

A Land Remembered by Patrick D. Smith

Martin County Library System Book Club Kit:

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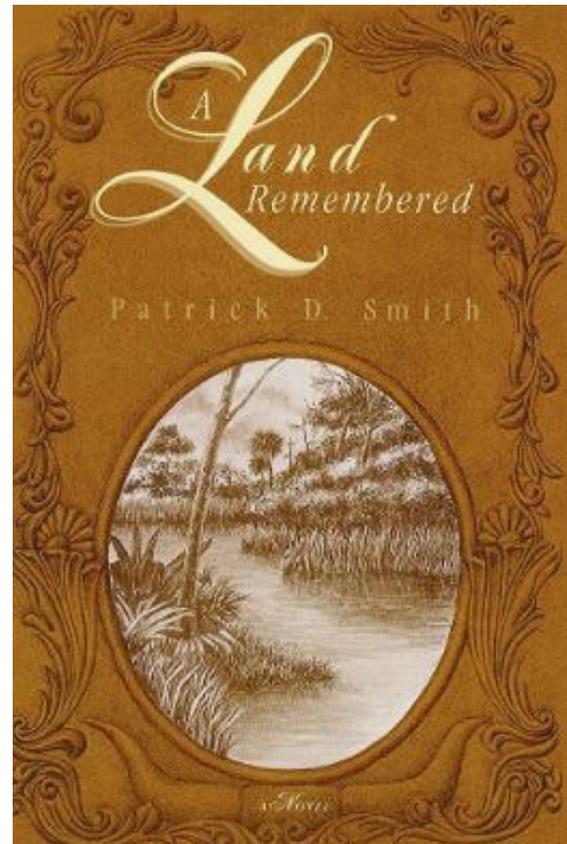
Included in the Kit:

- [Book summary](#)
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- [Discussion questions](#)
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Book summary

"Tobias MacIvey was thirty years old and had been in the Florida scrub for five years. He had come south out of Georgia in 1858. In his horse-drawn wagon, there was a sack of corn and a sack of sweet potatoes, a few packets of seeds, a shotgun and a few shells, a frying pan, several pewter dishes, forks, and a cast-iron pot. There were also the tools he would need to clear the land and build a house: two chopping axes, a broadaxe foot, crosscut saw, auger bit, a fro and drawing knife."

So begins the journey of Tobias, his wife Emma, and son Zechariah in the Florida wilderness in the mid-19th century. The book is the powerful story of three generations of a family in Florida and a story portraying the tenacity of American pioneers: how they survived and prospered in an often hostile



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environment. There are those still around today who sat across the dinner table from grandparents and heard first-hand similar stories from those who were there when it happened.

For his quintessential story of three generations in Florida, published in 1984, Smith traveled the state and sat on front porches, swatting mosquitoes, sipping sweet tea and talking to country people about their lives and the lives of their parents and grandparents scratching a living off this land. While the novel is fiction it is based on these stories and actual events in Florida history.

Source: Author's family's website.
(patricksmithonline.com/a-land-remembered)



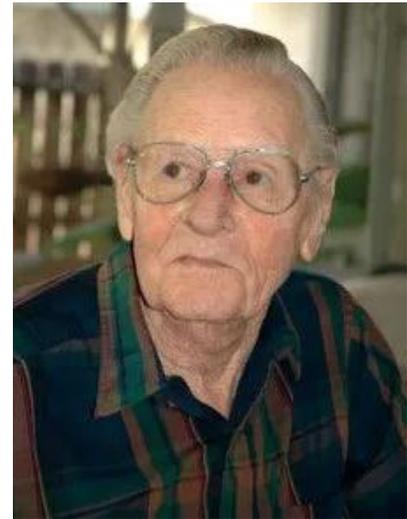


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Meet the Author

Patrick D. Smith was born in D'Lo, Mississippi on October 8, 1927. He married Iris Doty in Deland, Florida in 1948. He had two children, Jane born in 1949, and Patrick, Jr. (Rick) born in 1952. He lived in Mississippi until 1966 when the family moved to Merritt Island, Florida. He became very interested in the history and culture of Florida, which resulted in several novels about Florida, including the best know, *A Land Remembered*.



Patrick D. Smith has been nominated three times for the Pulitzer Prize, in 1973 for *Forever Island*, which was a 1974 selection of *Reader's Digest Condensed Books* both in the English language edition and in all of the worldwide foreign language editions; in 1978 for *Angel City*, which was produced as a "Movie of the Week" for the CBS television network; and in 1984 for *A Land Remembered*, which was an Editors' Choice selection of the *New York Times Book Review*. In the annual statewide The Best of Florida poll taken by *Florida Monthly Magazine*, *A Land Remembered* has been ranked #1 Best Florida Book ten times.

Source: Author's family's website. (patricksmithonline.com/patrick-smith)



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Discussion Questions

1. What is the main theme in this book?
2. Which characters did you find most likable and sympathetic?
3. How do you feel about the way the book starts – in present day Miami? What does this literary technique do to enhance the theme of the book or was it unnecessary?
4. What motivated Zech to buy up more and more land? Do you think that was wise or should he have left well enough alone?
5. Why did Tobias fight so hard against Zech's business ideas? Were all his life's struggles worth it at the end of his life?
6. What did you think about the relationship between the MacIveys and Skillit? How much do you think the dynamics of relationships between black people and white people have changed?
7. Tobias is a man with no prejudices in a time when it is most advantageous to have them. Why do you think Tobias acts so kindly toward people of other races and nationalities? What lessons can people today learn from Tobias?
8. What did you think about the relationship between Zech and Tawanda? Did he make the best choice in mates and how do you feel about his actions towards Tawanda?
9. What influenced Solomon to live the life he did and become a big player in Miami real estate? How do you think his grandfather would feel about it? His father?
10. Why does the scene at the water hole affect Zech so much? How does it change his behavior?
11. Why does Solomon have a change of heart at the end?
12. Were the MacIvey's cursed as they got farther away from the land and their simpler roots? If so, why do you think that was?
13. Why is it appropriate that Sol's final effort is to pop a whip? Why are Sol's last words "Where did it all go, Pappa?... Where did it all go? ..."



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14. Refer to 1st page of chapter 28, 4th paragraph – Did Sol live up to the meaning of his name?
15. Many people comment that everyone dies in this book. Why do you think that it seems that way?
16. How has your idea of Florida changed since reading this book? What surprised you most about the state's history?
17. The topic of environmentalism, especially in some endangered areas of Florida, is a critical one today. Discuss how people like the MacIveys both hurt and helped the Florida environment.
18. How has Toby demonstrated the MacIvey family characteristic of responsibility and caring for others?
19. Compare and contrast the MacIveys extremely limited communications with the outside world with the instant communication of today's world.
20. What do you think Tobias, Zech and Solomon MacIvey would think of Florida today? What would surprise them the most? What would they find the same?
21. What part of the book affected you the most?
22. What did you learn about Florida's history that you did not know before?
23. Imagine that you are the MacIveys and have no house, kitchen, bathroom or bed. What are the positives of that lifestyle and the negatives as compared to today?
24. If you have done so, describe your reaction to using a real outhouse. (Port-a-potties don't count.)
25. Do you agree with Sol's comment that he is "the least" of the MacIveys?

Source: A Land Remembered (alandremembered.com/for-book-clubs)



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Recipes

Corn Pone Recipe

- 1 cup medium or fine stone-ground cornmeal
- 1 1/4 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1/2 cup hot water
- 1/4 cup bacon grease or vegetable oil

Place 1 cup medium or fine stone-ground cornmeal and 1 1/4 teaspoons kosher salt in a medium bowl and whisk to combine. Add 1/2 cup hot water and stir until a soft, thick dough forms. The dough should be able to shape into a disk and hold an

indentation when pressed with a finger. Cover with a kitchen towel and let rest for 10 minutes. Divide the dough into 4 (1/4-cup) portions (about 2 ounces each). Form each into a 4-inch-wide, 1/4-inch-thick patty. Place on a plate.

Heat 1/4 cup bacon grease or vegetable oil in a large cast iron or stainless-steel skillet over medium heat until shimmering. Add the patties and cook until golden-brown on the bottom, about 4 minutes. Flip and continue to cook until the second side is browned, 2 to 3 minutes more. Meanwhile, line the plate with paper towels. Transfer the corn pones with a flat spatula or slotted spoon to the plate.



Source: kitchn (thekitchn.com/corn-pone-recipe-23329094)



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Southern Sweet Tea

- 3 family sized black tea bags (or 12 individual tea bags), such as Lipton or Luzianne
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- Ice
- Fresh mint or lemon slices

Prep Time: 10 min. Yield: 1 gallon.

Bring 4 cups of water to a boil in a small saucepan over medium-high heat. Remove from heat. Insert tea bags and steep for 5 minutes. Discard bags. Add the sugar to the tea and stir until completely dissolved. Pour the tea into the pitcher. Top off with water. Refrigerate until very cold, at least 4 hours or overnight. Serve over ice. Add a sprig of mint or a slice of lemon to each if desired.



Source: "Southern Sweet Tea." *The Kitchn*.
(thekitchn.com/how-to-make-sweet-tea-cooking-lessons-from-the-kitchn-94457)

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