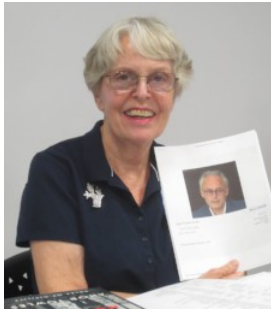


## ***A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles**



**presented by Moira Johannesen**

At the October 2018 meeting of the Friends of the Palms Springs Book Club, Moira Johannesen led us in a discussion of Amor Towles' *A Gentleman in Moscow*. With degrees from Yale and Stanford, Towles worked for 20 years in financial services in New York before retiring and pursuing his passion for writing. His first novel, *Rules of Civility* is set in the United States and shares a character with *Moscow*, Towles' second novel; but *Moscow* is by no means a sequel. This novel coincides with the rise of the Soviet Union through the eyes of a former noble who is sentenced to house arrest in the Metropol, a grand hotel that members of the Book Club recalled visiting. The novel has wide appeal as evidenced by Hollywood's interest in producing a series TV adaptation starring Kenneth Branagh in the lead role of Count Alexander Rostov.

*Moscow* was generally enjoyed by all -- perhaps a first for the Club? One member commented that the book doesn't stress you out. Another stated there was just enough Russian history to get a sense of time and place. There was a discussion about Towles' use of footnotes. Most enjoyed the humor in the story (wine bottles without labels??). For most, the book's ending was a surprise (if not a secret for those who didn't get the willowy figure reference).

Some other stars suggested for the role of Count Rostov were Jeremy Irons and Liam Neeson. Of course, to the winner go the spoils and because Kenneth Branagh is also producing the upcoming TV series, he had some influence in who would play the lead!