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REVIEW: At Home in Mossy Creek

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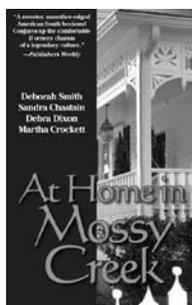
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FICTION

At Home in Mossy Creek by Debra Leigh Smith, Sandra Chastain, Debra Dixon, and Martha Crockett, with others (Belle Books, 2007; ISBN 978-0-9768760-8-3, \$14.95).

They say there's something in the water of Mossy Creek, Ga., especially when it's Valentine's Day weekend, the Cirque d'Europa's bus breaks down, and town residents open their homes and hearts to the stranded travelers. This collective novel by multiple authors shows that circus performers and Creekites alike have much to learn from each other about love. Mossy Creek, whose town motto is "ain't goin' nowhere, and don't want to," is home to lively residents like Mayor Ida Hamilton Walker, police Chief Amos Royden, chef Bubba Rice and librarian Hannah Longstreet, all of whom must react to the romance in the air this weekend. Add knife-throwers, acrobats, mimes and a dancing bear to the mix, and this cozy read offers light-hearted entertainment. Sixth in the Mossy Creek Hometown series, *At Home in Mossy Creek* can stand on its own, although readers who are new to the quaint north Georgia town would find helpful an updated "Who's Who of Mossy Creek" that includes more major characters from this book. Still, this novel provides an enjoyable escape to the kind of Southern community familiar from TV shows like *Evening Shade* and *Mayberry* — perhaps it doesn't exist, but we might wish it did, at least for a romantic weekend visiting a mountain cabin or



a magical circus performance. Suitable for popular or regional fiction collections. ►►

— Reviewed by **Emily Rogers**
Valdosta State University

The Death of a Confederate Colonel: Civil War Stories and a Novella by Pat Carr (University of Arkansas Press, 2007; ISBN: 978-1-5572-8835-6, \$14.95).



Carr's latest publication is a collection of works, each told from a Civil War era woman's point of view, giving a gritty and fascinating glimpse into the life of women in the South during the War Between the States. The reader is transported from place to place by means of a series of short vignettes that paint the South and its struggles during this difficult and tragic time. The collection opens with "Diary of a Union Soldier," in which a married woman learns the inner workings of a Union man's thoughts as she reads the diary she finds in his torn and bloodied clothing. "Slave Quarters" gives a stark look at the life of Southern slaves during a malaria outbreak. The title story, "Death of a Confederate Colonel," shows the brutal results of the Civil War through the heart-wrenching decisions required at a makeshift medical base where the limitations of medical supplies and expertise prevented adequate treatment. "The Mistress" provides a change of pace as the reader views a short scene between house slaves and the Lady of the plantation. "The Return" is a Southern girl's diary as she waits for her betrothed to return from the war. "The Confederate