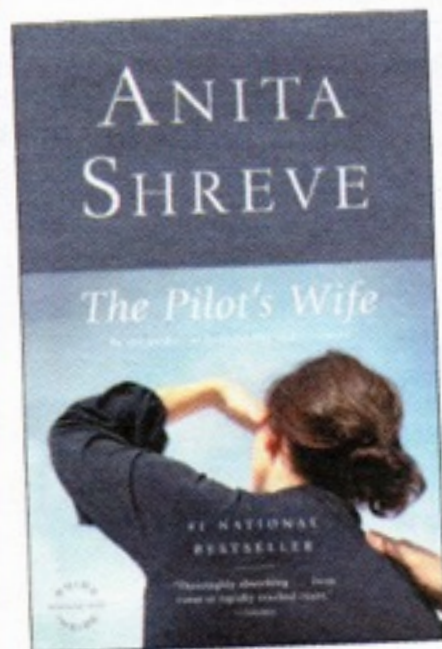


Author Anita Shreve to Speak at Mast Cove Galleries

by Valerie Marier

On a sunny Saturday morning in early August, Anita Shreve stretched out on a chaise in the second floor bedroom of her spacious home overlooking the rocky coast of Maine.

"Just lying here watching Wood Island light-house bathed in sunlight is such a contrast to today's headlines in the *New York Times*," she said. "Later this morning I'll walk through the village. I love exploring the interior of a town and ambling by the interesting warren of old homes."



The Pilot's Wife, by Anita Shreve, is one of three of her books made into movies.

In a heartbeat you get a sense of this best-selling author who's penned 17 novels in more than two decades. She cherishes the New England lifestyle, and many of her novels are set in the picturesque villages and seashore towns of Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

She enjoys her own company and prefers the simple serenity of her writing studio to the fuss and fanfare of a celebrated author's life. "I'm actually quite a private person," she said.

Fortunately, not too private. Shreve will share more thoughts at a book signing and author's talk on Thursday, August 21 at the Mast Cove Galleries on Maine Street, Kennebunkport.

Hosted also by the Book Burrow in Kennebunk's Lower Village, the event will give Shreve an opportunity to discuss her latest novel, *Stella Bain*, the story of a young American woman who is found on a French battlefield near the end of World War I. Suffering from shell shock and amnesia, Stella is taken in by a British surgeon and his wife who try to help her recover her past and find her identity.



Author Anita Shreve, who has a home in coastal York County, will discuss her work at an event on August 21.

"I've always been intrigued by the catastrophic moment in life," Shreve says. "I like to write about ordinary women who are pushed to the edge by a situation. This motif runs through many of her novels, and notably in *The Pilot's Wife*, when heroine Kathryn Lyons discovers and confronts her husband's multifaceted secret life after

he dies in a plane crash off the coast of Ireland.

This book also catapulted Shreve to fame beyond any dreams she had as a young girl growing up in Dedham, Massachusetts, with a father who was, coincidentally, an airplane pilot.

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Shreve

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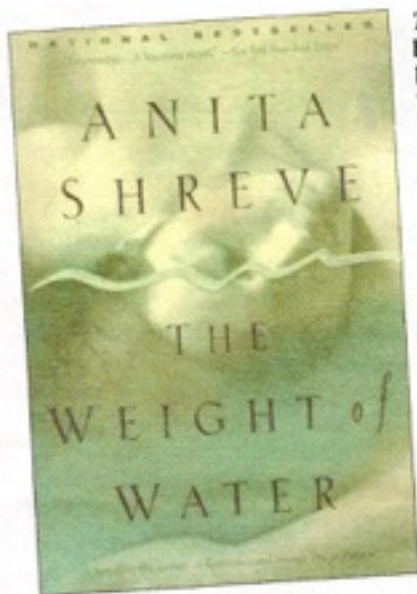
In 1999 *The Pilot's Wife* was selected by Oprah Winfrey for the Oprah Book Club and, Shreve says, "That phone call from Oprah really changed my life. My audience grew exponentially from that moment."

Three of Shreve's 17 books have been made into films, including *The Pilot's Wife* (with Christine Lahti), *Resistance* (with Julia Ormond), and *The Weight of Water* (starring Elizabeth Hurley and Sean Penn).

Shreve is also the 1998 recipient of the Laurence L. and Thomas Winship/PEN Award, which honors New England authors, and the New England Book Award for fiction. She admits that one of her proudest moments came when *The Weight of Water* was shortlisted in 1997 for the Women's Prize for Fiction (formerly known as the Orange Prize.)

"Writing each novel is a little bit like reinventing the wheel," Shreve says. "There are new locales, new voices, new plots. It's probably a little tougher each time I write a novel because I have to dig so much deeper to find characters and plots. But I always write for myself. Getting on Oprah's list was wonderful, but a writer can't think of an editor or Oprah or whomever when she's writing — she should write what satisfies her. I want to write about what I want to read."

Asked to name favorite characters from her novels, Shreve says, "I'm so absorbed in my new book that I really can't remember or think of prior books!" She does admit, however, that the title character Stella Bain "came from an earlier book. I'm letting Stella finally have her say, but I'm leaving it to my readers to figure out which book she was in originally."



Shreve is a voracious reader. "I fall asleep with a book in my hand every night," she says. (Inside scoop: Shreve strongly supports local book stores and was often spotted roaming the aisles of the former Kennebooks in Kennebunk Lower Village.)

Currently on Shreve's bedside table is Irish writer Colm Toibin's *The Master* which imagines the private life and last few years of famed American novelist Henry James.

"It's perfectly shaped and gorgeously written," she says. Her advice to budding writers: "Read anything and read all the time! That's how you'll find your voice and learn how to write."

When not in her writing studio from 7:30 AM to

The Weight of Water is the 1997 bestselling novel by Anita Shreve. Partly historical fiction, it is based on the Smuttynose Island murders of 1873. The book was made into a movie in 2002.

12:30 PM daily, including weekends, Shreve might pop down to Boston with husband John Osborn, whom she first knew when she was 13.

But during the summer months, she happily shuts

the door on her studio and takes time for family which includes five children and three grandchildren.

"A good part of my summer is dedicated to my

family," she says. "They love to come and stay here at our house in Maine and that is just the best."



Stella Bain, Shreve's latest novel, is the story of a young American woman who is found on a French battlefield near the end of World War I.

Meet Anita Shreve

On Thursday, August 21, from 5:30 to 7:30, Anita Shreve will be at Mast Cove Galleries on Maine Street in Kennebunkport. The author will give a talk at 6:30 PM. Copies of Shreve's books will be available for purchase.

The event is co-hosted by Mast Cove Galleries and The Book Burrow in Kennebunk Lower Village (behind Mornings in Paris). Reservations are appreciated. Call 207-204-5006 or email info@thebookburrow.com.

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