The census reveals that three of my great grandfathers, who were the head of their households (that is, the person filling out the census entry) were out of work. One of my great grandfathers, who the 1911 census had shown to be employed as a labourer, couldn't physically work because of injuries he had sustained during the 1914-1918 war. Unemployment rose to an average of 11.5% between 1921-22, affecting many working-class families.

Compared to previous censuses, the 1921 data shows more children in education. This is because the school-leaving age was increased to 14 years old in 1918.

Divorce is recognized here for the first time, with more than 15,000 people classing themselves as "divorced." Though still relatively difficult to obtain at this time, especially if you were a woman and were not wealthy, national divorce rates increased sixfold after the first world war, peaking in 1921. Whereas men could divorce on the grounds of adultery alone, women had to prove adultery and one other matrimonial offence. Because of the questions it no longer features, the 1921 census is less exciting compared with that of 1911, especially for family historians. But what is special about it is not the new questions it asks, but the period it paints. This census, as cultural historian Professor Matt Houlbrook says, "effectively freezes a society that is in motion. It is poised right between the upheaval of the Great War, desperate efforts at post-war reconstruction, and the transformative social, cultural, economic and political changes of the 1920s."

Did You Know....

In 1909, the average life expectancy was 47 years; only 14 percent of homes had a bathtub; only eight percent of homes had a telephone; there were only 8,000 cars and only 144 miles of paved roads in the USA; the maximum speed limit in most cities was 10 mph; the average wage in 1909 was 22 cents per hour; the average worker made between \$200 and \$400 per year; more than 95 percent of all births took place at home; sugar cost four cents a pound; eggs were 14 cents a dozen; coffee was 15 cents a pound; five leading causes of death were pneumonia and influenza, tuberculosis, diarrhea, heart disease, and stroke; the American flag had 45 stars; crossword puzzles, canned beer and iced tea hadn't been invented yet; there was no Mother's Day or Father's Day; two out of every 10 adults couldn't read or write; only six percent of all Americans had graduated from high school.

Season 11 of "Who Do You Think You Are?" Returns to TV July 10

(This announcement was made by NBC Broadcasting who said that the series would return to NBC for 13 episodes and is set to premiere on July 10, 2022.)

The television series *Who Do You Think You Are?* is returning for season 11 after a four-year hiatus, and the new promo for the show revealed the emotional journeys of the six celebrities who had their family histories researched. On the show, celebrities trace their family trees in an attempt to piece together the stories of their ancestors with the help of historians, genealogists, and other experts. Their visits to locations in the United States and all over the world unearth new discoveries about their genealogy and breathe new life into the stories of the people who came before them. Sometimes the celebrities even meet relatives they never knew they had. The Emmy-nominated series *Who Do You Think You Are?* premiered on March 5, 2010 on NBC where it ran for three seasons, until it moved to TLC. It aired for seven more seasons on that channel but now returns to NBC for season 11. The series is executive produced by Lisa Kudrow and Dan Bucatinsky. This season features the experiences of Allison Janney, Zachary Levi, Nick Offerman, Billy Porter, Zachary Quinto, and Bradley Whitford as they take a trip back in time to research their lineage.

The [NBC promo](http://findmypast.com) for *Who Do You Think You Are?* season 11, (season 4 on NBC), gives a first look at the journeys of the six celebrities. It begins with a narrator stating, "Everyone has questions about their ancestors," and includes clips from the episodes. The narrator goes on to say, "This season on *Who Do You Think You Are?*, six celebrities will embark on a global search for answers, and will be forever changed by what they find." Each celebrity has a very different family history, but all of the experiences appear to have been emotional and life-changing.



Cheyenne Genealogical & Historical Society

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The Cheyenne Genealogical &
Historical Society welcomes these
new members who recently joined
the society: **Barry & Carol Stark,**
and **Linda Watson.**

CGHS continues to wish all its mem-
bers healthy, productive genealogi-
cal research adventures and we
encourage all members to pay their
CGHS dues, participate in our
programs, get assistance at the
library, and invite friends & new
members to join us!



"Check This Out"

Family history-related fiction & nonfiction
book reviews by CGHS members & others



The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek

By Kim Michele Richardson (c. 2019, 358 pages;
Sourcebooks Landmark; Naperville, Illinois—
fiction)

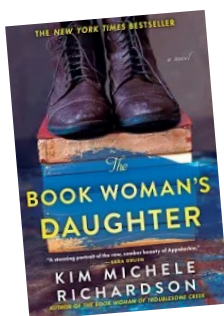
The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek is a 2019 novel by Kim Michele Richardson. The story is a fictionalized account of real subjects in the history of eastern Kentucky. In 1936, Cussy Mary or 'Bluet' is the last of the Kentucky Blues. In the dusty Appalachian hills of Troublesome Creek, nineteen and blue-skinned, Bluet has used up her last chance for "respectability" and a marriage bed. Instead, she joins the historical Pack Horse Library Project of Kentucky and becomes a librarian, riding up treacherous mountains on a mule to deliver books and other reading material to the poor hill communities of Eastern Kentucky. Along her dangerous route, Bluet confronts many who are distrustful of her blue skin. Not everyone is so keen on Bluet's family or the Library Project, and the impoverished Kentuckians are quick to blame a Blue for any trouble in their small town. Cussy Mary is a "Book Woman" — one of the Packhorse Librarians who delivered books to remote areas of the Appalachian Mountains during the Great Depression, from 1935 to 1943, as part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration program. Cussy Mary is also a "Blue" — the last of a line of blue-skinned people, whose skin appears the unusual shade due to a rare genetic disorder. As a Book Woman, Cussy Mary is highly regarded, but as a Blue, she is feared and reviled, and experiences racism, discrimination and violence. The Carters are the last of the Blue People of Kentucky, considered to be "colored" by the segregationist white community. Her "Pa", Elijah, slowly dying from lung disease from working in the mines, is determined to marry his daughter off, at any cost, in order to ensure her future security. But Cussy Mary loves her independence, her calling, and the joy she helps bring people with books, and would not be able to continue as a married woman. While the people of the small nearby town that the library treat her badly as a Blue, at least some of her patrons love and respect her.

Inspired by the true and historical blue-skinned people of Kentucky and the dedicated Kentucky Pack Horse Library Project, *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek* provides an authentic Appalachian voice to a story of hope, heartbreak and raw courage and shows one woman's strength, despite it all, to push beyond the dark woods of Troublesome Creek. *Book Woman* was on *The New York Times* Best Seller list, as well as the best seller lists of the *Los Angeles Times* and *USA Today*. *Book Woman* also won several national honors, including *Forbes* Best Historical Novel.

—Review by Amazon.com & Wikipedia

The Book Woman's Daughter

By Kim Michele Richardson (c. 2022, 305
pages; Sourcebooks Landmark; Naperville,
Illinois—fiction)



Kim Michele Richardson's latest novel, *The Book Woman's Daughter*, is both a standalone and sequel to *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek*. It follows Honey Lovett, daughter of the Book Woman who must fight for her own independence with the help of the women who guide her and the books that set her free.