



# Steamed Open

*Barbara Ross*

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It's summertime in Busman's Harbor, Maine, and the clamming is easy—or it was until a mysterious new neighbor blocks access to the beach, cutting off the Snowden Family Clambake's supply. Julia Snowden is just one of many townspeople angered by Bartholomew Frick's decision. But which one of them was angry enough to kill?

Beachcombers, lighthouse buffs, and clammers are outraged after Frick puts up a gate in front of his newly inherited mansion. When Julia urges him to reconsider, she's the last to see him alive—except the person who stabs him in the neck with a clam rake. As she pores through a long list of suspects, Julia meets disgruntled employees, rival heirs, and a pair of tourists determined to visit every lighthouse in America. They all have secrets, and Julia will have to work fast to expose the guilty party—or see this season's clam harvest dry up for good.

## Steamed Open Details

Date : Published December 24th 2018 by Kensington Publishing Corporation

ISBN : 9781496717948

Author : Barbara Ross

Format : Paperback 265 pages

Genre : Mystery, Cozy Mystery

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# From Reader Review Steamed Open for online ebook

## Mark Baker says

Lou Herrickson, a beloved member of the Busman's Harbor community, has recently died. Lou has left everything to her late husband's grandnephew, Bart Frick. That includes the mansion where she lived and the lighthouse and beach connected to it. Lou had always left the beach open to the public, but the first thing Bart does is fence off the beach. The locals who make a living by clamming are the first to discover this when they arrive to start their morning of work, and that's when Julia Snowden becomes concerned. Her family uses clams harvested from this beach in the Snowden Family clambake. Hoping to resolve things faster than a court challenge will allow, Julia goes to talk to Bart the next morning only to find him closed to reopening the beach. A few hours later, Bart is dead. The suspects range from those impacted to by closing of the beach to any potential heirs to a couple obsessed with lighthouses. Can Julia help find the killer?

I absolutely love this series, and this is another excellent entry. The mystery is strong with several competing suspects and motives to keep us from seeing the truth until Julia figures it out. A couple of sub-plots carry over from the previous book, and I liked how they were woven into the main mystery. No, you don't have to have read the previous book to understand what happens here, but it certainly helps. The characters are strong, with layers to them that unfold as the book progresses. This makes the characters introduced here more complex than in many of the series I read, and I love them more for it. We also learned a bit more about a series regular here, and I loved that added insight. There are four recipes for you to enjoy once you've finished the book, two featuring clams and two baked goods.

NOTE: I received an ARC of this book.

Read my full review at Carstairs Considers.

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## Kristina says

Steamed Open is a light cozy mystery. We get to go through the day to day running of the family clambake business with Julia Snowden. When Lou's heir is murdered, Julia sets out to get answers (just because she is nosy). The guilty party might as well have a neon sign over their head. It is easy to pick out the killer early in the book. We do get to learn more about Chris in this book. I will share my full review soon.

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## Patty says

Streamed Open by Barbara Ross is the 7th book in A Maine Clambake Mystery, and a wonderful book. Julia Snowden and her family are busy running the Snowden Family Clambakes Company. After a beloved neighbor passes away and her nephew inherits the family mansion, the trouble begins. Bartholomew Frick puts a large fence on the border of his property, and denies people access to the beach. Clammers, beach combers and lighthouse buffs are very angry. Next Frick is found dead, shortly after Julia talked to him. There are a lot of twists and turns in this book, which Julia is determined to solve. Ms. Ross's books just seem to get better and better. I enjoyed reading about summer, as it snows outside my house. I strongly recommend this book and the whole series, you won't be disappointed.

I received this book in exchange for a fair and honest review.

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### **Lisa Ks Book Reviews says**

Everyone knows when I get a cozy mystery in my hands, leave me alone until I come up for air. The day I read STEAMED OPEN, the book didn't leave my hands. It went everywhere in the house with me (Yes. Everywhere. TMI I know). Seriously, I couldn't stop reading until I had finished.

I wouldn't say book seven in the Maine Clambake Mysteries was lucky number 7 for author Barbara Ross. Luck had nothing to do with it. Brilliant writing and knowing what readers will love had everything to do with it!

Besides having wonderful characters that feel like family, food that will make your stomach growl (Thanks for the recipes at the end of the book, Ms. Ross!), and a setting that makes you wish you were there, STEAMED OPEN is a fabulous mystery that will have you guessing, like it did me, until the end. It also gets my vote for most creative murder weapon.

If you're looking to do something nice for someone, or yourself, get a copy of STEAMED OPEN!

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### **Diane Hernandez says**

Steamed Open, the seventh in the Maine Clambake Mysteries, has great characters and will teach the reader about clamming but the mystery was too easy to solve.

Bartholomew Frick, a stranger in town, inherits the Hendrickson mansion, lighthouse, and beach after 101-year-old Lou's death. His first move is to bar access to the beach. His second is to be murdered with a clamming fork.

When Lou's elderly housekeeper, Ida, asks Julia for help in clearing her name, Julia looks for the real killer. Julia juggles sleuthing with her island clambake lunches and dinners. In addition, she uncovers why her boyfriend has been so secretive about his family. Last, but not least, there are five recipes included: Linguini with clam sauce, clam dip, clam potato casserole, raspberry muffins and sour cream coffeecake.

I enjoyed the Maine atmosphere and the great and varied characters. Chris' backstory is heartbreaking. Watching the police get mired down interviewing everyone multiple times while Julia proceeds to find the answers to two old Hendrickson secrets was fun. However, the clue to the murderer's identity was too obvious, like a flashing yellow sign.

Steamed Open is a good choice for cozy readers looking for a slice-of-life portrait of how people live in coastal Maine. However, for armchair detectives like me, it didn't offer enough of a challenge. 3 stars.

Thanks to Kensington Books and NetGalley for an advance copy in exchange for an honest review.

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## **Fred says**

Steamed Open is the seventh book in the A Maine Clambake Mystery series.

I've loved this series since the first book. I can always count on an interesting and well-written story with interesting and believable characters. I've never been to a clambake, but I never tire of reading what is included and what goes into the preparation of the clambake.

Beloved resident, Heloise "Lou" Herrickson, has left her property, including her house, lighthouse, and lighthouse keepers cottage to her grand-nephew, Bartholomew Frick. The first change that Frick makes is to install a fence and locked gate preventing clambers and residents access to the beach that they have enjoyed for years. The clambers, wielding their clam rakes and residents begin a boisterous protest but are informed that the matter will have to go through a court process to resolve. Julia thinks that if she can talk with Frick, that maybe some kind of agreement can be worked out. As she approaches the front door she meets Ida Fischer, the Herrickson's housekeeper. Ida lets Julia know that she has just resigned and tells her where Frick was when she last saw him. It turns out to be a short meeting and Julia's pleas of understanding fall upon deaf ears. Then as Julia is leaving, she is approached by a neighbor, Vera French, who wants to express her sympathies to Frick and get a look inside the house. Later that day as Julia is returning from Morrow Island after the evening clambake, she is met by the police who inform her of Frick's death.

Julia is more concerned with who will inherit from Frick, than who the killer was, hoping that it isn't anyone involved in the protest. But, at the same time, she feels that knowing who the other heirs that are mentioned in Lou's will may point to the possible killer. This turns out to be a dilemma for her as the late husband's godchild, Elizabeth Anderson, cannot be found. Also, there is mentioned in the will a daughter that no one seemed to know anything about and was written out of the will.

Also coming out in this book is more about Julia's boyfriend, Chris. Chris has been mostly secretive about his past and family. Finally, Julia is able to get him to open up and explain why he limits his contact with them. Also, plans for the restoration Windsholme, the old family home on Morrow Island, are being reviewed so that construction may start soon.

It always wonderful to spend time with the enjoyable residents of Busman's Harbor and I will definitely be watching for the next book in this great series.

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## **Amanda says**

This book was so hard to put down, I read it in one sitting! I love the small, seaside town of Busman's Harbor and the family clambake featured in this series. They're practically characters in the story. The characters are great, from protagonist Julia and her boyfriend Chris to policemen Dawes, Binder, and Flynn, and all the family and friends in between. Some of the usual side characters are little more than a mention in this book, but we meet several interesting, new characters. This is a well-written mystery, centered around recently-deceased Lou and her family's extremely valuable oceanside estate, her heirs - one of whom winds up dead - and a disinherited relative. There are a few solid suspects and a couple characters with mysterious histories. There's also a side storyline revealing more of Chris' background. I'm already looking forward to the next book in the series, and this one hasn't been released yet! For readers who haven't discovered the joy of the Maine Clambake Mysteries yet, this book works as a stand-alone, but I highly encourage you to start from

the beginning and enjoy the whole series chronologically!

I received an advance copy of this book. This review contains my honest thoughts and opinions.

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### **Amy says**

Another summer begins in Busman's Harbor, Maine and so does Julia Snowden's family's business of providing boat tours and authentic clambakes on their private island. But their quiet lives are disturbed with the death of a beloved elderly resident and the unwelcome arrival of her grandnephew by marriage, the executor of her estate. He promptly erects a fence on the property's beach, restricting public access to clamming and the lighthouse, which has been allowed for decades prior. When he is found dead just days after coming to town, few people mourn his death. But what will become of the estate and who had motive to murder him?

This is one of my favorite cozy series and I have read all prior six books. It was an excellent read. The mystery had multiple plot layers containing family secrets, leaving no shortage of suspects. Additionally, Julia and her boyfriend Chris face a crisis in their relationship. I am looking forward to book eight and hoping they can work through this challenge together.

Thanks to NetGalley for an advance digital copy of this book. My review is voluntary.

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### **Brenda says**

Great Cozy Series I learned about digging for clams in book 7! Very detailed relationship searches to find Lou's heirs was very interesting.

Another season for Snowden Family Clambake and things are going well until Lou Herrickson's heir shuts off access to her beach for everyone, even Will Orsolini and the other clammers whose livelihood comes from gathering clams there and Will sells to Snowden family for their daily clambake excursions.

When heir Bart Frick is murdered, Julia is asked to investigate by a neighbor to clear the Herrickson housekeeper.

Julia's skills at uncovering clues from the smallest detail has her providing the police with new people to question.

The Snowden family home, Windsholme, restoration project is discussed and plans are underway. Julia & Chris' relationship moves forward once Chris shares his family & dark secrets.

I volunteered to read an ARC through Net Galley Release date is Jan 2019

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### **LORI CASWELL says**

Dollycas's Thoughts

Busman's Harbor, Maine is in an uproar as Bartholomew Frick shuts down Sea Glass Beach access on a property he is set to inherit from the much-beloved resident Heloise "Lou" Herrickson. Julia is worried about having enough crabs for their Snowden Family Clambake's and about the clammers that are losing their income. The tourists aren't happy either especially a couple that was booked to spend a few nights in the nearby lighthouse. Soon after Julia tries to meet with the man to try to come up a plan to reopen the beach he is found dead. There are plenty of suspects as he had angered plenty of people. Just who was mad enough to commit murder? Julia plans to find out.

It was so nice to escape to Maine in the summertime as the cold weather here tries to chill us to the bone.

This time in addition to the beach being closed off preliminary plans have been drawn for repairing and renovating Windsholme, the mansion on Morrow Island that been empty since the 1920s. The mansion on the beach that Bartholomew Frick was inheriting was built by the same builder so the architect and designer are anxious to get a peek as they continue to finalize the plan. Julia and her boyfriend Chris are having some issues but she opens her will finally open up and tell her more about the secret she knows he is keeping.

This was a really fast read for me. The death of "Lou" Herrickson sets off a chain of events that had my pages absolutely flying. Her family tree and her will designations were very surprising to the people of Busman's Harbor.

All my favorite characters were back and some new characters that definitely fit the "quirky" definition were introduced. One couple traveling by RV is trying to see or sleep in all the lighthouses in the U.S. What a fun idea!

I liked that we delve into Chris' past in this story and start to understand him better. He has had a complicated life and the author is finally allowing Julia and us readers in on his past.

The entire story is very well-written with subplots the blend perfectly into the main plot. Twists, turns, and some exciting moments take place as Julia does her best to solve this mystery. There is a clear "edge of your seat" moment near the end that had my heart racing.

I love the way Barbara Ross tells a story. She drew me in, set a brisk pace, and took me on a wonderful little trip complete with delicious food descriptions (with recipes) and a top-shelf mystery.

Each book in this series can be read on its own but for maximum enjoyment, I recommend reading them in order.

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### **K.A. Davis says**

STEAMED OPEN, the seventh book in the Maine Clambake Mysteries by Barbara Ross, captured my attention from the very beginning and held it until the very last word was read! I've been a long-time fan of this series and picking up this newest release was like sitting down and having a reunion with special friends that I haven't seen in a year. Ms. Ross is tops in her league at creating memorable characters that readers feel can become close friends. And as happens (hopefully) in real life, these characters grow, change, and become better people from the events that shape them. Even though STEAMED OPEN is easily read as a stand-alone, I whole-heartedly recommend reading in order (if possible) to fully appreciate the skill Ms. Ross exhibits in creating her characters.

Protagonist Julia Snowden and her family own and operate a clambake on their family's private island. It's mid-August in Maine and the tourists are out in force. Ms. Ross paints a beckoning description of the town and the island during summer season, enticing the reader to take a virtual vacation. I would dearly love to visit this area in real life after reading this series! But, it's not all fun in the sun for Julia and her family when a murder hits the town. The story is tightly plotted with twists and turns to keep the reader guessing. The subplots are riveting and adds an extra layer of intrigue to the book. I've been long curious (as has Julia) about her boyfriend's past and his reluctance to open up. We're finally given a glimpse into his secrets which makes him all that more meaningful to the story. I also appreciated the bits and pieces of information the author adds about clams, lighthouses, and the plight of seasonal fishermen and workers, and how difficult it is for them to make a living in the area. The author wove in the facts without ever detracting or slowing down the exciting story.

Julia, her family and friends, all enjoy lots of delectable food both on the island during clambake and in town. The descriptions will leave the reader hungry but fortunately Ms. Ross includes several recipes at the back of the book to satiate any appetite.

I was provided an advance copy with the hopes I would review. All thoughts and opinions are my own.

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### **Missi Stockwell says**

I am a HUGE fan of the Maine Clambake Mystery series by Barbara Ross !! I am a HUGE fan of the state of Maine so it makes sense that I would love this series as it is set in Maine !! But there is so much to love about this series !

You cannot help but fall in love with the main character Julia, her family and the neighbors, her family business and the fact that when there is a murder Julia jumps right in with both feet to "help" the local police department solve the case. Even though Julia has her hands full running the family's clambake business and its summertime which is when they are at their busiest, when there is a murder Julia is off and running.....even if the murdered person is basically a stranger.

Ross knows how to capture the readers attention as soon as you open the book and keeps your attention until you have read the last word and even after you close the book, Busman's Harbor will stay with you for a while. How can it not ? The way the story is written, you feel like you are a part of their community and not just someone passing by. You feel like you have a seat at the counter at Gus's and you feel like you are enjoying lunch with everyone employed at the Snowden Family Clambake....but the best is hanging out with Julia as she solves another murder in her close knit town.

Steamed Open is the seventh book in this wonderful series and I cannot help but hope that there are many, many more books in this series. I need to return to Busman's Harbor as many times as I can..... Thank you Barbara for allowing me and all your other faithful readers the chance to take a vacation while sitting in our own living rooms !!!

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### **Danielle Urban says**

Steamed Open by Barbara Ross is an interesting cozy mystery. One that takes place in Maine. A lot of



people require access for their livelihood. And it appears that the heir of a deceased town member is blocking it off. All the citizens are angry. But who would kill out of anger? There are many suspects and the murder is one that I wouldn't have guessed. I liked that it was not predictable like most murder mysteries are.

Barbara Ross creates a tale that sweeps readers into a family like community in Maine. Everyone knows each other. However, one them is about to become a killer. The question of how well do we really know the people in our area pops into mind. One woman works to solve the case. Her family owned business relies heavily on access to clams. And the events lead to a chill that never leaves. One person is killed and another is spared. Mystery, intrigue, and entertaining characters made *Steamed Open* a good read. I did not read the previous novels in the series and was able to follow along just fine. Overall, it was well-written.

I received this copy from the publisher. This is my voluntary review.

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### **Megan Williams says**

Fun, FUN series. It's always great to re-visit Busman's Harbor and see what's UP! This time we have a long time Maniac die and leave her estate to a flatlander who ends up dead when he doesn't 'fit in'. The characters are wonderful, the scenery to sigh over, recipes to try and a longing for summer.

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### **Taryn says**

Julia is happy that it is summertime and clamming season is upon her family. There's nothing greater than having clambakes and hoards of vacationers to enjoy them. When a newcomer to town denies access to the beach where the Snowden family holds their Clambakes there is an uproar of disapproval not only from the family but the town. People look forward to the Clambakes not only for themselves but for the people it brings to the town. When newcomer, Bartholomew Frick, ends up dead things don't look good for the Snowden family. Julia knows that no one in her family could have murdered the man but who does that leave? She soon learns that Frick had quite a few people who disliked him but who out of the bunch could have killed him and why. Follow along as Julia digs into Frick's life and hopes to find a killer among the clues. Will she find the answers she seeks or will this murder remain a mystery? This is a great series filled with a wonderful cast of characters. I love the relationship that Julia has with her family and it just adds to the story. The location is beautiful and one I would love to visit one day. I'm from the south so I enjoy learning about the cuisine that is mixed throughout the story and it has me trying new things all the time. I can't wait to see where the author takes Julia and her family next and I hope she brings some new and exciting recipes to the mix.

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