

Our State[®]

DOWN
HOME
IN

NORTH CAROLINA

DECEMBER 2010

3 Takes on a classic

*A Christmas
Carol*
in Fayetteville,
Cullowhee, and
Raleigh
PAGE 124

8 Great Steaks

WHERE TO FIND
CHOICE CUTS IN
NORTH CAROLINA
PAGE 62

Our favorite
**CHRISTMAS
ISSUE**



O.P. Taylor's
TOYS
Downtown Brevard
PAGE 94

Snow along the
North Carolina
Coast
A winter photo essay
PAGE 106

McIntyre's is a readers' paradise — tables and shelves full of books begging someone to crack the spines.



Personal Touch

At McIntyre's Books, the staff tailors title selections to readers' interests. It's a welcome contrast to big-box bookstores.

By Leah Hughes

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STACEY HAINES

McIntyre's Books doesn't have a romance section. It doesn't have a science-fiction section or a self-help section. But McIntyre's has carpet. The plush kind that makes your entire body relax as you let out an "ahhh" when your foot sinks in.

That soft-brown carpet — the color of coffee with a generous dose of cream — caught resident book buyer Pete Mock 15 years ago. It had him on the first step. "The first thing I thought was, 'Oh my gosh, this carpet is so nice,'" Mock recalls. He walks through McIntyre's rooms comfortably, like he's in his own home. His work attire — a gray T-shirt, black jeans, and white sneakers — fits his casual, relaxed personality. And he fits McIntyre's.

"Pete is hands down, bar none, the best bookseller," says Manager Keebe Fitch. Mock's not officially part of the Fitch family, but he's been adopted.

Classy yet comfortable

Fitch started the bookstore 21 years ago. It was her father's idea. R.B. Fitch wanted a bookstore in Fearington Village, the residential haven he and his wife, Jenny, created on U.S. Highway 15-501 between Chapel Hill and Pittsboro where belted Galloway cows graze in pastures behind white-picket fences. The couple drew inspiration for the village square from their European travels. The quaint quadrant now includes a coffee shop, restaurant, gift shop, and bookstore, all surrounded by sprawling gardens.

Keebe Fitch figured she should take her father's advice; after all, during her college days in Chapel Hill, she spent more time browsing in the Bull's Head Bookshop than attending classes. So she pushed aside her hotel school plans, thinking, "Why would I do that when I've got all this here?"

The bookshop's atmosphere and merchandise reflect Fearington's style: classy yet comfortable. Thick, white



McIntyre's Books Manager Keebe Fitch beams when her daughter, Hazel, eagerly engages in the family business.

crown molding trims the walls, and studio lights fill the rooms with a warm glow. McIntyre's Books looks like a house, not a store. Guests step into the foyer where they're greeted by their host, Pete Mock. He guides them to whatever nook suits their literary interests.

The sitting room has plush furniture arranged around a fireplace with gas logs. Above the mantel a sign assures, "Southern literature is never dead." Classic titles by literary greats, such as William Faulkner and Thomas Wolfe, fill the floor-to-ceiling shelves. Across the store, the cookbook corner has brick pavers laid in the floor — a traditional design choice in Southern kitchens. Copies of the *The Fearington House Cookbook*, written by Fearington's first lady, Jenny Fitch, encourage chefs to take the tastes of the village home.

Mock's favorite room is in the back — the mystery room. A tall chalkboard lists "Pete's mystery picks of the week." An oversize pair of wooden reading glasses, with a globe for an



WHAT WE'RE READING

PETE MOCK SUGGESTS:

COLLUSION

by Stuart Neville

"Good Irish shoot-em-up. Good for Jack Reacher fans."

KEEBE FITCH SUGGESTS:

HOUSE OF PRAYER NO. 2

by Mark Richard

"Mr. Richard writes like nobody else. This memoir is not an exception to his body of work. WOW!"

GABE CHADWICK SUGGESTS:

NEMESIS

by Philip Roth

"In only the way he can, Roth paints the perfect picture of fear and panic surrounding a fictional polio outbreak in 1940s Newark, New Jersey."

KATHERINE PINARD SUGGESTS:

THE DANGER BOX

by Blue Balliett

"From the author of *Chasing Vermeer* and *The Calder Game*, comes this new mystery that is both optimistic and loving with quirky characters..."



Resident book buyer Pete Mock (top left) welcomes visitors to McIntyre's Books and guides them to their nook of interest, such as the classics room (middle left). Readers, such as Sophia Harcourt (top right), appreciate Mock's knack for selecting titles they will love. Chalkboards and note cards with handwritten recommendations help customers make informed choices.

eyeball, sits on a table — a visual reminder that one can see the world through books.

Attention to detail

Children have their own space, too. In the kids' room, a tower of *Little Golden Books* invites young readers to test their newfound skill. Preteen novels confront those difficult adolescent years when it seems you're growing up

too fast, but then again, not quite fast enough. One novel — *12 Finally* by Wendy Mass — has a note card sticking out of its pages.

Are you a wisher? Do your parents tell you wait till you're blab blab blah? READ THIS BOOK!!! I [heart] it so much! The characters are great, and the end is fantastic! Read this book if you are a wisher. — Hazel