



SISTERS in CRIME
CROAK & DAGGER
ALBUQUERQUE CHAPTER

THE NOOSELETTER

Volume I, Number 3—June, 2005

† Expert Testimony †

—From the Prez

I like birthdays and use any excuse to celebrate them. This delight goes beyond the mercenary pleasures of well-wrapped presents and scrumptious chocolate cake with coffee ice cream. For me, birthdays—along with anniversaries—represent accomplishments. They deserve parties and applause and an extra shot of whipped cream.

Imagine my happiness in realizing that our chapter has two birthdays to mark its beginnings. And we haven't celebrated either one sufficiently yet. Perhaps that's because the length of the gestation period for Croak & Dagger is up for some debate. Did it begin with our first organizational meeting in October? Did it start with the mumblings of various mystery authors and enthusiasts one, two, or seven years ago? I remember commiserating about wanting a Sisters in Crime chapter in Albuquerque with Roy Z. and Carolyn P. (your *Nooseletter* editors) back in 2003. So, there's admittedly a little confusion.

Plus, it was a happy pregnancy. In those initial conversations and organizational meetings, there was a wonderful sense that anything could happen. We didn't limit ourselves by deciding to target membership rates or funds. We didn't define what success for our organization would look like—beyond gathering a group of people who love the mystery genre and crime fiction.

The two birthdays I think we've missed are: Wednesday, November 10, 2004. That was the meeting when we elected the board and gave our chapter its name. To me, that's when we became a real organization; we committed ourselves and our time to Croak & dagger—rather than leaving the idea to blossom somehow by itself. The other date is January 25, 2005 when Croak & Dagger held its first program in the mildly stuffy teachers lounge at

Grant Middle School. The room was awkward and the signage poor, but about 20 people came to hear Richard Peck speak. There was a feeling in that room, a happy sense that this was the beginning of something fun and enriching for each one of us.

So, we're either eight or six months old now. In that time, we've drafted by-laws, attracted public attention, found a great meeting space, had informative and interesting programs, eaten yummy snacks . . . and we've begun to ferret out the mystery lovers in, and near, Albuquerque. Our sense of community is growing.

I propose a big slice of virtual cake for each one of us and a toast with champagne (or bubbly nonalcoholic cider): "May the life of the Croak & Dagger chapter be long, healthy and ever better."

With the likes of our current membership, I have no doubt C & D will be celebrating many more happy birthdays in the years to come.

* * *

There's more from the Prez, who's been adventuring in L.A. at the **"No Crime Unpublished© Writers Conference: Writing and Selling Killer Mysteries"**

Last weekend, I went to Los Angeles, California to participate as a panelist at the Sisters in Crime LA Chapter's *No Crime Unpublished Writers Conference*. About 125 budding mystery writers—as well as total newbies—attended this day-long event packed with so much useful information and perspective that I'm still trying to debrief.

The morning began with a session moderated by Naomi Hirahara whose first book, *SUMMER OF THE BIG BACHI*, has been nominated for a Macavity Award for best first novel, 2004. Hirahara interviewed panelists David Skibbins (*EIGHT OF SWORDS*), Harley Jane Kozak (*DATING DEAD MEN*) and Patricia

Smiley (FALSE PROFITS) about their experiences with their own first novels that have become breakout successes.

The rest of the morning was devoted to dialog writing, editing and polishing manuscripts and forensic lectures. Panelists included Robin Burcell (COLD CASE), John Morgan Wilson (author of the Benjamin Justice mystery series), Edward Wright (WHILE I DISAPPEAR), and Dorothy Johnston—a well-known Australian novelist whose first US book, THE TROJAN DOG, is due out later this year.

For writers who didn't want to listen to panels, there were other experts such as Doug Lyle, MD, (FORENSICS FOR DUMMIES), FBI special agent Mark Lorrin, and Ron Bowers who is a senior deputy district attorney whose presentations for authors about courtroom dynamics and basic law are nationally known and respected.

Our lunchtime speaker was Lee Child. This engaging and charming speaker told the crowd about how he came to write novels, the astounding success of his work so far, and how he remains flummoxed by it all. His talk lasted a good half-hour later than the organizers expected. To their credit, they simply pushed all the events forward that amount of time rather than cut a single minute from the programming. All the panelists were gracious enough to agree to the change.

In the afternoon, participants had the choice of four longer workshops focusing on character development, pitching for movies, killer openings, or juicing up creativity. The day concluded with a panel of literary agents for newer writers.

However sketchy my report, I wanted to give members here an idea of how Sisters in Crime chapters help their communities grow, learn and prosper. In the years to come, I think it would be wonderful if our chapter could come up with a similar day-long event—something with the breadth and quality of this fine conference. I know that chapters in California may have a wider group of people from which to draw their speakers—but given our Croak & Dagger programming thus far, I think we could certainly come up with an event that would marvelously fill our local needs. It's something to think about.

Cheers to you all,
Pari Noskin Taichert, President,
Sisters in Crime Croak & Dagger chapter

FROM DAISY DALRYMPLE TO LUCREZIA BORGIA

Notes from the *Historical Novel Society 1st North American Conference*,

Salt Lake City, April 15-17, 2005

by

Sarah Schwartz

The Historical Novel Society's first North American conference drew a bounty of writers passionate about medieval Europe, ancient civilizations, and the Renaissance. Then, of course, there were the rest of us who are infatuated with the American past: the Civil War, the Wild West, and the Victorian era. I felt as if I had parachuted into a strange new land filled with people obsessed over past lifetimes, vowing to get it right—in their novels. Over 300 people attended the event in Salt Lake City.

The following description of panelists' works affords but a glimpse of the range of historical periods covered and the characters that inhabit them.

Writing the Western Experience

A panel moderated by Ann Parker

Mystery author Shirley Tallman spoke about her novel, *Murder on Nob Hill* (St. Martin's Minotaur, 2004), which takes place in 1880 in San Francisco. The sleuth, Sarah Woolson, is a young woman who has always dreamed of becoming a lawyer. The trouble is, everyone believes it is not only unnatural, but against God's will, for women to seek a career.

The panel's moderator, Ann Parker, is the author of *Silver Lies* (Poisoned Pen Press, 2003) set in Leadville, Colorado, in 1879 and featuring Inez Stannert, a tough-minded saloon-keeper.

Researching the Historical Novel

A panel moderated by Karen Swee

Kathleen Ernst has written three Civil War mystery novels for the American Girl History Mysteries series: *Trouble at Fort La Pointe*, *Whistler in the Dark*, and *Betrayal at Cross Creek*. In addition to writing, Ernst conducts workshops on historical fiction, including research methods and sources, using artifacts and photographs to develop story ideas, characterization, and plotting.

Margaret Frazer has written fourteen Dame Frevisse mysteries set in 15th century England. Her latest is *The Widow's Tale* (Berkley, 2005). Originally, "Margaret Frazer" was two people who

met through the Society for Creative Anachronism. After six novels in the Dame Frevisse series, the “Margaret” half returned to the 20th century. The Margaret Frazer we met, the “Frazer” half, came to the relationship with shelves and notebooks full of research on England in the 1400s.

While researching one of her novels, Judith Merkle Riley studied portrait painting so that she could understand what it’s like to be a portraitist. Riley’s latest historical novel, set in 1556, is *The Master of All Desires* (Penguin, 1999). The prophet Nostradamus must stop two foolish ladies from wishing on an evil relic. Catherine de Medici also plays a role in this story.

The moderator, Karen Swee, is the author of *Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Murder: a Revolutionary War Mystery* (Bridge Works Publishing Co., c2004).

These writers are meticulous, a little bit nutty—and I hope to be just like them.

Historical Mystery Panel

Moderated by Alana White and composed entirely of Sisters in Crime members!

Beverle Graves Myers’s latest novel, *Painted Veil: a Baroque Mystery* (Poisoned Pen Press, 2005) is set in 1734 in Venice and is a sequel to *Interrupted Aria*. Her amateur sleuth is Tito Amato, a castrato soprano. How original is that? Myers’s first career was psychiatry so expect a little character analysis in her works.

Carola Dunn’s novel, *A Mourning Wedding: a Daisy Dalrymple Mystery* (St. Martin’s Minotaur, 2004), is the latest in a series set in England in the 1920s, featuring Daisy Dalrymple Fletcher and her husband, Detective Chief Inspector Alec Fletcher. Dunn used to write Regency romances, but now she writes “nice, friendly, little murders.”

Kathy Lynn Emerson writes Elizabethan mysteries featuring the amateur sleuth Susanna Appleton. Her latest novel is *Face Down Below the Banqueting House: a Lady Appleton Mystery* (Perseverance Press, 2005). Emerson is also the author of nonfiction books about the era in which her *Face Down* series is set, including *The Writer’s Guide to Everyday Life in Renaissance England* (Writer’s Digest Books, 1996).

Based on her long list of novels set in the Middle Ages or in the Napoleonic Era I would say Roberta Gellis is a history junkie, but she has also written a sizeable number of science fiction novels. She cut her historical teeth on Howard Pyle’s King

Arthur and liked the fact that in those times “everything was personal.” Asked why she is writing mysteries, she described herself as a “whore” who’ll write anything that sells. She pointed out an advantage to writing historical mysteries—as opposed to contemporary mysteries—is that one doesn’t have to worry much about forensics. Her latest novel, *Lucrezia Borgia and the Mother of Poisons* (Forge, 2004), features Lucrezia Borgia, who is accused of poisoning one of her ladies-in-waiting. Borgia becomes a sleuth in order to discover who committed the crime and recover her reputation. *Bone of Contention: a Magdalene la Batarde Mystery* (Forge, 2002) is set in 1139 and features the mistress of a house of prostitution as sleuth.

Lauren Haney writes mysteries set in ancient Egypt. Her latest novel, *Flesh of the God: a Mystery of Ancient Egypt* (Avon Books, 2003) is a prequel to a series featuring the Medjay policeman, Lieutenant Bak, who has been exiled to a fortified city in a desolate part of the Nile Valley. Haney travels to Egypt at every opportunity. Imagine the drudgery of travel to exotic places in order to get the setting right.

The panelists, for the most part, were drawn to the historical period first, then the story.

Coincoin of Isle of Canes: Breathing Life into Shadowy Women of the Past

Speaker: Elizabeth Shown Mills

Mills, past president of the American Society of Genealogy and editor of the *National Genealogical Society Quarterly*, recounted her research for the historical novel, *Isle of Canes*, an account of a multi-racial family that rose from the chains of slavery to rule Louisiana’s Isle of Canes. The story’s central character, Coincoin, is a legend in Louisiana. Mills compared the celebrated Coincoin with the historical Coincoin to show the fallacy of accepting oral history as fact, and of accepting that slaves (and women) cannot be adequately researched. She urged the audience to turn fragments of information into insight and to remember “the past was a foreign country—they did things differently there.”

Some of Mills’s research principles:

- To find a female, follow the males to whom she is attached.
- To understand a woman, thoroughly study her known kinfolk.
- Track records at every level of government.

- Look for friends, associates, neighbors—anyone connected in any way.
- Interpret legal records in the context of contemporary law.
- Identify unofficial record-keepers and locate their records.

Mills researched three generations before and after Coincoin to ensure the accuracy of her story.

The conference provided an opportunity for writers to meet with literary agents and editors, including Natalia Aponte from Tor/Forge, Judy Geary from High Country Publishers, Irene Goodman of the Irene Goodman Literary Agency, Miranda Stecyk of MIRA Books, and Rachel Kahan from Crown Publishers. I mention this aspect because conferences that enable a writer to pitch her wares are an invaluable resource for the pre-published author.

Sisters in Crime, Croak & Dagger Chapter, Albuquerque, was well represented with Rob Kresge along with the Page Erwin writing duo. The four of us Sisters met over drinks with our Western sisters who are members of Women Writing The West, an association of writers, editors, publishers, agents, booksellers, and other professionals writing and promoting the Women's West. Their 11th annual conference is scheduled for Oct. 21-23, 2005 in Fort Worth, Texas. Check out www.womenwritingthewest.org for more information. (Men are welcome!)

If you write, or are a fan of historical mysteries, find out more about the Historical Novel Society at www.historicalnovelsociety.org.

The Cairn of Albertvs

Roman Holiday

Don't always do as the Romans did...

Some 132 days in the twelve Roman calendar months, which parallel our own (vice-versa, actually) were days off for Julius Citizen and his family. Slaves, especially, looked forward to the December Saturnalia, but don't try these in your living room.

This Bud's for you! The ancient March 15 new year festival of Anna Parenna may sound like a Tolstoy novel, but on that day Romans packed their coolers and got out of town to picnic on someone

else's property. In this original binge drinking spree, the aim was to down as many cups of wine as you could, because it was believed you would live as long as the number of drinks you had. Trouble was, at the end of the day no one could remember.

Voodoo and Vampires. The invisible spirits who lived at crossroads were either friend or foe—sort of like drivers crossing The Big I. On January 1-3, to keep spooks happy, hang woolen dolls in your house and lace many strands of garlic around your personal household gods.

Tax deductible? On April 15, after mailing in your IRS return, go out and celebrate Mother Earth. Directions:

1. Find a pregnant cow.
2. **C E N S O R E D**
3. Take the unborn calf to the Vestal Virgins at Rome, who will burn it in their sacred fire.
4. Save the ashes of the burned fetus for use at April and July festivals.

Pre-Viagra. On March 1 women trooped to Juno's temple on the Esquiline Hill (Jupiter was out somewhere dallying with wood nymphs.)

Husbands stayed home and prayed (that their wives would or would not return?), then gave them money and presents when they did come home. Doesn't say if some left again right away.

You don't wanna know... March 15-25/ Fertility rites to Cybele and Attis. Some men went out into a pine forest with a sharp blade...

...**C E N S O R E D**

Definitely not in your living room! To make dunging out sheep and cattle pens seem like fun, Roman farmers turned the two days into Funsville. Sulfur was burned to cover the smell, then the animals were put into clean, decorated pens and sprinkled with H2O. Bonfires were lighted, after which olives, horse blood (Pegasus, where are you?), beanstalks and the ashes of that unborn calf were thrown in. Those still able to—man *and* beast—jumped over the fires three times to protect themselves from things that went bump in the night. To calm the beasts, they were fed oatmeal cookies and warm milk. It's not recorded what the farmers took. Wanna guess?

New Mexico monsoon. On August 19 rituals were held to Jupiter to encourage the whimsical god to send storms, heavy rains and floods **NOW**, before the harvests were brought in.

Make up your mind. Eight days later, the Voltunia festival was held to keep ripening fruits

from shriveling in the hot winds common at this time.

All I want for Christmas is... The Saturnalia took place from December 17 - 24. Week-long revelries honored the god Saturn (Kronos in Greek mythology; he ate his children) and marked the winter solstice. The celebration was a sort Roman Mardi Gras-cum-Extreme Social Makeover: businesses, schools and the government shut down, people over-spent on gifts, over-ate, over-drunk and over-dressed in costumes until no one could tell billionaires from beggars. A mock king, "The Lord of Misrule," was crowned, who ordered masters to serve their slaves. 'Course the costumes came off on the 25th—guess who cleaned up the mess?

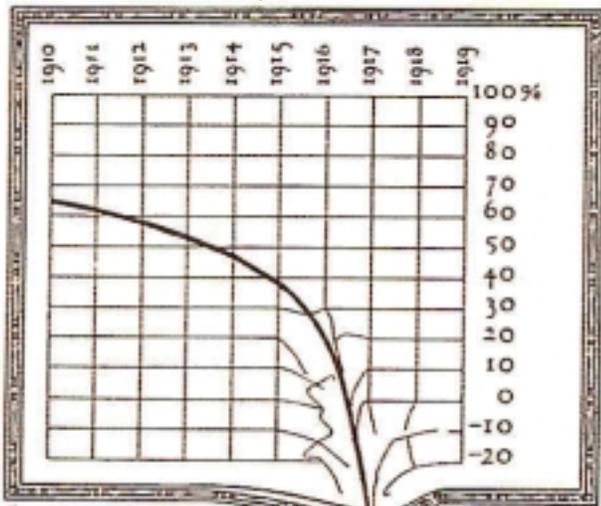
Some festivals had self-explanatory names: Orgiastic Festival of Juno Februa (Don't ask); Festival of Bacchus (Do you have to ask?); Hilaria (Laugh a minute); Feast of Expectant Mothers (It better be a boy); Feast of Pomona (Opted by a California town).

Pax vobiscum. Perhaps January 30 should have taken precedence—The Festival of Peace. ✓

—Albert Noyer

Does anything ever change?

And now we bring you this little tidbit from the "Henny-Penny files. —Ed.



A chart showing the percentage of excellence in the physical properties of books published since 1910.

Extracts from *An Investigation into the Physical Properties of Books* by W.A. Dwiggin & L.B. Siegfried (1919)

Note: The author seems to have forgotten the minor variable of World War I.

OP-ED

—THE GALLOWS TRAP DOOR—

Pop-Monkey-Do-Clone —by Page Erwin

Whether you are a writer or a reader of fiction, you have to wonder, what is happening to publishing?

This is a hard question because there is no definitive answer and the factors keep changing as market demands change. Add in a monkey-see monkey-do factor in which one best seller gives birth to clone after clone. A little voice within me asks, "Is there any correlation between literature and pop-fiction?" The answer is a resounding "no." The massive influence of media has forever altered taste, and the publishing establishment is only too eager to cater to the whims of consumerism.

Huge changes in the publishing industry such as consolidation of major houses, "musical chair" hiring of editorial staff, and the increased power of the major book seller chains have all affected what is on the shelves. It may be that literature can still be found among the mid-list publishers, and there are always gems of literature within the ever-shrinking and struggling small press world.

However, let's have fun with one week's *New York Time Book Review Paperback Book Best Sellers* list. For example, at random, I chose May 22, 2005 and analyzed it, and sure enough, a theme emerged. Disregard that, during that week, Dean Koontz topped the list by going over the edge with *The Taking*. He's popular all over the world and I've seen his titles in airport bookstores from Milan to San Francisco.

However, six other titles within the top sixteen tell a big part of the story. *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hesseini deals with an Afghan-American who returns to Kabul to learn about his childhood friend and see if he is surviving the Taliban. In *A Loving Scoundrel* Johanna Lindsey probes the life of a young woman who grew up on the rough streets of London, wanting to become a lady. *Nighttime Is My Time* by old faithful Mary Higgins Clark deals with a teen set on revenge for being a high school reject twenty years earlier. The reunion, of course, sets him off.

Susan Monk Kidd turns to a 1964 South Carolina setting in which a teenage girl attempts to exhume her mother's private life in *The Secret Life of Bees*. In *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*, a fifteen-year-old autistic savant

searches for the killer of a neighbor's dead poodle. Sue Grafton has reached the letter R and has only eight letters to go! In *R is for Ricochet*, good old Kinsey Milhone stars in a mystery revolving around a millionaire's newly paroled young daughter in deep kim-shee.

Think about it! That particular week more than one-third of the top selling paperbacks focused on young people. I don't think very many young people even read fiction, unless it's assigned. Even then Cliff Notes would be the real best-seller. So it must be the old folks trying to be young again by osmosis. After all, America's material culture is centered on youth.

So here's a message for writers. If you are looking for an agent, or better yet, an editor of an honest-to-god publishing company, consider writing this book: A mystery dealing with a teenager, preferably with a deep psychological problem, whose daddy is rich. The teen should be on the run, armed with major secrets or searching for answers to major secrets, and, naturally, this teen must seek revenge. What editor would turn down this suspense-revenge-chick-lit-pop masterpiece? It's high concept, baby. It rocks! ✓

ROB'S RANDOM SHOTS

***Die Like a Hero* by Clyde Linsley; Berkley Prime Crime, 244 pp**

The latest book by one of our February East Coast speakers came out after he visited us. *Die Like a Hero* is Clyde Linsley's fourth mystery novel, and the third, but probably not last, in his Josiah Beede series of historical mysteries.

The series follows New Hampshire lawyer and former Jackson administration kitchen cabinet member Josiah Beede from his actions as "the boy hero of the Battle of New Orleans" in 1815 through his apparent retirement to his farm after the 1836 election of Martin Van Buren. But Beede is not destined for the quiet life. The discovery of the body of a red-headed young woman on his property set the stage for the first Beede adventure, *Death of a Mill Girl*. Linsley followed up this premiere novel the next year with *Saving Louisa*, in which Beede and his freed black neighbor Randolph brave the perils of slavery in 1830s Louisiana to search for Randolph's missing wife, suspected of murder. The first book lets Linsley explore the emerging Industrial Revolution in New England mill towns and the exploitation of young

farm women pressed into service as cheap labor. The second novel allows the author to limn a disturbing portrait of slavery and its practice in and around the most cosmopolitan of Southern cities.

Die Like a Hero takes place in early 1841 and has the most engaging and ingenious premise of the entire series. President William Henry Harrison was inaugurated in March and died the following month, apparently of pneumonia due to his age, extravagant partying, and the fact that he spoke for more than an hour bareheaded in a chilling rain. But rumors persist. Daniel Webster asks Beede to come to the capital to investigate whether Harrison's death was in fact not as natural as it seemed.

This allows Linsley not only to sketch a quaint, near-rural Washington that is largely unoccupied when Congress is not in session, but to paint engaging portraits of some of the well-known and lesser known political figures of the time. Besides Webster, Beede encounters and interacts with Henry Clay (a suspect), new President John Tyler (also a suspect) and former Vice President Richard Johnson of Kentucky (a unique character with insight into Harrison's military career). Harrison built his reputation on killing the Shawnee Chief Tecumseh. Did that event have any connection with the President's death?

Railroads are just coming into general use at this time, and as much as they facilitate some of Beede's travels, he must also travel by uncomfortable stage coach to interview Johnson in Kentucky. We get an engaging picture of a frontier America grappling with growing pains and the problem of "that curious institution," slavery. Linsley portrays the public and private faces of many historical figures on this subject and is able to show a dichotomy on the issue in New England. Contrary to modern expectations, it was not a region overrun with abolitionists at this time.

In a bold move, Linsley introduces a distraction for his hero when his love interest, Deborah Tompkins, marries another man. He soon disappears from his New Hampshire farm and is later found dead. The two cases not only compete for Beede's attention but cause him to travel between Washington and New England attempting to unravel both mysteries.

Readers who enjoy learning more about an era and issues they may have thought they understood will revel in the details of Linsley's latest. And those who've acquired a taste for

Josiah Beede in previous novels will not be disappointed in this one. To say that Beede is a taciturn New Englander would be an understatement; Sherlock Holmes is a blabbermouth by comparison. If Gary Cooper (“yup”; “nope”) were still alive, he would be a natural to portray Beede in a film.

Darkness on the Edge of Town by J. Carson Black (Margaret Falk), Signet, 358 pp

You can't read every mystery novel or thriller that's published each year. You do know that, don't you? It seems like we ought to be able to do that. I know I read between fifty and a hundred. I used to “read” consistently closer to the higher figure when I was working and could listen to a book on tape or CD at the rate of one per week. Alas. The things you give up when you retire.

But you have to make room for new authors you discover. If you can't keep up with the annual flood of mystery titles, when you meet an author for the first time or are given a book in a mystery convention goodie bag, you sometimes discover someone you want to keep reading. That's the way it was at Left Coast Crime this year. I had breakfast with J. Carson Black of Tucson and her husband. I liked her description of her first novel, so I bought the last copy in the dealer room and went through it in about three sittings.

Everything from the cover art to the style of her writing will remind you of Thomas Harris (*Silence of the Lambs* and the much better *Red Dragon*). This is not to say that Black is derivative. On the contrary, she presents an original heroine, Tucson native and local PD detective Laura Cardinal. The action begins with the report of a murdered 14-year-old girl on page three and the roller coaster action never lets up after that. Laura has both the advantages and disadvantages of having grown up in Tucson and knowing a lot about local families and old criminal cases. She finds clues to the current crime spree by a serial killer in an old manuscript her late mother wrote but never had published (there's a caution for would-be mystery authors).

In the best tradition of Michael McGarrity, this is a police procedural and Black makes the most of multiple points of view, from other cops, to killers and potential victims. Laura's investigation

of the killer(s) leads her out of state, and what she discovers about one killer's childhood is as chilling as what Harris writes about “Buffalo Bill” in *Silence of the Lambs*. Like McGarrity, Black is not reluctant to harm some characters we've come to know and like over the course of the novel. And people we initially don't like eventually become understandable, even admirable characters.

Eventually, the trail of the killer leads Laura from Bisbee, Arizona, to Florida, and home to her own backyard in Tucson. The final confrontation with the unexpected villain is both satisfying and gut-wrenching at the same time. With all the loose ends wrapped up, readers can only wait and hope for Carson Black's sequel, *The Dark of the Moon*, due to be published in January.

This is an author and a novel you'll be glad you discovered. Want better recommendations? *Darkness* comes highly touted by such veteran mystery authors as Michael Prescott, Michael McGarrity, and multiple Edgar-winning T. Jefferson Parker. Check out Black's website at www.jcarsonblack.com. I've been remiss in not providing website info in each of these reviews. Most authors have sites that use their names. Use Google or another search engine to find them. Keep reading and keep discovering. ✓

—Rob Kresge

AND NOW FOR A BIO...

WHO IS SARAH SCHWARTZ?

Sarah Schwartz is a native of Idaho and a graduate of the University of Washington, with a bachelor's degree in Philosophy and a master's degree in what is now called Library and Information Science. She worked as a cataloger at the Washington State Library and then in library technical services and administration for a regional public library system in the Seattle area. As a librarian she grabbed as many technical writing assignments as possible and relished writing procedural manuals and brochures for various library computer processes.

Sarah moved to Albuquerque three years ago in hopes that, while she wrote mystery novels, the sun would dry out the moss carpet clinging to her north side. In 2003, she was a winner in the *Alibi's* Valentine's Day love letters contest. Her contribution indicated the murderous intent of her heart. Aside from trips to the gym, Sarah spends her days imagining homicide.

Sarah has written two mysteries set in Idaho in the early 1950s and is beginning a new mystery set a hundred years ago on the lower Columbia River.

Rob and Sue *et al.* do Lunch

Saturday night, June 4th, noted Alaskan mystery author (and Sister) **Sue Henry** came through Albuquerque, not only to promote her latest book, but also touring the country for experiences at the expense of the RV Manufacturers of America, who loaned her a 31-foot "Minnie Winnie." A few years ago, Sue started a second series, this one about a woman "of a certain age" who tours in an RV and is confronted with murders and other crimes. Sort of a "Route 66" for our generation (younger readers please excuse my assumption).

The RV manufacturers were so taken by the idea of an established writer setting a sleuth aboard an RV that they are not only sponsoring (well, Sue is having to pay for her own gas) Sue's tour, but when she gets to New Orleans in September, they will give her a signing table at the annual RV Show and convention. In a two-fer, Sue will also get a signing table at the other major convention occurring in the same facility--the annual meeting of the AARP. Sounds like being allowed to print your own money, doesn't it?

A fascinating cast of characters worthy of Agatha Christie met with Sue Saturday night and dined with her at El Pinto. Which of these diners would be a candidate for murder?

Sue's traveling companion from Alaska, **Becky Lundqvist** (no, that's not a typo), is a flight nurse, EMT, and emergency room nurse who not only acts as a medical resource for Sue, an old friend of her family, but has written nursing textbooks and was a volunteer nurse in Bosnia for more than two years. By coincidence, Secret Agent K was checking sanctions monitors along the Serbia-Bosnia border during some of that time as well.

Lucinda Schroeder, Croak and Dagger Chapter's April speaker, had a long and varied career as an undercover agent for several federal law enforcement agencies. She served as a resource for Sue's novel, *Sleeping Lady*, and her character was killed off in the early chapters.

Lucinda brought along local Albuquerque writer **Gale Sutton**, who's trying to get one of her first three legal thrillers sold. Gale is a jury psychologist and writes from that perspective. If

she is published, Gale will become the seventh generation Sutton author. Her dad, Jeff Sutton, had a lot of sci-fi published in the 1960s and 70s.

Chapter Secretary **Margaret Tessler** and Sue exchanged signed mysteries. Margaret and husband **Howard** have toured extensively by RV. Howard is an avid fisherman and ex-hunter.

Southwest Writers members **Mary and Ted Lynn** came up to Albuquerque by RV that very day in order to have dinner with Sue. Recently they have been trying to interest publishers in a series of mysteries involving a couple touring by RV, drawing on their own extensive experiences, and they found Sue quite willing to talk about doing such a series and how to deal with publishers and agents. In addition, Mary regaled us all with experiences of having agents sit too long on a MS. One even dropped dead while reading her MS as an "exclusive." We all thought Mary's MS should have been titled *Kiss of Death*. Much hilarity ensued, lubricated by a pitcher of margaritas. Murder ideas flew around the table, scaring off some of the wait-staff.

After seeing the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center and Old Town on Sunday, Sue and Becky went on to Santa Fe, Taos and Colorado as the tour continues.

—Rob Kresge

Croak & Dagger Lineup

Free to the public in the police briefing room of the James Joseph Dwyer Memorial Substation, 12700 Montgomery NE, east of Tramway. For more information, call 281-5765.

On Saturday, **June 25, at 1 PM, John Maddox Roberts** will speak to the group. This prolific author has written numerous works of science fiction and fantasy, in addition to his successful historical SPQR mystery series. His latest book in the series, *SPQR VI: Nobody Loves a Centurion*, will be published later this year. He also writes mysteries starring Gabe Treloar, private eye, among other series.

On **Tuesday, July 26 at 7 PM**, we will hear from Albuquerque author **Penny Rudolph**, whose latest book is *Thicker Than Blood*.

On **Tuesday, August 23 at 7 PM**, we'll have a **true mystery guest**—even we don't know who it will be (yet)!

One sinister Saturday in September, **we'll all be going on a macabre trip to the morgue**. Join us if you dare!

STILL NOT A MEMBER OF SISTERS IN CRIME?

\$20/year brings mystery to your life! The Albuquerque Croak & Dagger chapter welcomes mystery fans who want to enjoy felonious fun, absolutely criminal companionship and sensational speakers.

Benefits of membership in the Croak & Dagger chapter include a subscription to our *Nooseletter*, close contact with local mystery writers, and fun events with other mystery fans.

You do NOT have to be a member of the national organization to join us. Come hear our next program speaker and meet the gang. We promise to bring mayhem and murder into your life. **Contact Stephanie Hainsfurther, membership chair at 505-298-2155, or words13@osogrande.com.**

LOCAL APPARITIONS

Saturday, July 16 at 2:00 pm

Albert Noyer, a member of *Croak & Dagger*, will present slides and discuss three pagan Roman cults and two early Christian heresies at a signing for his latest 5th c. mystery novel, *The Cybelene Conspiracy*. **TITLE WAVE BOOKS** 1408 Eubank NE at Constitution **NOTE:** They have moved to the strip mall on the NE corner of Eubank and Constitution.

A Mystery!!! We have been informed that **J.A. Jance** will appear at **Bound to Be Read** on August 15th. However, the store's website has posted an announcement that they'll be finished with business in Albuquerque on that date.

PAGE ONE—Nothing mysterious scheduled.

BOOKWORKS— Nothing mysterious scheduled.

Notes taken at the New Mexico Book Fair, 7 May 2005, Cottonwood Mall

"What Writers Need to Know About the Brutal Truth of Book Promotion" by MICHAEL McGARRITY

* Don't hesitate to self-promote! Tell where you'll be: signings, bookstore talks, guest appearances, etc.

* **STAND UP** and greet people! At book fairs don't sit behind your table and expect people to ask about your publication. Stand and engage people about the book.

* At store signings get there half an hour earlier and go into the aisles at tell people that you'll be signing at 7 P.M. (or whenever.)

* The main ways that people hear about your book:

1. Word of mouth is the most important!
2. A bookseller.
3. Reviews in newspapers, magazines, internet sites. At about 70,000 new books/year, maybe 1% get reviews. (Don't count on one.)
4. Promotion by your publisher or yourself. Big publishers spend about \$1 per book on promotion. This is given to booksellers, who use the money as they want. Publishers also buy front shelf space as a featured item.

* Ads: instead of spending a lot on an ad in The New York Times Review of Books, use the money to buy many ads in local papers.

PUTTING THE BOOK IN A READER'S HANDS: get the book circulated, talked about.

1. Donate books to fund raisers.
2. Donate books to libraries. Keep a quantity in your car and when visiting another town, find the library and give them a couple of copies.
3. Give your book to service men who come to your house; plumbers, electricians, repairmen, etc.
4. Buy books from your publisher and give them away for a tax deduction.
5. When writing, keep your specialized interest audience in mind—fans of Westerns, historical novels, local sites.
6. **WOMEN ARE THE ONES WHO BUY BOOKS!** Keep that in mind. They form book clubs, set up signing events, etc. Your book must appeal to a female audience, so at least have a strong woman character in it.

7. Web Sites: yours should not be entirely self-promoting, but also informative. McGarrity said his is used for research about New Mexico by others.

WHY WRITE BOOKS?

You must have a compulsion to write a story and can't stop from doing so.

NEXT ISSUE END OF SEPT. FOR NOW, CASE CLOSED!

—Page Erwin, ED

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ANSWERS TO AUTHOR OBSCURIA ATTACHED

ANSWERS TO CLIFF'S OLD-TIME CRIME OBSCURIA

The Characters

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 18__Tommy & Tuppence | 28__Inspector Morse |
| 10__Nick & Nora Charles | 3__Sir Henry Merrivale |
| 36__Mr. & Mrs. North | 16__Lord Peter Wimsey |
| 21__Batman & Robin | 2__The Phantom |
| 33__Philip Marlowe | 45__The Shadow |
| 14__Philo Vance | 18__Miss Marple |
| 12__Phillip Trent | 13__Miss Withers |
| 48__Barnaby Trent | 20__Mr. Wong |
| 10__The Thin Man | 39__Mr. Moto |
| 10__The Fat Man | 25__Fearless Fosdick |
| 35__Nero Wolfe | 23__The Hardy Boys |
| 17__Bulldog Drummond | 43__George Smiley |
| 26__The Falcon | 10__Sam Spade |
| 6__The Green Hornet | 37__Mike Hammer |
| 27__Prof. Moriarty | 29__Horace Rumpole |
| 30__Dr. Fu Manchu | 34__Perry Mason |
| 3__Dr. Gideon Fell | 15__Lew Archer |
| 51__Gideon Oliver | 40__Jessica Fletcher |
| 50__Doc Savage | 32__Richard Diamond |
| 9__Doc Long | 11__Arsine Lupin |
| 1__Brother Cadfael | 46__Auguste Dupin |
| 7__Father Brown | 8__Albert Campion |
| 19__Boston Blackie | 41__Adam Dalgliesh |
| 49__Harry Lime | 22__Charlie Chan |
| 31__The Saint | 24__Dick Tracy |
| 47__Ellery Queen | 42__Nancy Drew |
| 4__Judge Dee | 5__Nick Carter |
| 44__Superintendent Alleyn | 38__Mike Shane |

THE CREATORS

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Ellis Peters | 27. Arthur Conan Doyle |
| 2. Lee Falk | 28. Norman Dexter |
| 3. John Dickson Carr | 29. John Mortimer |
| 4. R. H. van Gulik | 30. Sax Rohmer |
| 5. John Coryell | 31. Leslie Charteris |
| 6. Henry Trendle | 32. Blake Edwards |
| 7. G. K. Chesterton | 33. Raymond Chandler |
| 8. Margery Allingham | 34. Erle Stanley Gardner |
| 9. Carlton Morse | 35. Rex Stout |
| 10. Dasheil Hammet | 36. Richard & Fran Lockridge |
| 11. Maurice Leblanc | 37. Frank Spillane |
| 12. E. Bently & C. Rice | 38. Davis Dresser |
| 13. Stuart Palmer | 39. J. P. Marquand |
| 14. S. S. Van Dine | 40. Levinson, Link, Fischer |
| 15. Ross Macdonald | 41. P. D. James |
| 16. Dorothy Sayers | 42. Mildred Benson |
| 17. Sapper McNeile | 43. John Le Carre |
| 18. Agatha Christie | 44. Ngaio Marsh |
| 19. Jack Boyle | 45. Maxwell Grant |
| 20. Hugh Wiley | 46. Edgar Allan Poe |
| 21. Bob Kane | 47. F. Dannay & M. Lee |
| 22. Earl Derr Biggers | 48. Carolyn Graham |
| 23. Edward Stratemeyer | 49. Graham Greene |
| 24. Chester Gould | 50. Henry Ralston |
| 25. Al Capp | 51. Aaron Elkins |
| 26. Michael Arlen | |