



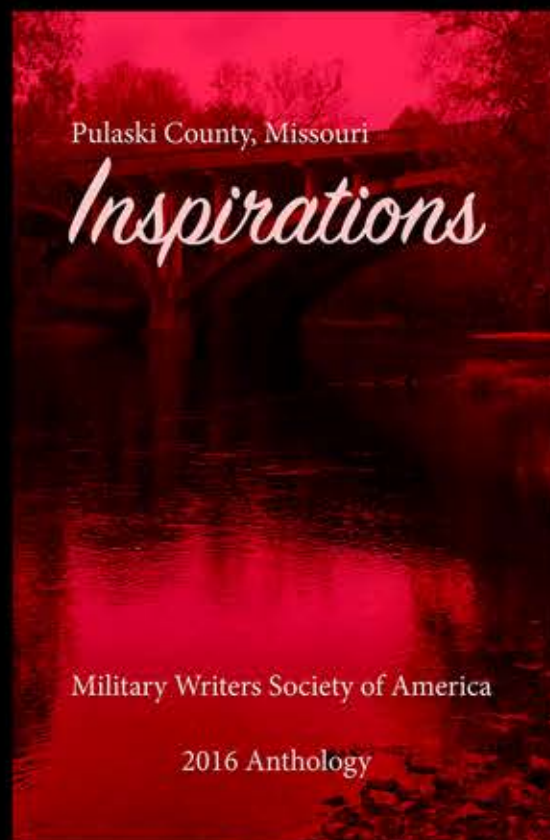
DISPATCHES

MILITARY
WRITERS
SOCIETY OF
AMERICA

Rescuing History One Story at a Time

www.militarywriters.com

SUMMER 2017



**MWSA WISHES MEMBERS
RICHARD LOWRY AND JOANNE QUINN-SMITH
A FOND FAREWELL**

Pulaski County Inspiration Anthology Launch
Interviews with MWSA authors Mary Lee and Gail Neustadt
December 7, 1941 -- Frank Evans
Tom Jones Honors Veterans
Yellowstone -- Joe Campolo, Jr
Sandra Miller Linhart Discusses Books for the Children of Military Families - Part I
Tips and Tricks -- Timelines
Travel Articles -- Fort Smith, Arkansas and Fort Scott, Kansas
Fourth of July -- Bob Flournoy

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Letter from the editor

Pat McGrath Avery

Wow! By the time the fall issue comes out, we will have gathered in San Antonio for our conference. Bob Doerr and the Planning Committee have been—and will continue to be—hard at work making sure the event will create happy memories and expanded knowledge for everyone. Check out Bob's update (pgs 20-21).

San Antonio is a dream vacation spot, filled with history, Spanish architecture, and natural beauty. September is a great time to visit. If you haven't registered, be sure to do so while the special hotel price is available.

Joyce Faulkner and I recently traveled to Pulaski County (MO) to hold a launch party for the Pulaski County History Crawl anthology. The enthusiasm of the writers and the community confirm that MWSA inspires its members and attendees at its events. You can order your copy of Pulaski County Inspirations from MWSA or from Amazon.

The deadline has passed for book submissions and the reviewers are busy reading and reviewing books. Award recipients will be announced at the conference. John Cathcart gives us more information (pg 11).

Our prayers go out to the families of two members who have recently passed—Joanne Quinn-Smith and Richard Lowry. Both added their talents and time to the fabric of our organization (pg 14).

Joe Campolo takes us on a visit to Yellowstone, Bob Flournoy gives us a story about a Vietnam veteran and Frank Evans relates his experience at the USS Arizona Memorial. Sandra Miller Linhart discusses the role of children's books for military families. My two travel articles take readers to Ft. Smith, Arkansas, and Ft Scott, Kansas. Joyce Faulkner introduces us to Tom Jones, a high school classmate who creates wooden urns for veterans.

This issue begins a new program introducing our members' books. Check out the interviews with Mary Lee (pgs 8-9) and Gail Neustadt (pgs 30-31), as well as information on new books by Patricia Walkow (pg 15) and an anthology by the Corrales Writing Group that includes Jim Tritten and Patricia Walkow (pg 3).

Be sure to peruse Dwight Zimmerman's President's Message, Bob Doerr's suggested reading list and Joyce Faulkner's Tips and Tricks. Submissions for the fall issue are due by September 15. Please send them to me at patavery@gmail.com

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 Columnist - Bob Doerr
 Columnist - John Cathcart
 Feature Writer - Bob Flournoy
 Feature Writer - Frank Evans
 Feature Writer - Joe Campolo, Jr.
 Feature Writer - Joyce Faulkner
 Feature Writer - Sandra Miller Linhart
 Layout and Design - Joyce Faulkner
 Photography - Pat McGrath Avery

Contents

President's Message - Zimmerman, 2
Inspirations Launch, 4-5
Yellowstone - Campolo Jr, 6-7
Mary Lee Interview, 8-9
Fort Smith History - Avery, 10
MWSA Awards - Cathcart, 11
My Fourth of July - Flournoy, 12-13
In Memoriam, 14
Children's Books - Linhart, 16-17
2017 General Conference, 18-19
December 7, 1941 - Evans, 20-21
Summer Reading List - Doerr, 22-23
Fort Scott - Avery, 24-25
A Most Special Gift - Faulkner, 28-29
Gail Neustadt Interview, 30-31
Tips and Tricks - Faulkner 32-34

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President's Message

I want to first express my condolences to the family of Richard Lowry who recently passed away. I first met Richard at our Orlando conference and, though I was in my first year as a member, he was gracious and helpful to this newbie. I loved his work and am happy to say that I was happy to be able to use his books as reference in some of my published efforts. While I am saddened to learn of his passing, I am happy to have known such a fine person.

We also lost Internet radio personality and MWSA member, Joanne Quinn-Smith who has worked with us since 2010. We have appreciated her focus on MWSA authors and we will miss her at our conferences. She made us laugh.

This issue's president's message is a little bit of a departure from previous ones. Its subject: The Tyranny of the Blank Page.

As writers, we've all been there, whether long-time professional or first-time writer. You would think that it gets easier the longer you do it, but it doesn't. If anything, it can get worse. That blank sheet of paper or blank computer screen can be an intimidating indictment containing this message: You Don't Know What To Write.

So, how do you overcome it? Well, I know what I do, but that's not the point, because all of us have to face it and overcome it in our own way. And that leads me to this question: What intimidates you most?

The purpose of the Military Writers Society of America is to help members at all skill levels tell their story. And I'll be upfront that even a person like me who has had decades of experience in publishing still gets that cold chill of fear at the start of a project (and occasionally, like now in this biography I'm writing, in the middle of it).

So, I'm asking all of you, what are the challenges you are facing with your work that you'd like help on? Is it starting? Have you hit a wall in the development of your project? Where are you feeling overwhelmed? Do you need help on research? Or, do you just need to have someone to talk/email to who is familiar enough with writing that you can discuss the situation you're struggling with? (This last is my personal problem. I'm now in the fourth year of writing my novel and it's been an off-and-on struggle. Right now I've hit a plot wall that has stopped me from working on it for more than a month.) Or is there another concern?

We're a community whose purpose is to help each other. So, I'm making this open appeal to you: if there's anything about your project that you'd like to discuss, or anything about the publishing industry that you'd like to know about, send me an email at: djonzim@gmail.com. I or someone who is knowledgeable with regards to your request will get back to you.

We can only help you if you let us know what help you need.

On July 4, 2017, our nation celebrated its 241st birthday. What an achievement!

I hope everyone had a wonderful Independence Day!

*Dwight Jon Zimmerman,
President, Military Writers Society of America*



MWSA members learned about tracking criminals, victims, and dead bodies at the inaugural Crimecon Conference in Indianapolis for True Crime writers. June, 2017.



Passages

A Corrales Writing Group Anthology

**Cooke Hoover Neiman
Tritten Walkow Allen**

Passages: A Corrales Writing Group Anthology

ISBN-10: 1539502279, ISBN-13: 978-1539502272, 1st edition
(January 19, 2017)

The group recently did this interview about their new anthology:
<http://wp.me/p4gVD7-1lv>

The book may be purchased at Amazon.com either in paper or Kindle formats:

www.amazon.com/Passages-Corrales-Writing-Group-Anthology/dp/1539502279/

and

www.amazon.com/Passages-Corrales-Writing-Group-Anthology-ebook/dp/B01MUF8Q2Q/

Jim Tritten and Pat Walkow are both members of MWSA – there are five other members of the writing group who are authors in this book.

Military Writers Society of America launch of *Inspirations, Pulaski County Missouri*

Pulaski County History Crawl participants discovered the diverse history of the Missouri Ozarks last fall. This diversity led to an anthology filled with stories about the history and legends of the region.

On June 12, the anthology was unveiled at an event at Cellar 66 in Waynesville, MO. The authors and the community turned out to celebrate and share their stories. Submissions ranged from experienced “old timers” in the writing world to “first timers” as published authors.

After Mayor Luge Hardman welcomed everyone, each author introduced his or her own story.

Cellar 66 is a “must stop” when you travel I-44 through Missouri. Superior service accompanied by a variety of wines and beers—especially the Missouri wineries and microbreweries—created a perfect atmosphere for the event.

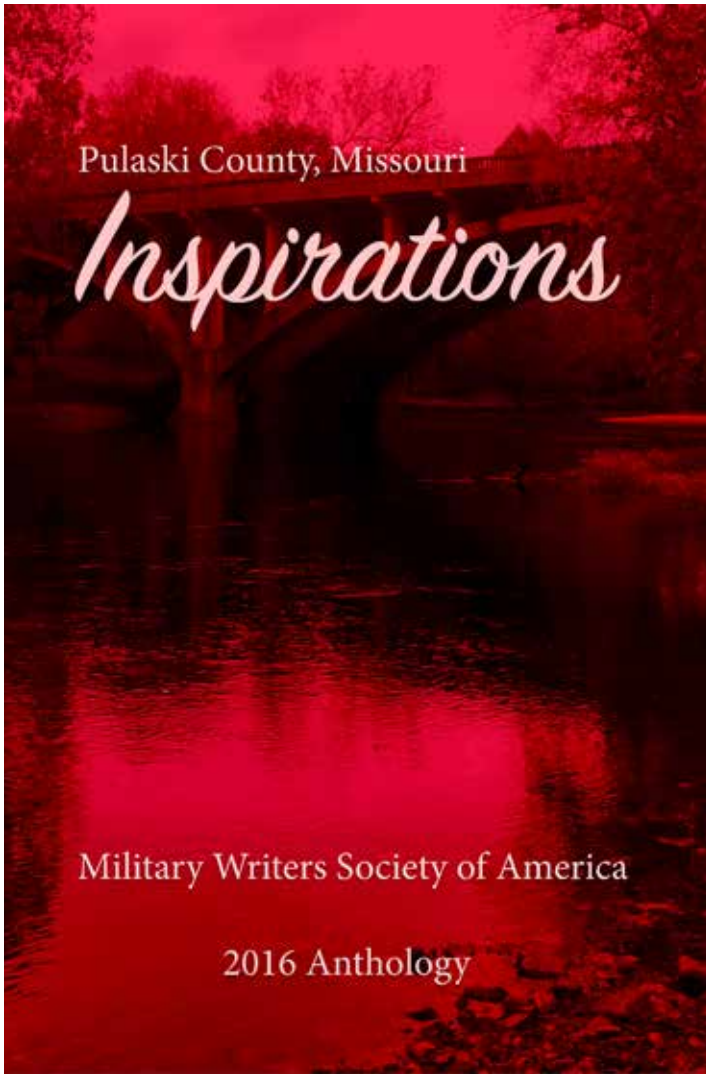
Copies of the book are available at several locations in the area as well as through Amazon. Whether or not you attended the event, you’ll experience Pulaski County through these stories.



*Beth Wiles, Laura Huffman, and Dawnmarie Cecora
—contributors to **Pulaski County Missouri,
Inspirations.***



*Bob Hathaway signing a copy of **Pulaski County Missouri, Inspirations Anthology***



L-R: Micki Voelkel, Denise Seevers, JB King and wife, and Beth Wiles

Pulaski County, Missouri Inspirations includes “Missouri Monsters” by Micki Voelkel, “Ruby’s Tavern” by JB King, “Remembering the CBI” by Gary Best, “The Climb” by Bob Hathaway,” “Between the Dashes” by Laura Huffman, “Murder in the Courthouse” by Denise Seevers, “Tears along the Roubidoux” by Pat McGrath Avery, “Bindley” by Dawnmarie and Raymond Cecora, “The Wile’s Travels” by Beth Wiles, “Old Settler’s Day” by Christopher Avery, “The Legacy of Count Pulaski” by Joe Campolo, Jr, “Remembering Well” by Sherry Hathaway, “The Ozark Quilt Trail,” “Perdita’s Treasure” by Joyce Faulkner, and “Devil’s Elbow” by Denise Seevers.

You can purchase it on Amazon or you can send a check for \$18 to Military Writers Society of America. PO Box 1768, Cranberry Township, PA 16066. Please include the address where you would like us to send it.



Micki Voelkel holding her copy of the Pulaski County, Missouri History Crawl volume of the MWSA 2016 Anthologies



Yellowstone with an Oriental Twist

Joe Campolo, Jr

In 2012, my wife Ann and I decided to visit the American West. Digging through our options, we found a bus touring company owned and operated by an outfit in mainland China. They conducted tours all over the U.S. as well as other destinations around the world. Since I'm a cheapskate, the very reasonable cost of the tour got my attention. They offered several adventures out west, with Yellowstone being an option in three or four of them. We elected to take a 6-day journey which started in Denver.

After flying in from Milwaukee, we met our group at the Denver airport. Boarding two brand-new Mercedes Benz coaches, our first destination was the Colorado capitol building in Denver, and the second, the Red Rock amphitheater. Returning to the downtown area, we had dinner and checked into our hotel.

The second day, we drove through Colorado, Wyoming, and up into South Dakota to visit Mt Rushmore and the new Crazy Horse National monument. The third stage of our trip, we traveled west through Wyoming, touched Montana and Idaho, and turned south. We spent two days in Yellowstone and a half day in the Tetons. Next up was Salt Lake City where we visited the Mormon Tabernacle and the Great Salt Lake.

Our next stop was Arches National Park where we spent the better part of a day. From Arches we went on to tour the Kennecott Copper mine. Our first destination back in Colorado was Glen Wood Springs, then Aspen, and back to our starting point at the Denver Airport—and an end to our very busy, six-day tour.

Ann and I enjoyed the trip very much. About seventy-five

percent of the people on the tour were Chinese, mostly from mainland China. There were a handful of Americans, a couple of folks from South America, a few people from Canada and several from Europe. The bus drivers and the tour guides were Chinese. The tour guide on our bus, "Roger," was impressive. He spoke perfect English and had in-depth knowledge of all the areas we visited. He possessed a talk-show-host personality and kept us entertained and informed throughout the trip. He was also a bit of a drill sergeant, taking anyone to task who didn't return to the bus on time. The Chinese take their touring seriously!

One thing we learned quickly on this trip—do NOT get behind the Chinese guests and food. Every meal was a buffet and the Chinese descended on them like hordes of locusts. They didn't actually push anyone out of the way that I saw, but I'm quite sure if anyone would have fallen, they would have been trampled to death. Getting on and off the bus for touring stops, dining, or restroom visits was also a challenge. Rather than depart from the front of the bus one at a time, they all bull rushed the door and it was every man (and woman) for his or herself. As in the case of the dining, we learned how to deal with this also. We would let them all rumble off the bus before we deboarded. We also came back a little early so as not to get caught in the return stampede.

Roger gave two sets of talks for every occasion—one in Chinese and one in English. Fortunately for most of the guests from Europe and South America, they had a fine command of the English language. The Chinese from mainland China did not...and they jabbered to each other continuously throughout the trip in their

native tongue. My wife and some of the other tourists were somewhat put off by this, especially on the bus and in close quarters. Having spent a year in Vietnam, I was accustomed to the sing-song tone of the oriental language.

There were inflexible rules we had to follow. One was getting back to the bus on time between stops and morning departures. First time offenders would be forced to sing a song for the whole bus upon their arrival. Repeat offenders were chastised in front of God and everyone. Another rule, unpopular but rigidly enforced, was the restroom policy. Although there were two very nice bathrooms on each bus, we were prohibited from using them. Tour management did not want to incur the cost... or time of cleaning them. So we had to wait for rest stops, contributing to the previously-mentioned stampede. One hapless Chinese fellow, who was experiencing digestive issues, had no choice but to use the restroom on the bus between stops. Roger had no sympathy for him and chastised and embarrassed the poor man in front of the other passengers.

Aside from that, the trip was enjoyable and interesting. I learned more about the many places we visited, listening to Roger than I had at any previous time in my life. Roger was also a gentlemen and a good sport about helping out with luggage, photographs, and other things that came up. So it was easy to cut him some slack on the bathroom and tardy lectures.

Winter comes early to Yellowstone. Taking place during the last week of September and the first week of October, our tour was the last for the year as soon the roads would become icy, the lakes and ponds would freeze over and the vegetation would go dormant. Heavy jackets were required outdoors, especially in the early morning. The scenery at this time was spectacular with autumn colors at peak. Steam rolled off of the lakes and ponds, the bison and elk were now rutting and frisky as they engaged in their pre-winter mating rituals. Bears were fattening up, preparing for their long winter hibernation. It was kind of sad knowing we would be the last ones through until next spring, and I believe it gave us an additional appreciation of everything we saw. The Tetons were spectacular.

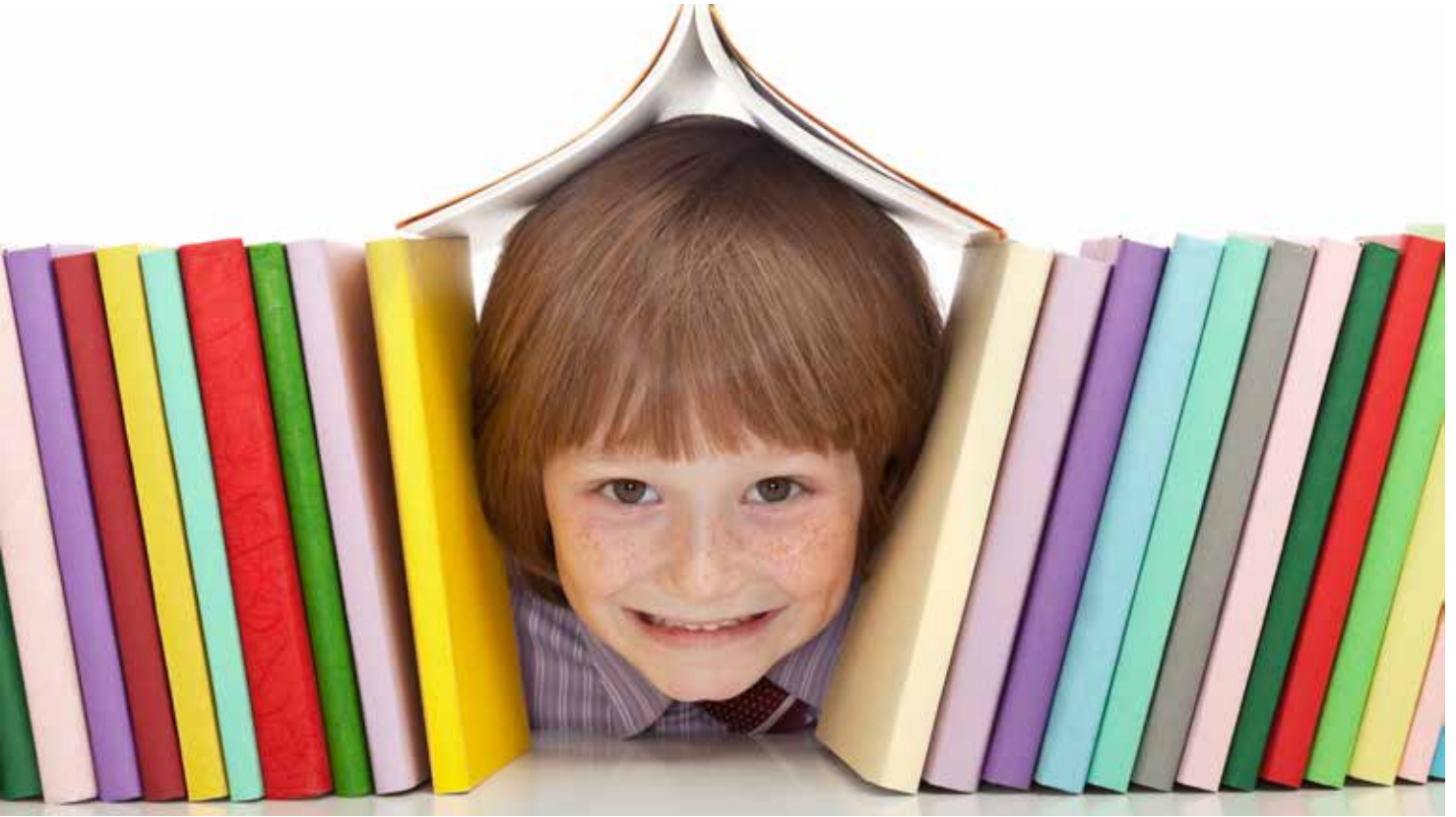
The Mormon Tabernacle was also spectacular, the architecture marveling and inspiring. Having lived next to Lake Michigan most of my life, the Great Salt Lake was not as impressive to me as it was to some of the other guests. Devoid of fish, I sure didn't see what the big deal was and had no problem departing there for our next visit at Arches National Park.

Arches did impress me, with its stunning rock monuments in various shades of brown and orange. We climbed among them throughout the better part of a day, with some of the younger tourists scaling them like mountain goats. Looking toward the horizons, it seemed that spectacular rock outcroppings resided as far as the eye could see in the eighty-thousand-acre park.

Upon leaving Arches, Roger informed us that we were on our way to a large copper mine. After his discussion about it, we eagerly awaited the Kennecott Copper Mine in Utah—the largest open pit mine in the world. Although this was not a part of the trip I had thought much about before hand, after the tour it was certainly one of the most impressive—and my personal favorite. The scale of the mine is unfathomable—and yes, it truly is visible from space. Entering the mountain, the enormous bowl shaped mine is hidden until you are almost upon it. Standing on the upper “lid,” the giant mine-working tractors and equipment in various locations throughout the pit appeared to be small ants bustling about a large anthill. Occasionally sirens went off alert us to explosive detonations used to break up mine sections into smaller, manageable parts. The facility had a museum as well as a gift shop where you could purchase all manner of copper trinkets and assorted junk. We learned that the operation also recovered residual amounts of gold and several other minerals while mining the copper ore, so of course gold products were among the wares of the gift shop. (At my insistence, we stuck to the copper souvenirs)

The remainder of the tour was anticlimactic. The ski resorts in Western Colorado were scenic, though not on the same level as Yellowstone and some of the other areas we had already visited. It was a nice winding down of the six day jaunt though, and we reentered Denver satisfied and relaxed. We took some additional photos at the airport and said our goodbyes and exchanged contact information with many of the people we had toured with. Roger gave us a sales pitch on some of the other trips the company offered, suggesting that discounts were available for those who signed up quickly.

Several weeks ago Ann and I started reminiscing about that trip, and are now tinkering with the idea of taking another one. We wouldn't mind hooking up with the same touring company again...**now that we know how to muscle through a buffet line and exit a bus in fifteen seconds or less!**



INTERVIEW WITH MWSA MEMBER

MARY LEE



When Mary Lee was in the Air Force, friends would ask her children questions about her uniform and what it was like having a mom in the Air Force. “I laughingly

told them, when I retire I will write a book,” Mary said, “and that is what happened.”

When Mary first retired, she tried her hand at short stories and poetry—but then, several years later, remembering the interest her children’s friends had in her career, she had an idea. “I noticed there were many books about fathers in the military,” she said, “but not many about mothers, so I decided to write *My Air Force Mom* and have it published.” That book garnered her a win in the Children’s Fiction Category of the 73rd Annual Writer’s Digest Writing Competition and established her continuing interest in the genre of children’s literature.

Mary joined Military Writers Society of America in 2011 to submit, *My Air Force Mom*, for a review. When her second book, *When Grandma’s False Teeth Fly* was released, she submitted it for consideration in the Awards Program and it won a Silver Medal. Mary and her husband went to the Awards Ceremony that year and he joined MWSA too. “I had a pitch session with Maria Edwards of Navigator Books at the conference,” Mary said. “And I have published two of my five books with Navigator Books.”

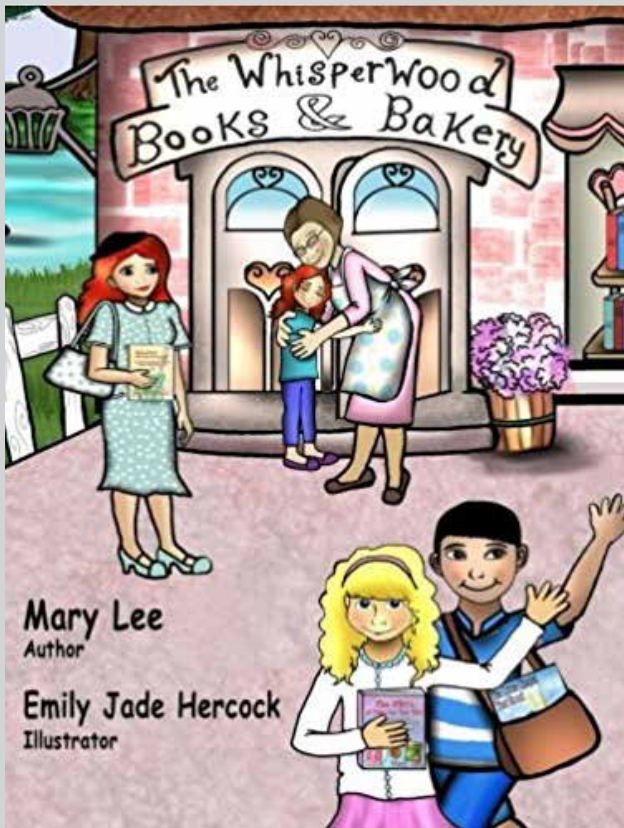
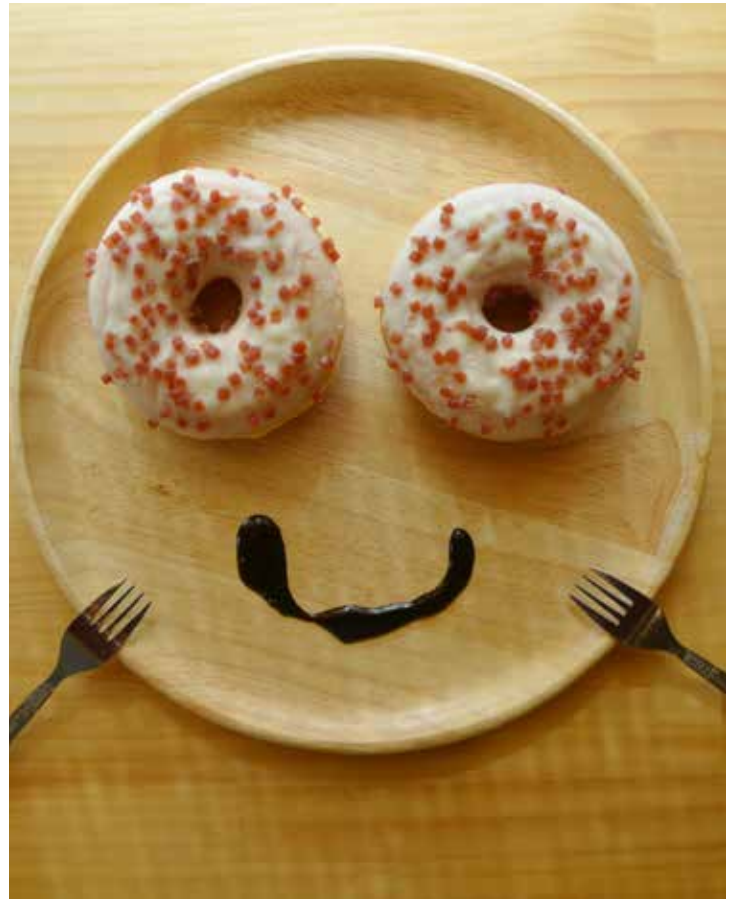
Lee's third book, *The ABC's of Titles for Tiny Tales*, won the Bronze Medal from the MWSA. *A to Z Titles for Tiny Shark Tales*, her fourth book, was released in June 2016.

Mary Lee's fifth children's book, *The Whisperwood Books & Bakery*, was released in April 2017. *The Whisperwood Books & Bakery* is a beautifully illustrated nine stanza poem about Granny Sue, who owns the bakery and loves reading or singing to the children while they snack on their treats.

"My husband is a baker," Mary said. "We talked for many years about opening a small bakery. We wanted to have books in the bakery so I could have a story time for the children. Life events prevented this from happening. So, I thought it would be fun to have an imaginary bakery."

The Whisperwood Books & Bakery is special to Mary Lee because it is her first book written in poetic style.

Author Mary Lee is a retired Air Force Master Sergeant. She obtained an MSW Degree at the University of South Carolina. Mary and her husband now live in Lacey, Washington.



The Whisperwood Books & Bakery

Mary Lee

Children, Subcategory: Stories in verse

A charming nine stanza poem along with bright, colorful illustrations will catch your child's eye and work together to create this unique picture book for children 4 to 8 years old. Come to the Whisperwood Bakery, where Granny Sue will read or sing to you while you enjoy sweet treats.

Book may be purchase at [CreateSpace.com](https://www.createspace.com) and [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

Published by Navigator Books and CreateSpace and released April 7, 2017.

Fort Smith History Defined by the Arkansas River

Pat McGrath Avery

The Arkansas River begins its journey in Colorado and flows through Kansas and Oklahoma before it reaches Arkansas, where it finally flows into the Mississippi.

Many cities along the way can trace their history to the Arkansas, which is the sixth-longest river in the US. It is the second-largest tributary of the Mississippi. In 1803, the Louisiana Purchase brought it into the US.

Fort Smith began as a military post at Belle Point, the junction of the Arkansas and Poteau Rivers. The 1817 post overlooked Belle Point and the Oklahoma Territory across the river. Although the original fort closed in 1824, the Army moved back in 1838 to supervise the ending point of the Federal government's Cherokee and Choctaw resettlement policies. Known as the Trail of Tears, the forced journey left thousands dead along the way.

As I stood at the overlook, my heart ached for all those who made the march and those who never completed it. I had recently visited a Cherokee campsite in Pulaski County, Missouri, (www.visitpulaskicounty.org) and learned about the various routes the government chose. I didn't know until Fort Smith, that removal by river was also a

major route. In any case, thousands suffered the loss of their homes and history.

While some of the Cherokee stayed in and around Fort Smith, the majority moved on the Oklahoma territory. The Cherokee Nation is now centered in Tahlequah, Oklahoma (www.cherokee.org).

Today, the Fort Smith National Historic Site maintains the grounds where only the foundations of the old fort remain. When you visit, take the time to walk the trails – to the overlook of the fort and Belle Point. Then walk down to the Trail of Tears overlook at the river's edge. It's not a history to take pride in, but it is a part of our heritage that we need to know, part of the 19th-century belief in Manifest Destiny.

Just over 60 years later, Fort Smith played a major role as a starting point in the 1889 Oklahoma Land Rush, which provided the race-to-claim-land settlement of the territory.

During this period the Federal government appointed Fort Smith as a Federal District, determined to bring law and order to the town and the Wild West. That's another story for another day!



MWSA Awards Program

John Cathcart

Our 2017 book award submission window closed on the 15th of June.

Our plan was to have all books read, scored and reviewed by the end of July. Around the middle of August, we'll announce our award finalists. Then, on Saturday, September 9th, we'll announce the actual medal winners at our San Antonio Awards Banquet.

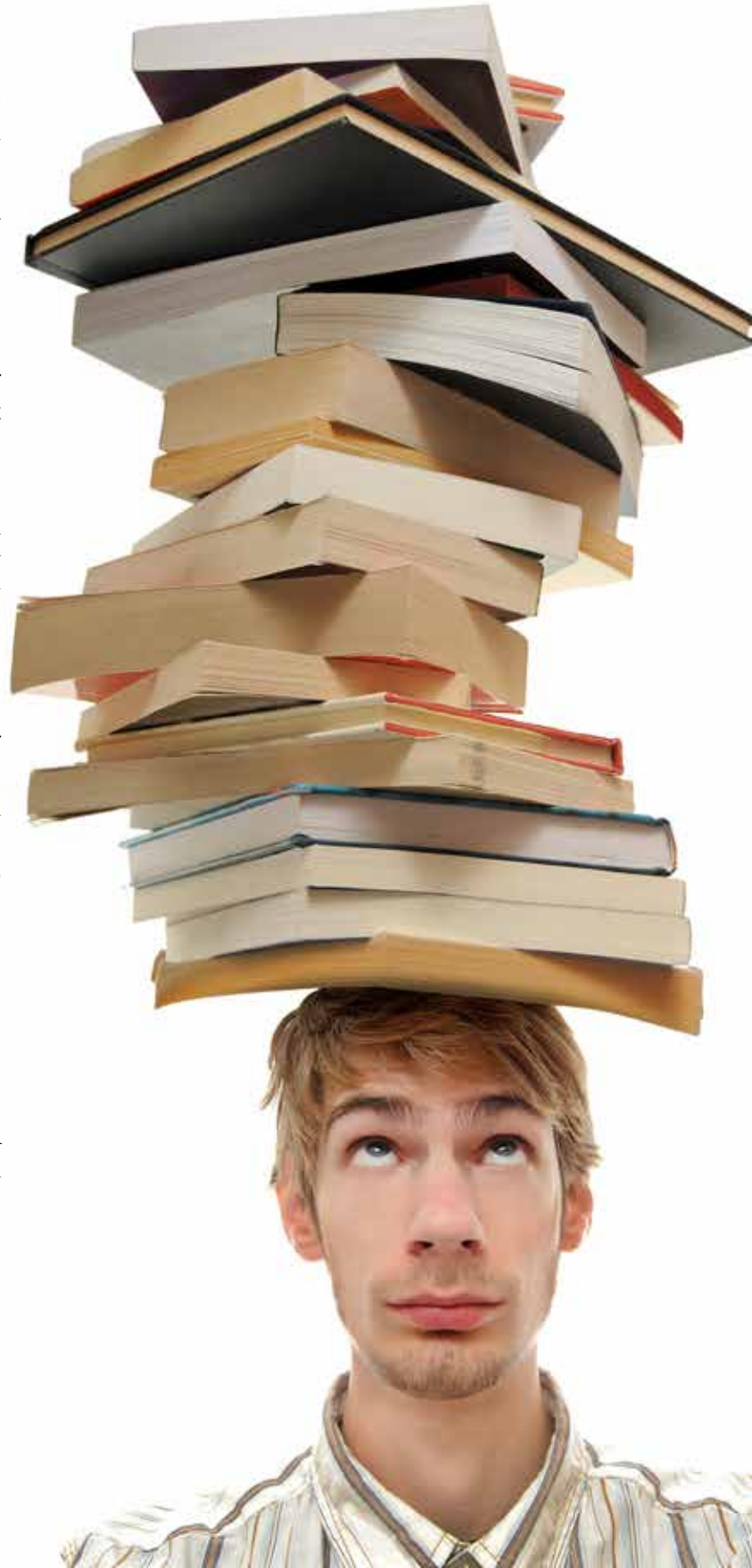
This awards season was a "record breaker." We had a grand total of seventy-nine books submitted this year. That's the same number of books submitted for the combined 2015-2016 awards season and represents 237 individual readings and scorings. That MWSA is growing is a great thing, but our volunteer reviewer force is having trouble keeping up with all these great books.

As of June 28th, forty-nine books have been read, scored, and reviewed. Twenty-two are with—or on their way to—our reviewers. Unfortunately, with only two days left until our deadline for assigning review slots to reviewers, five books still don't have the required three reviewers identified, and those five books have ten open review slots.

If we can't meet our deadline, we'll have to offer our effected authors either a refund of their submission fee or a guaranteed slot in next year's season (for which we'll have to limit the number of books submitted). I'd really rather not have to do this, but I can't ask too much more from many of our reviewers.

Speaking of "asking a lot," nine of our twenty-three volunteer MWSA reviewers have read a dozen or more books this season... three are approaching—and in one case, well over double that number!

Bottom line, we could sure use your help. Please consider "paying it forward," and helping a fellow MWSA author by joining our reviewer force! You'll be glad you did.





Short Fiction

MY FOURTH OF JULY: AN AMERICAN TALE

Bob Flourney

My name is Bobby Marchesi. I used to be somewhat of a nobody. I was not an athlete in high school. I did not even play in the band, but sat, usually by myself, at the football games, after which I did not go to the drive through for a hamburger. I never went to a dance or had a girl friend. I was pretty much invisible. My grades were ok but my family did not have the resources to send me to college. An army recruiter visited our high school during my senior year and I learned about the GI Bill for veterans. I signed up the day I graduated in 1968. I was in basic training in the blast furnace heat of Fort Benning, Georgia one month later. There, I got my first taste of belonging to something, and had friends for the first time in my life as we struggled with the physical demands of that grueling 8 weeks, driven by hard nosed drill sergeants that we hated but came to love. In those days there were no stragglers, no quitters or criers. When I graduated, a band played and I marched with the pride of belonging to something for the first time in my life, knowing that I had met the standards of the greatest army in the world. Johnny from Chicago, Rick from Birmingham, Jerry from Nashville and about a dozen more names belonging to every skin color there is. I remember their faces, their laughs, and the looks in their eyes to this very day, because I was

laughing with them.

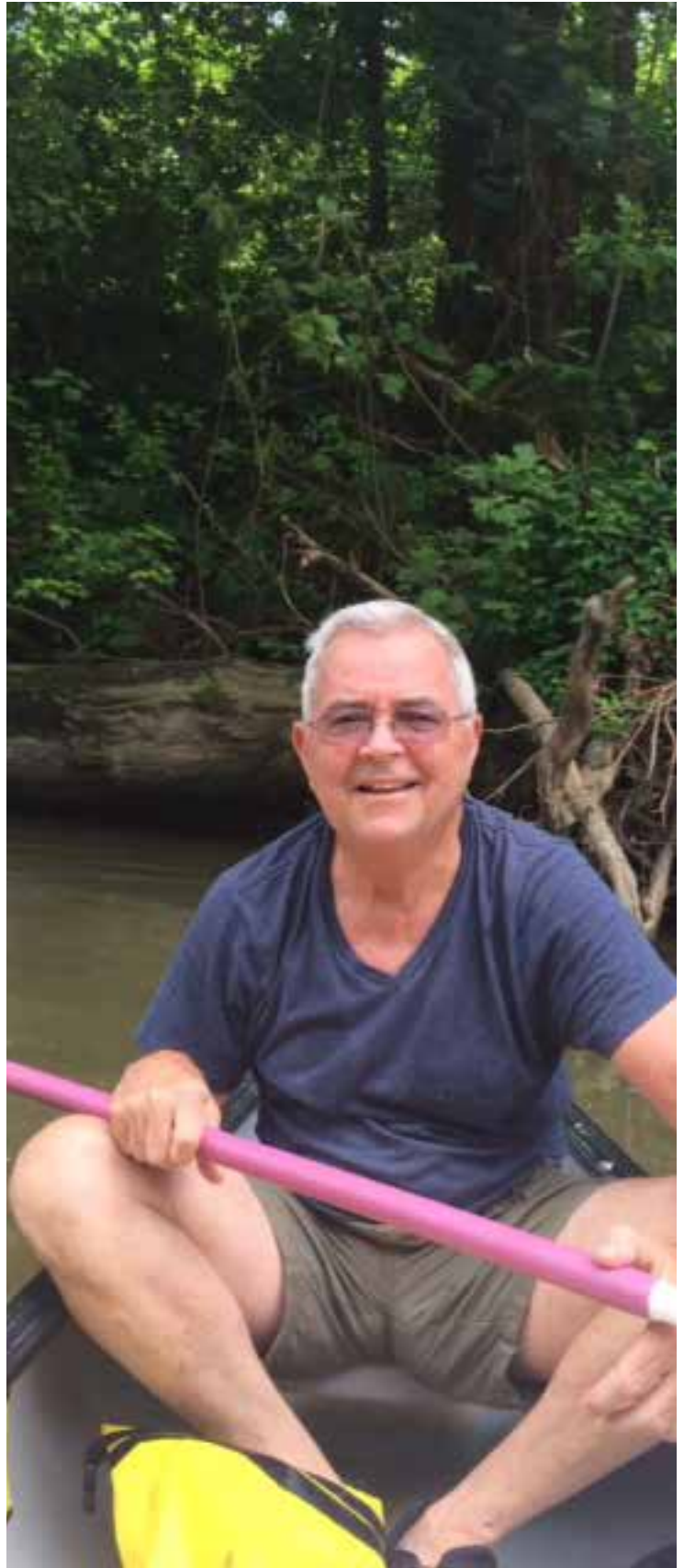
After advanced basic training, another 8 weeks, I had a short leave during which time I went home, so proud, so very proud that my parents and neighbors could not stop looking at me and smiling. They saw, they felt the change. They could see me now. I was hard as a rock physically, with a clear mind. I was headed for Vietnam and would be there in 2 short weeks.

And so I was. An 11 B (Eleven Bravo) rifle man with B Company, 1/7 (First of the Seventh) Cavalry, 1st Air Cavalry Division. We used to say that when death smiled on the battlefield, we smiled back: we were Air Cav. Custer's Little Big Horn streamer flew from our standards, and while the butt of wry jokes, we thought of ourselves as something special because we were under the same colors almost 100 years after his demise on a Montana battlefield, defeated by warriors just as fierce and determined as we were. I mention this only because it added to the mystique we felt that we owned, soldiers who swept on swift birds of war called Hueys into remote areas where we would engage our enemy. Unlike our cavalry predecessors on horses, my first combat assault in a gaggle of 18 choppers carrying 96 men in our company occurred on December 15, 1968.

I was still missing stateside coffee I was told, as a new comer, but I was embraced by those battle hardened 18 year olds like a brother from day one. I was not in the stands, alone, at the games anymore. I was a part of a dance that I would not trade for a Prom experience for all the money in any bank. I was the Prom King, I was a soldier, dancing with brothers who shared the fiercest love, never dreaming to let them down. I would die for them and they would die for me. Despite, even because of the wound that broke my back, I carry that love in my heart now, almost 50 years later, thankful for the chance to have done a heroic thing, something that we all aspire to.

Vietnam was a disaster for our country, and I lament the loss of one million lives, both American and Vietnamese, but I would not trade the experience of it all for anything. I have never met a Vietnam combat veteran who would. They may cry at some memory, or go off someplace far away in their mind in the middle of the day, caught up in some distant thought of swirling colors, smells, and sounds, but they are always proud. They showed up. Three simple words that carry a weight known only by the brotherhood who wear the patch. On the first Fourth of July, their kind was to be found in the volunteers of the Continental Army under General Washington, with him at Valley Forge and Yorktown, forging the birth of our nation. And I, Bobby Marchesi, wall flower and once a nobody, am one of them. I fly a flag on this day, proud to know that I was a part of those who have always tried to do the right thing so that we can live in the greatest nation that the history of our world has ever seen. We are not perfect, and we have made mistakes, but our heart is big. It is in no way necessary to serve in the military to feel proud of this day, but it is special to me, for reasons I have tried, however clumsily to express. Today, Bobby Marchesi is a proud American who greets everyone he passes with “happy Fourth of July.”

P.S. I earned my degree on the GI Bill after the war, and I have two sons. One is a star on his high school’s hockey team, the other plays trombone in the band. I make sure that everyone knows who they are. Everyone. Both of them.



Bob Flourney, gifted MWSA author and Vietnam Veteran

In Memory of ...

Joyce Faulkner

This has been a sad quarter for Military Writers Society of America. We lost two well-beloved members of our organization after long illnesses. We are blessed to have known them and MWSA flourished in part due to their efforts.

Joanne Quinn-Smith



The hilarious and charming MWSA member known as the “Techno Granny” passed away on June 14, 2017. The world will never be quite as outrageous or nearly as funny again. Joanne Quinn-Smith loved veterans and she loved great storytellers. So when I invited her to the first Pittsburgh conference in 2010, she was more than excited. When she got to know you all and what this organization is all about, she couldn’t contain her glee. You were—and still are—her heroes.

Over the years, Joanne interviewed many of you for her “Author, Author, Shine Out Loud” Internet radio show. She also attended many of our conferences—to showcase your talents and to give you marketing and promotional tips. She also made it her business to be at the Awards Dinner to celebrate your accomplishments.

We will miss her, but God called her home to arrange the next celestial soirée. Already, the heavenly disco ball is spinning, the music is playing and Joanne is singing!

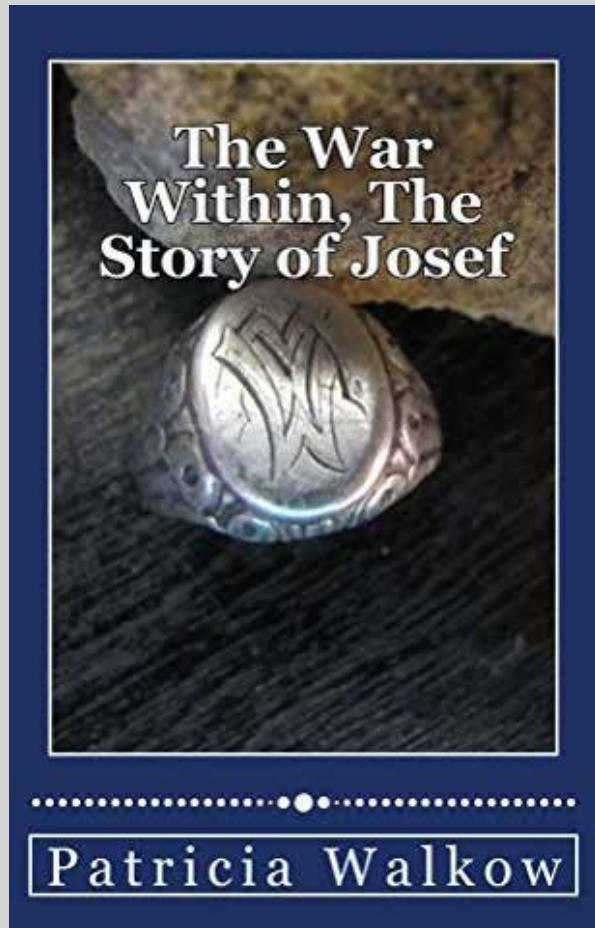
Richard S. Lowry



Military Writers Society of America member, veteran, and award-winning author, Richard S. Lowry, passed away on June 24, 2017. Through his books, he had the ability to make us laugh, to make us cry, and to make us understand. He was passionate about his vision of history—and about his work. He went beyond the call of duty to help us set up the 2009 MWSA Conference in Orlando, offering up his home for the boxes of medals, certificates, and programs that I couldn’t—and didn’t want to—carry with me on the plane.

Richard has the distinction of having written the only gold-medal book MWSA ever submitted for a Pulitzer. What makes *New Dawn: The Battles for Fallujah* that special reflects on the qualities that made Richard himself special. Striking out where few historians tread, he spent hundreds of hours interviewing the participants of these events by phone. He named every lost soldier, sailor, and marine—and described their final moments. These efforts endeared him to the brave men and women who participated in these battles and to the families of those who died in the effort.

God speed, Richard! We will miss you while you focus on your next project. Memorial donations can be made, in his name, to the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (nmcrs.org).



Publication date: June 27, 2016

ISBN# 978-1519181015

Biography

The book may be purchased at amazon.com, barnesandnoble.com, and ordered at any bookstore.

Josef, a sixteen year old Catholic Polish slave laborer, awakens after his left leg is amputated due to an accident in the factory where he worked in Southern Germany, near the Swiss border. A talented mechanic, even at his young age, Josef has a natural ability to understand, repair and fabricate machinery. Because of his usefulness, his life is spared, although slave laborers are normally considered expendable and when injured, are summarily executed. German citizens are prohibited from helping slave laborers. Yet, Willie, a German ambulance driver only a few years older than Josef, saves Josef's life by taking him to the hospital and allowing him to recuperate in his own home. Willie lives with his mother, Sonya, a loyal German.

Through the course of his recuperation, Josef fights his hatred of the Germans; Sonya roils with emotion as she comes to see the injured boy as a human being, rather than "the enemy," and Willie questions his own motivations for helping the young Pole. A German girl, who is a cook in a nearby house, befriends Josef. She struggles with her own mother's decision to remove her from school, forcing her to work as a servant. Josef and Ella fall in love and keep their love a secret through the war. When the war ends, they remain in French-occupied Germany, marry, and start a family. As a mixed Polish-German couple they face the ire of the Germans, and, when their eldest son develops tuberculosis, they fear losing him, and decide to leave Europe.

This story offers a window into the ways some Germans broke the rules to help their enemies, and depicts the lives of ordinary people through the last two years of the war, Allied occupation, near-starvation, and the agonizing decision to leave Europe.

Each person in the story fights his own war and each finds that face to face and heart to heart, they are not enemies at all. Furthermore, the existence of a hidden holocaust is brought to light in this story for the many people today who have no clue Hitler also intended to exterminate, through forced labor, Slavic peoples of any religion.

Most, but not all of the characters in the story are real. The situations are real. But the dialogue is fabricated.

This story would appeal to anyone interested in how various populations were affected by World War II and in particular, by how two young people were forced to mature extremely quickly, facing obstacles and making decisions most young adults today would be completely incapable of handling.

From Kirkus Review:

"... this is an often satisfying and illuminating story that resonates in today's climate of rising nationalism and debates over ethnic migration and refugee resettlement. A poignant tale with timeless and timely lessons..."

CHILDREN'S BOOKS FOR MILITARY FAMILIES

Sandra Miller Linhart

Military Writers' Society of America (MWSA) has been a tremendous resource for me, my writing, and my books. Through this organization, lasting friendships have developed and I've witnessed so many good things come to pass for several of its members and fellow military writers.

One mission of MWSA is to give a voice to our veterans. What is lesser known, I believe, is that MWSA also endeavors to benefit active duty and reserves servicemembers and his or her spouses and families.

When the servicemember initially takes the oath to protect and serve the Constitution of the United States, he or she does so on a deeply personal and individual level. Rightly so, the servicemember doesn't exclusively consider his or her family members while taking that oath. But the fact remains, once the oath is taken the military and the United States come first in the lives of our servicemembers, active, reserve and guard alike.

Some members are single when he or she enlists, others are married and/or with children.

The old adage "You knew what you were getting into when you married..." is just not true. How many times did I hear that as I struggled alone to keep the household

in order and functioning? It's nothing more than a verbal slap in the face. The truth is military spouses may have had an idea, or thought she or he knew what to expect, but never truly do. Being in the military lifestyle as a spouse, or child, one learns to adapt to many different cultures, changes, and tribulations on the go. Most of the time it felt like maybe we were just trying to survive.

When my five-year-old daughter fell down in school and broke her leg, I was immediately torn between having to seek immediate medical attention (which, let's face it, in the Army means four to twelve hours in the ER waiting room) and being present to pick up my other daughter from second grade in less than two hours, because there was no one else to do it.

The mil-spouse seemingly learns to split into multiple entities, if you will, to complete all the tasks at hand, or reach out for help when he or she would rather not. Mil-spouses with children are the only married persons I know who are single parents over 80% of the time, and whose tasks go mostly unrecognized and unrewarded. Many times, a mil-spouse more than likely feels there just aren't enough resources to assist with



his or her child(ren)'s emotional issues exacerbated by military life.

This article is the first in a series of three, in which I will explore children's picture books that address three chief sensitive issues that may affect the military child: Deployment, Separation Anxiety/Reunion, and Loss.

Deployment is a major emotional issue for younger ones. Children don't understand why Mommy or Daddy is leaving to take care of another child, person, or place. More than once my children asked me why Daddy was always gone. Was it something she did, or said to make him not want to be around for school meetings, award ceremonies, birthdays and other holidays? The truth of the matter is the servicemember gave away the option of being present when he or she became part of the military.

My children are all adults now, some with children of their own. But during the time I needed it most, there were no books written about deployment which strived to explain the soldier's absence—none that I could find anyway, and certainly none that painted the servicemember in a desirable light, either. So, in 2004 I wrote one. In 2005, *Daddy's Boots* won the Dixie Lee Connor Award for Best Children's Manuscript Under 12. Originally published by Windstorm Creative in 2005, it has gone on to win numerous awards from several contests. I am astounded by the huge reception *Daddy's Boots*, and subsequently *Momma's Boots* have been given.

Since 2005, authors have reached out to fill the void of deployment books for the military member. Unlike *Daddy's Boots* and *Momma's Boots*, which are written non-race, non-gender (child), and non-military branch specific, many of these books are more specific—written only for one branch or another, etc. Most of these books are well-written, and have an adequate audience. However, this particular article focuses on deployment books that are not entirely branch specific.

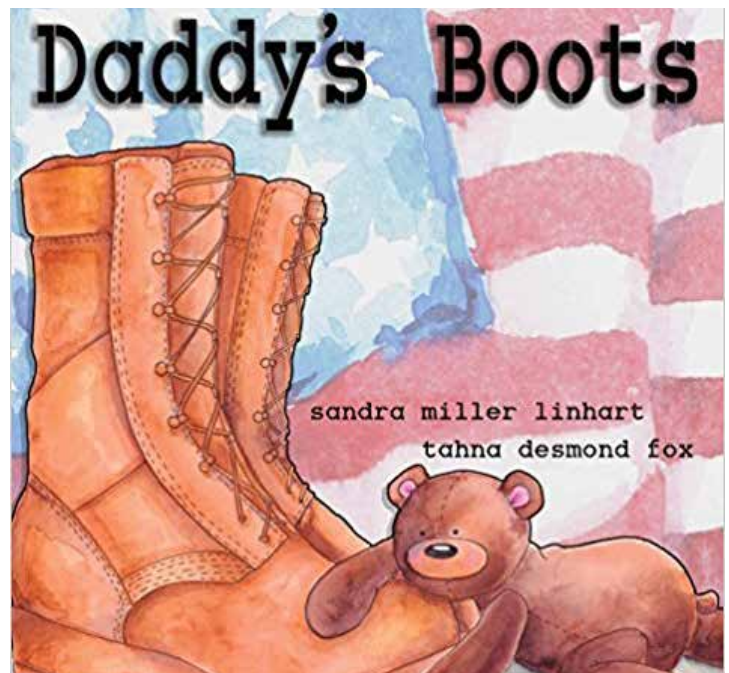
In no particular order, here are five books I adore and highly recommend for a military child you love that best deal with deployment (in my humble opinion):

Night Catch, by Brenda Ehrmantraut, wonderfully illustrated by Vicki Wehrman, published by Bubble Gum Press in 2014 is a lovely interactive book (you can place a picture of Daddy inside) that depicts a soldier's love for his son while he's away. It's a loving tribute, and can help the small son of a male soldier feel connected while Daddy is deployed. <https://www.amazon.com/dp/1934617288>

Momma's Boots, by Sandra Miller Linhart, beautifully illustrated by Tahna Marie Desmond, published by Lionheart Group Publishing in 2010 is a loving description of a mother explaining to her child why her job is not much different than other parents' jobs, why she must leave, and what she does while she's away. <https://www.amazon.com/dp/0984512713>

A Paper Hug, by Stephanie Skolmoski, nicely illustrated by Anneliese Bennion, published by author in 2006 is a story about a little boy who figured out the best gift to give his servicemember father while he was deployed. <https://www.amazon.com/dp/0978642503>

Daddy's Boots, by Sandra Miller Linhart, lovingly illustrated by Tahna Marie Desmond, published by Windstorm Creative in 2005, and Lionheart Group Publishing (2d ed) in 2016 is a loving description of a father explaining to his child why his job is not much different than other parents' jobs, why he must leave, and what he does while he's gone. <https://www.amazon.com/dp/1938505190>



Lily Hates Goodbyes (All Military Version), by Jerilyn Marler, superbly illustrated by Nathan Stoltenberg, published by Quincy Companion Books in 2012 is a storybook for young children coping with their father's deployment. She also has a Navy-specific version of this book available. <https://www.amazon.com/dp/1936214784>

MWSA
2017
General
Membership
Conference
September 7-10



at
The Historic
Menger Hotel
on the
Riverwalk
in
San Antonio
Texas!



MWSA 2017 General Membership Conference

Bob Doerr

September is coming quickly and with it our General Membership Conference. This year it will be held at the historic Menger Hotel from Sep 7-10. Come stay at the oldest hotel west of the Mississippi, where Presidents and famous celebrities have stayed before. Have fun in the heart of old San Antonio, across the street from the Alamo and a mere block from the River Walk! A word of caution - leave your diet behind.

More importantly, come network with other writers, hone your craft of writing, and give us your ideas on how we can make MWSA a better organization! This year we are attempting to make the conference a blend of learning through expert advice and informative panels. We plan to have a portion of the conference focused on the topic of World War I as this is the centennial year of the United States' entrance into the "War to end all wars." In fact, we are soliciting all attendees to write a short piece about their family's involvement in that war or about the significance of the war on their home towns. Participation is voluntary, and we will discuss those that we receive at the conference, not to criticize but to share. Some may even win a coveted (or not) door prize.

Many of you may have gone through your initial air force training at Lackland AFB, but don't worry, any visits back to the old obstacle course will certainly be voluntary! Most military medical training now takes place in San Antonio, and the city has recently become a hub for military cyberwarfare. In fact, visiting here may give you a lot of background materials and ideas for your next book!

At the conference you'll have the opportunity to meet with other authors whom you may only see once a year, and you'll have a chance to talk to MWSA's board members on a one-on-one basis. The conference fee covers your lunches, the banquet dinner on Saturday and attendance at all the events. There will be an ice breaker at the hotel on Thursday evening for those who arrive during the day on Thursday.

If you haven't registered, do so now! Here's the link: <https://militarywriterssocietyofamerica.wildapricot.org/events>

Come and have fun. Hope to see you there!





Schofield Barracks, Oahu, Hawaii

DECEMBER 7, 1941

Frank Evans

I had not been born then. I am a member of that generation usually referred to as “the baby boomers.” My memories of the Day of Infamy are those from the black and white filmstrips of that day when Pearl Harbor was attacked and thrust us into World War II. Later, movies and television specials provided the visual realities of the horrors of that day.

Serving in the US Army, I lived on Schofield Barracks on the island of Oahu for five wonderful years from 1980-1985. My personal recollections of that earlier day are created from my visits to the historical locations on the island of Oahu and historical files. I had plenty of time to visit and learn about the event that pulled us into the world conflict.

I jogged up Kolekole Pass where Japanese zero aircraft flew south to attack Schofield Barracks and the adjacent Wheeler Air Force Base. I saw bullet holes in the quadrangle barracks sustained from those attacks. Yes, they remain as a reminder of all the deaths and destruction that day. During the early 1980s, I lived in military

housing on Funston Road which was the main gate to Schofield in the 1940s. In some of the front yards you can still see depressions where families dug defensive bunkers to protect themselves following the attack in case the Japanese decided to follow their successes with ground attacks. In fact, my commander during my service at Schofield Barracks in 1981, was a child there on December 7th, 1941. During one of our infrequent cordial discussions, he revealed that he recalled vividly when the Japanese zeros flew at tree top level down the street as the pilots waved to the children playing outside early in the morning, then, as they passed by, turned their machine guns on the barracks at the end of the street. He was one of those waving children.

As the pilots neared the end of the street, they began firing their machine guns into the quadrangle troop barracks. The Japanese pilots evolved from smiling, friendly faces to dead-set enemy destroyers hellbent on killing anyone unlucky enough to fall into their sights. That evolution only took split seconds. I can only imagine the horror of the children and their mothers during

the loud explosions and the staccato of numerous machine-guns spitting out thousands of rounds of lead. Many wives must have realized that less than a football field's length away their soldier-husbands and friends might be dying in the massive downfall of bullets.

The avalanche of empty shell casings fell along Funston Road and rained over their homes and yards as the enemy guns ejected their empty cartridges. Living there at Schofield forty-plus years later, I could stand in my yard and picture the endless line of zeros following my street to the soldier barracks only a short stone's throw away. I had seen combat several years earlier in Vietnam and I recalled the sounds and crushing shock waves that pelted my body then. I know that those innocent women and children in 1941 must have been hysterical and overcome by the swift, horrendous and devastating attack.

While stationed in Oahu, I visited nearly every location attacked on that long-ago day. The most memorable experience of the results of that terrible day was my visit, on several occasions, to the memorial of the battleship Arizona. The emotions of those visits were like my visits to Arlington and other national cemeteries. I was on sacred ground and felt a closeness to those who gave their lives there. Still entombed in the ship are sailors killed during that vicious onslaught. Oil still seeps to the surface from the depths below. The ship can be seen clearly from the overarching memorial.



One final note, during a reciprocal training visit to Oahu from Australia, an Australian Army Major, commanding the soldiers we hosted, and I visited the Arizona Memorial. During our conversation over an excellent port wine, when I had visited his country earlier for the same reciprocal purpose, he mentioned that there were only two things he wanted to be sure to do during his “off” time while in Hawaii: visit the Arizona Memorial and see the arrival of the newly refitted New Jersey battleship. I made a mental note to be sure that both

requests would be honored. They were requests that I was happy to answer since I had been treated in a royal manner while visiting his country. That's another story for another time, however; there remains a bit more to my present narrative.

You see, as I escorted Major Freeman to the USS Arizona Memorial and we stood on the metal planking crossing over the underwater site, I could see that he was as touched by the moment as was I.

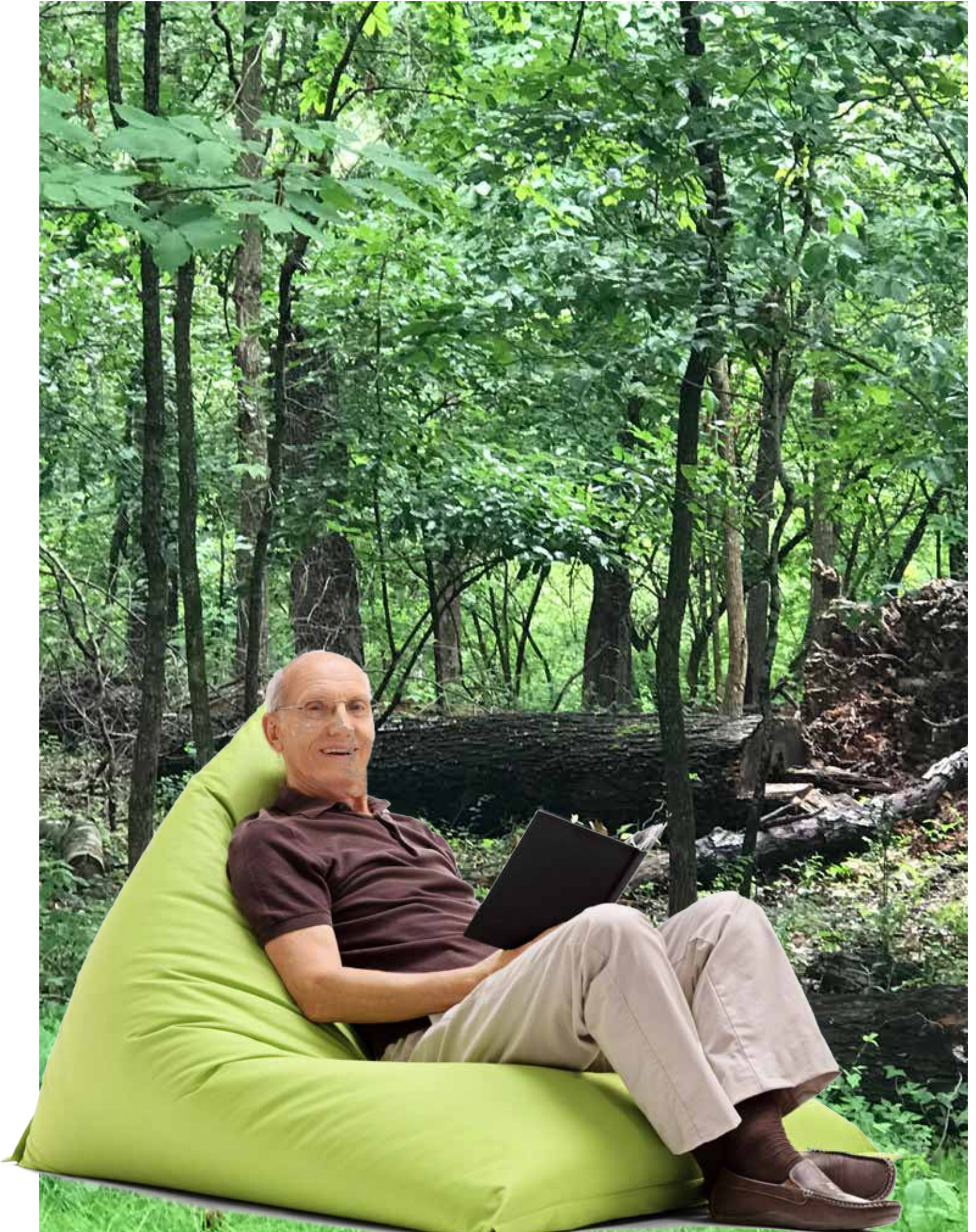
What neither of us expected was the sudden arrival into the harbor of the refitted USS New Jersey! Along her decks were hundreds of sailors and US Marines standing proudly at attention as large wreaths of Hawaiian leis were thrown overboard towards the Memorial. A volley of rifle shots erupted into the suddenly very quiet surroundings. The newly refitted battleship and her crew were honoring the service and sacrifices of the USS Arizona. Chills still affect me even now as I recall the nearly miraculous experience.

As my story ends, I must tell you the remark made by Major Freeman as the New Jersey proceeded past. He said, “Frank, I don't know how you accomplished this wonderful feat of timing—the arrival of the New Jersey while we stand over the Arizona—but I am thankful and amazed.” I smiled, nodded and said, “My pleasure. Anything to ensure that your visit is memorable.”

I was smiling because I had no idea that this accidental timing of these events would occur. The actual arrival schedule of the USS New Jersey was a closely guarded event although the local news reported the arrival to occur sometime in the next two weeks. It was a marvelous coincidence. Of course, I never gave away my secret during the Major's visit. Perhaps he still marvels at the amount of influence an ordinary US Army Major must possess to have this battleship arrive at the USS Arizona Memorial precisely as he was on deck.



Frank Evans



MWSA Recommended Reading List Summer 2017

By Bob Doerr

The Military Writers Society of America (MWSA) is an organization of hundreds of writers, poets, and artists drawn together by a common bond of military service. One purpose of our Society is to review the written works of our members. From a compilation of book reviews, we've selected the following as our 2017 Summer Recommended Reading List:

My Soldier Dad by Ross H. Mackenzie

The Oath by Dennis Koller

The Nostradamus Secret by Joseph Badal

The Lone Wolf Agenda by Joseph Badal

Lincoln's Bodyguard by T.J. Turner

I Promise Do or Die by Linda Swink

Passages: A Corrales Writing Group Anthology by Jim Tritten

Free Fire Zone by Dennis Maulsby

A Long Way Back by J. Everett Prewitt

That Deadly Space by Gerald Gillis

The Devil Dogs of Belleau Wood by Terrence McCauley

The Killing Practice by Linda Swink

The Last Road Home by Danny Johnson

The Parting: A Story of West Point on the Eve of the Civil War by Richard Adams

The Third Reich's Last Eagle by Bob Mustin

A Shau Valor by Thomas Yarborough

Clear to Lift by Anne A. Wilson

The Albatross by Gerry Hawes

Snowden's Story, One Man's Indebtedness to the Corps by Lawrence F Snowden

Soldier for Life by Jack Tilley

The Honor Was Mine by Elizabeth Heaney

The View from the Rigging by Richard Marcott

This quarter's list is longer than most. Must be some great authors out there! I know there are chores to be done, weeds to pull, bugs to kill, etc. For me though, it's way too hot, and I'm getting too old. I'd much rather be reading a good mystery, some historical fiction, someone's stories about their experiences in conflict, heck, I can read most anything. Didn't someone once say that reading was our most valuable pastime? Someone should have. If you're looking for a good read, just look back at the middle of this article. More info about the books listed above and the authors can be found at www.mwsadispatches.com.



Ft. Scott National Historic Site Celebrates Its 175th Birthday

Pat McGrath Avery

On May 30, 1842, the US Army established a new post on the frontier - Ft. Scott (KS) named for General Winfield Scott. As settlers rode west, they encroached more and more upon Indian lands. The US had promised a “permanent Indian frontier” and forts were opened from Minnesota to Louisiana to protect this right. Ft. Scott was one of those forts.

Soldiers did their best to keep peace between the white settlers, the native Indians and the relocated tribes from the East. It couldn’t have been an easy assignment.

Life was neither exciting or easy for the infantry soldiers and dragoons (soldiers who fought both on horseback and on foot). The infantry soldiers built the fort while the dragoons patrolled the surrounding area.

By 1842, Texas had declared its independence from Mexico and was recognized as the Republic of Texas. Traffic was increasing along the new Santa Fe and Oregon Trails. As conflicts arose, the dragoons were sent to keep peace. They rode escort on the trail in 1843. In

1844, they marched into Pawnee country to settle issues with the Sioux. In 1845, they patrolled the Oregon Trail.

Then in 1845, Texas became a state. President Polk, in his expansionist mode, wanted the lands that are currently California, Arizona and New Mexico. He instigated the Mexican-American War (1846-1848) by occupying disputed border lands.

Ft. Scott sent troops to fight in the war. Some dragoons marched with Stephen Kearney into New Mexico and California and others served with Zachary Taylor at the Battle of Buena Vista (where the US defeated Santa Ana’s troops). Infantry soldiers also took part in General Scott’s march to Mexico City.

Meanwhile, westward expansion continued. The war ended with Mexico ceding California, Arizona and New Mexico to the US. By this time, all thoughts of a permanent Indian territory had gone by the wayside and Ft. Scott was abandoned in 1853. I wonder if there

are Indian re-enactors who portray what their ancestors experienced during those years.

Just a few short years later, the developing war between the pro-slavery folks of Missouri and the abolitionists descending into the Kansas Territory created a renewed need for the fort.

At the 175th anniversary celebration on June 3, re-enactors arrived from across the country to portray life in the fort in the 1840s. We watched artillery and cannon demonstrations, learned about the uniforms of the period and the various units, and watched dragoons conducting sword practice.

One of the speakers portrayed a soldier from the 1st Regiment of Mounted Volunteers from Missouri, which served under Colonel Alexander Doniphan. He explained that at the time, the regular army consisted of around 5,500 men eligible for battle. To build our forces, President Polk authorized Congress to raise 50,000 volunteers. Missouri sent five regiments of volunteers.

If you've never attended a living history event, you're missing out on an opportunity to learn about our past. Although I have very little knowledge of weapons and the various military units, I enjoy the presentations.

The noise and the smoke are two realities of battle that I never suspected until I attended a re-enactment. At this event, just a few muskets created both. It makes it a little easier to understand the deafening noise and eye-watering smoke that filled the air. Multiplying the number by thousands stretches the imagination. Add cannon fire and human voices and I suspect a soldier's ears rang and his nose burned for days after a battle.



Dragoons



Crockett
1003

Plaza



Attention Members of MWSA:

We are offering another benefit to members of Military Writers Society of America. If you are launching a new book, send us the good news and we will introduce it to our MWSA audience. The first three submissions each quarter will receive a 1/3 page ad (\$100 value for non-members) in Dispatches. On submission, you will be told if your book will appear in the magazine. If you miss the magazine, you can request an announcement in the monthly email blast.

In addition, each issue of Dispatches will feature one two-page spread MWSA author interview which will include cover art, author headshot and bio. The interview will be limited to the first request each quarter.

Here are the rules:

- ✓ You must be a member in good standing of MWSA.
- ✓ Your book must be published, complete with an ISBN. We will not accept ARCs or manuscripts.
- ✓ Your date of publication must be no more than twelve months before requested date of ad in Dispatches.
- ✓ Your book must comply with the rules specified by the Awards Program, i.e., no pornography, must be respectful of the government of the United States of America and the United States Military.

Here's how to submit:

- ✓ Submit your cover art (jpg), genre and subcategory, a summary, and where your book can be purchased.
- ✓ The quarter you would like your ad to appear in Dispatches.
- ✓ If you would like a Dispatches staff member to interview you for a full article about your book, please indicate that in your submission. Only one interview per issue, so first come first serve.
- ✓ Send to patavery@gmail.com

THE MOST SPECIAL GIFT!

By Joyce Faulkner



Tom Jones, Woodcrafter and Veteran of the United States Army

Last summer, I attended the fiftieth reunion of the St. Anne's Academy class of 1966 in Fort Smith Arkansas. At the event, I was impressed with the accomplishments of all of my classmates, but one in particular, Tom Jones, touched my heart.

Tom is a veteran of the Army (December 5, 1968 to November 12, 1971) and was a policeman in Virginia for many years. Stories about his prowess as a detective floated around our classmates as well. As a child, his father introduced him to woodworking, but it wasn't until the mid-1990s that Tom was able to rekindle this interest and focus on advancing his skills. "I have made all types of wooden products from outdoor furniture, swings, jewelry boxes, indoor furniture, toys, and rocking horses. I sometimes sell some of my creations at craft fairs," he says modestly.

In 2007, now living in Florida and seeking others with similar interests, he joined the Woodcrafters Club of Tampa and spent the years since enjoying the companionship and spirited exchange of ideas. Eventually, he took on a leadership role.

About three years ago, Tom and his wife, Beverly, were watching TV and learned of a down-on-his-luck World War II veteran who passed away and, lacking resources for his final expenses, ended up being buried in a cardboard box in the Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, Florida. Outraged by the very idea that an American service man should end up in such an undignified situation, Tom was determined to do something about it.

First, he focused on creating a wooden burial urn. Then he took his idea and a sample design to his friends at the Woodcrafters Club of

Tampa and they were on board. They discussed the details of how such a project should function. Once they had everything in place, Tom contacted the Director of the Florida National Cemetery and created an agreement where the club would be notified if a veteran family needed an urn.

Since then, Tom and his friends have made over 300 urns for indigent veterans and their wives. On their website (www.tampawoodcrafters.org/html/veteran_urns.html), the club reached out to other woodcrafters around the country and explained the process and offered pointers on how to construct the urns and how to establish relationships with National Cemeteries. Soon other woodworking organizations around the country took up the challenge. Tom provided me with a list which I have included in a side bar on page 29 in case any of you are interested or know a group who might want to join the effort.

Impressed with the spirit of generosity and the determination of these woodworkers to honor United States veterans, I asked Tom how a family, who might not be burying their loved one in a National Cemetery, would get one of these beautiful boxes.

"Any veteran in need, with a DD214 as proof of their service, should contact one of the participating clubs. They will be presented, free of charge, with an urn detailed with the branch of service they served in," Tom said.

I was filled with questions. Can more affluent veteran families buy these beautiful pieces? How about families of police officers or firefighters?

"Any of the clubs that are designated as non profits would be happy to take donations to defray the costs of these programs, but the urns



themselves are not for sale,” Tom explained. “They are reserved for veterans of American military service who are unable to afford one.”

Recently, Tom and Beverly moved to Greenwood, Arkansas, which isn't too far from Fort Smith. Eager to share his joy in woodworking with others, he discovered that there wasn't a woodcrafters group in the area. So he started one at the Greenwood Senior Center, modeled after his club in Florida. Already, there are more than a dozen members eager to show off their projects and share their techniques with each other. Given Tom's track record of inspirational leadership, it seems likely that the Woodcrafters of Western Arkansas will be successful. In the meantime, Tom continues to work with his friends to build burial urns for veterans in need of them.

Should you have questions about this project, Tom's contact information is My contact information is talloak4@msn.com.

These are the clubs or organizations making urns for Veterans:

Woodcrafters Club of Tampa
Meet at Oak Grove United Methodist Church
2707 W Waters Ave, Tampa FL

St. Petersburg Woodcrafters Guild
Fellowship Hall of Grace Lutheran Church
4301 16th Street North in St. Petersburg

The Villages Woodworking Shop
Woodworker in Lady Lake, Florida
The Villages Woodworking Shop, 704 Oak St,
Lady Lake, FL 32159

352-751-0513

Greenville Woodworkers Guild
Address: 209 Hollyridge Ct, Greenville, SC
29607

864-299-9663

Free Urns for Veterans
P.O. Box 689, Anoka MN 55303

Colorado Woodworkers Guild
P. O. Box 100996
Denver, CO 80250





INTERVIEW WITH MWSA MEMBER GAIL NEUSTADT



Prior to retiring 12 years ago, Gail Neustadt was a speech-language pathologist with specialty in geriatric communication programs for individuals with dementia. She owned and operated a rehabilitation private practice for 10 years providing speech, physical, and occupational therapy services in longterm care. She also worked with the Department of Health and Human Services to establish the present quality and payment system for longterm care, retiring when her husband, who had early onset Alzheimer's disease,

went on hospice. She holds a license in Nursing Home Administration.

Gail authored several professional books during her career but began her first novel several months before her husband's death. The story grew out of a need to connect her then three-year-old grandson, Joey, to his grandfather. She wrote a story for Joey about his grandpa titled, *Dave's Tale*. A series of serendipitous events occurred that propelled Gail to continue writing, culminating eight years later in the allegorical fantasy adventure, *Sebastian's Tale*.

As Gail watched the slow deterioration of her husband, she started to believe there was a link between his disease and increasing pollution worldwide. She attended a conference at Penn State about the perils of a new method for extracting natural gas from the ground called horizontal hydrofracking. This method is controversial and many believe that the safety of people who work within the industry and those who live near well pads and rigs is at stake. "I asked myself what I could do about it," Gail says. "And I decided to go back home and begin advocating against it. In my mind, I would 'make a big stink!' I was determined to win against this Goliath of an industry, even if it was only in my imagination."

“I could not stop the slow decline of Alzheimer’s disease which ravished my husband and ultimately caused his death,” Gail continued. “But I felt by adding my voice along with many others, to stop the destruction of our earth from the polluting activities of irresponsible industries like horizontal hydrofracking, I could save the earth from annihilation. I felt an urgency and obligation to help preserve the land and its animals and the God-given natural beauty that surrounds us all for the next generations, especially for my four precious grandchildren.”

The death of Gail’s husband and her growing passion for environmental issues led to the creation of an adventure for all ages which includes classic themes like coming of age, responsible decision making, friendship and love as the action unfolds within a matrix of illness and the threat of chemical warfare. It is only through advocacy, strategic planning, resolution and negotiation, that the animals win the first of many battles.

Gail says, “I took pen to paper and wrote *Skunk Tales Trilogy*, using the pen name, Dylan Weiss. I believe it is the first series of books written on the subjects of Alzheimers and fracking that is appropriate for both a tween and an adult population.” *Sebastian’s Tale* is a story of determination and ingenuity. Sebastian Skunk, hero of the story, inherits a genetic curse from his Great Grandfather to the Fifteenth Power of Greats — no stripes. Sebastian is given an opportunity to earn his stripes and the story advances as he, along with his

beloved cousin and sidekick, Willie the Weasel, face many challenges in each of their quests. *Norton’s Tale*, is a prequel to *Sebastian’s Tale* and tells the story of how in ancient Germany, Norton Skunk, the first to be cursed with the genetic defect of no stripes is driven to become a chemist while seeking a solution to his problem. He causes an explosion in his lab which pollutes the forest and is expelled from the forest. He and his inventive cousin, Mordecai escape in a wild, hilarious and adventurous sea voyage as they seek salvation and a new place for all skunks to live.

Gail joined MWSA at the suggestion of Joyce Faulkner who invited her to attend the advanced writer’s workshop in Gettysburg, PA in May, 2016. “It was such a wonderful and motivating experience,” she says, “that I joined shortly thereafter.

Published by Red Engine Press, *Sebastian’s Tale* and *Norton’s Tale* are available on Amazon and other bookstore near you. You can also get a copy from Gail herself. Her email is: gail.neustadt@gmail.com

The third book, *Abigail’s Tale*, is in the works.

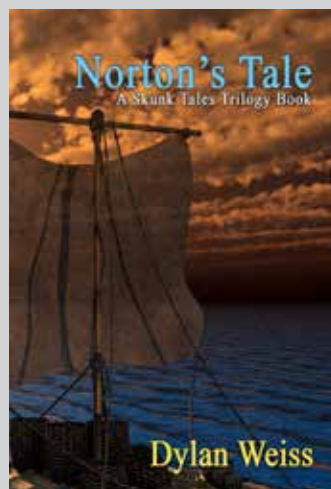
The first two volumes of The Skunk Tales Trilogy is now available.



Sebastian’s Tale

ISBN:978-1943267163

Best friends Sebastian and Willie struggle to unravel an ancient prophecy and end a family curse, but danger lurks around every corner. Along the path from Pretendment to Enlightenment, Sebastian and Willie learn about a new and menacing enemy that threatens their future, and time is running out. Who -- or what -- is taking over Penn’s Wood? And why are the animals and people getting sick?



Norton’s Tale

ISBN:978-1943267408

When the skunk Norton Bulymur is banished from the ancient land of Westphalia because of an experiment gone awry, he must escape to survive. His cousin Mordecai and a hodgepodge crew of unlikely sailors join forces, and together they embark on a perilous sea voyage in search of a new home.

Tips and Tricks: Timelines

Joyce Faulkner

A good writer must also be a good researcher. Even if you don't write history or historical fiction, other genres require you to understand how your plot and characters function with respect to time. If you are writing tales that take place on other planets or eons in the future, you have to define how time works in the environment you are creating—and how your characters move through it. You have to create not only the histories of each character, you have to build backstory for imaginary worlds and civilizations.

While it's not always possible to be 100% accurate with respect to historical insight or interpretation, you should have the basic facts in hand before you begin composing your story. And even if you have decided on a non-sequential technique, you must know the order of things to make decisions on how your tale should unfold, regardless of whether you are working in fiction or nonfiction.

In fiction, defining the timeline can make all the difference when it comes to understanding what characters have experienced and how a given event might affect them. It also helps during rewrite as you change your mind about scene structure, point of view, dialogue, and story arc. It is crucial during the editing phase when cutting certain scenes might mean confusing the reader rather than simplifying comprehension. And finally, it's helpful if you plan to use flashbacks or an omniscient narrator. In *Vala's Bed*, I had to always know how old the narrator EJ was so that his maturity, ability to remember, and language were appropriate. I had to also understand how historical events and his understanding of them influenced what he could and couldn't tell the reader. Without a timeline, I would have been lost.

In nonfiction, the longer the piece the more useful having a reference timeline becomes. Knowing when a historical event happened in relation to another is crucial in drawing conclusions about cause and effect, witness credibility, whether its possible for an event to take place at a given time regardless of traditional reports, etc. Most of us have encountered conflicting testimonies after battles, assassinations, and major

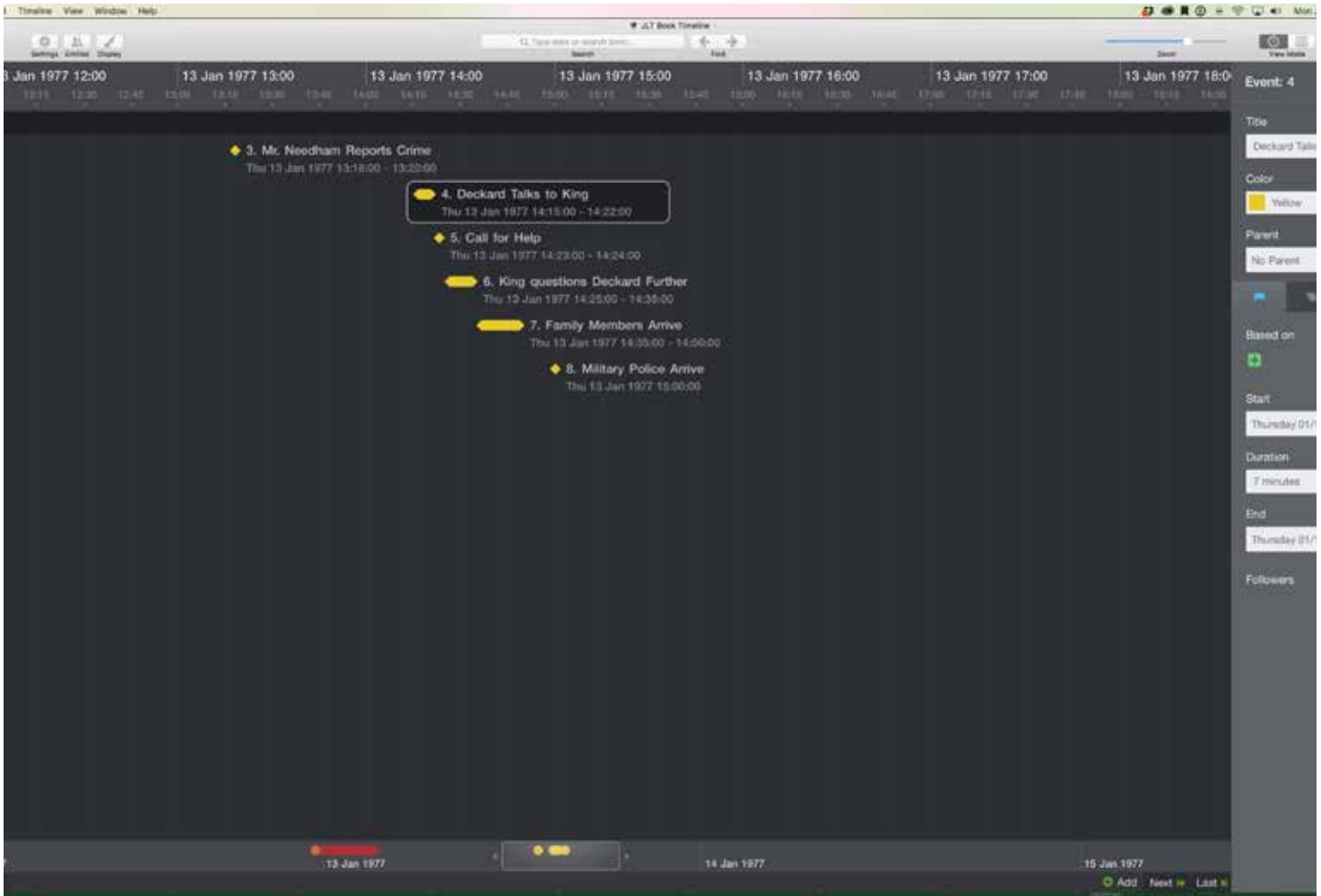
tragedies, like ship sinkings or airplane crashes, that have sent us back to the archives to try and figure out the sequence of events. Having a tool that documents what has happened and when allows you to spot discrepancies faster. A timeline provides you with a visual image to clarify your thinking as you search for what is possible...and more importantly, what is likely.

In the years before I composed exclusively on a typewriter, I used handwritten notes to keep track of sequences even for articles and short stories. Then in college, I began typing my timelines. When we got our first home computer in the late 1970s, I moved to spreadsheet software which made for easy-to-create, searchable, modifiable and readable files—rows indicating dates and columns for events. In fact, I still recommend the spreadsheet solution for those who have never constructed a timeline. It takes away the burden of learning new software and allows you to define your story sequence in a way that suits your way of thinking.

As I began using Scrivener more during the planning phases of a project, I found special software packages to create a pdf that I can import into the Scrivener research folder. This makes it accessible while I am writing and if I find I need to adjust the sequence, I can just make a new pdf, label it, and have both the old and new version available to me. I have two applications that I use regularly—one on my main computer and one on my ipad.

Aeon Timeline (www.aeontimeline.com) is a useful piece of software with versions for both Apple and PC. Currently, it can be purchased online for \$50. It allows for more than a static one-dimensional list of events. Here are a few of the features described on their website:

- you can model the backstory for each of your characters,
- you can see the relationship between events, characters, locations, and story arcs,
- the software automatically calculates characters ages for every event which in a complex story like *Vala's Bed* was very helpful,
- the software allows you to spot inconsistencies like



Aeon Timeline software is a robust tool which is precise, includes the ability to develop exotic timelines for Science Fiction and other tales that take place in the future. However, it requires a more intensive learning curve than Timeline Eon. Currently, it is only available for PC and Apple computers.

- a character being in two places at the same time,
- you can drag documents from Scrivener into the timeline and from the timeline back to Scrivener,
- if you write fantasy or futuristic pieces, you can create your own calendar,
- you can create nested events so you can zoom in for detail and zoom out for context.

The positives of this software are many—it allows for either simplicity or complexity, it can be used with my favorite writing software Scrivener or it can stand alone. If you are a visual person, it stimulates ideas during the plotting process and it allows you to use symbols and images. It's particularly handy during the editing phases of projects, especially if you are working closely with your editor and need to clarify aspects of your story that readers might be missing.

We are currently using it for our first True Crime book where we have dispatch documents, police reports, coroner's report, trials, witness statements, photographs,

and other information that we need to look at in order of occurrence. While it's an extra step, it does insure that we understand everything about the cold case we are researching.

The negative for Aeon Timeline is the learning curve. Although the interface is form based and thus, simple to set up, I struggled with how to use it conceptually at first. I suggest that you allow learning time on the first project. Still, I find myself using this software in more useful and creative ways every time I bring it up. There are various options to speed up your comfort with the software, including numerous videos developed by the Aeon Timeline and by tech bloggers and users. I recommend that you take the time to seek out a "how-to" video that fits your project—especially if you are planning on using the software for something complex like our cold case book. I certainly don't use all of its features yet, but its good to have software that will allow me to grow.



Timeline Eon defining a new book titled Garrison Avenue which takes place in early 1900s in Fort Smith Arkansas

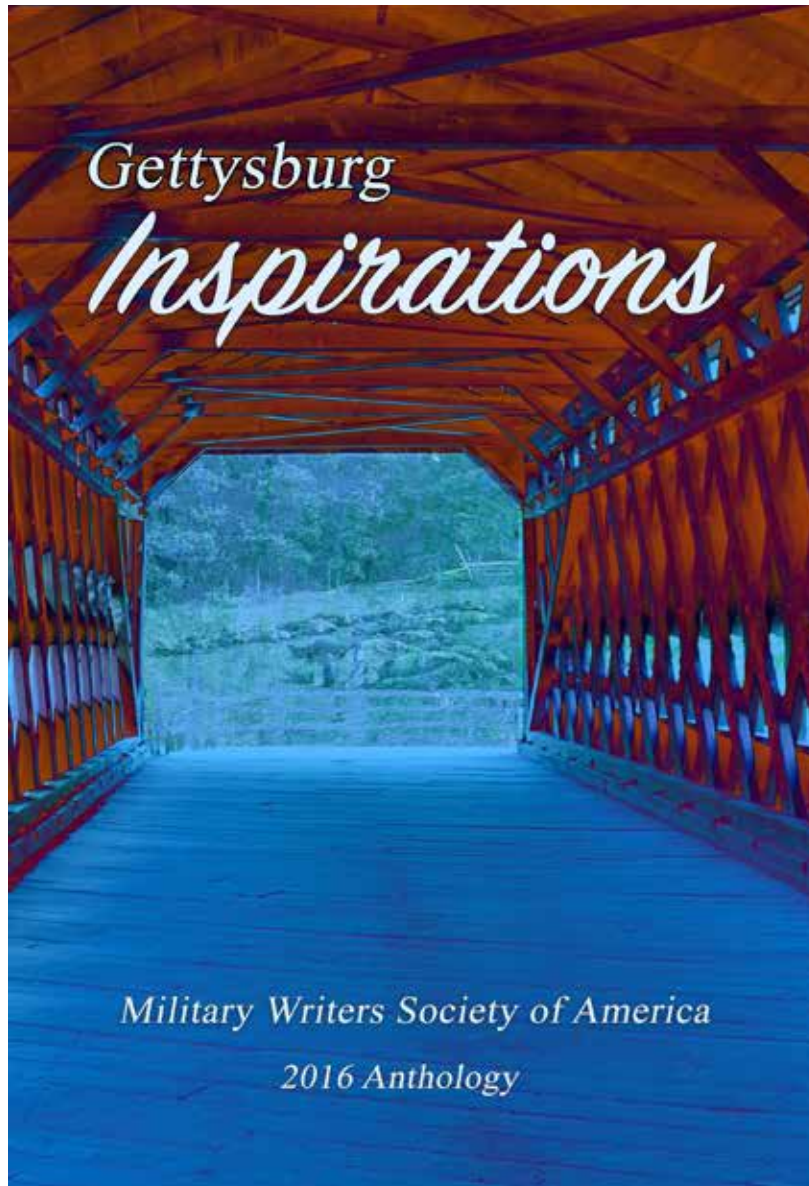
Easier to use is an iPad app, Timeline Eons, which can be downloaded from the Apple store. Although not currently offering as many options as Aeon Timeline, it allows you to quickly map out a series of plot points, historical events, and character interactions, using images and text to describe events. Like Aeon Timelines, you can go back in time or forward although it might not be as handy for creating nontraditional timelines.

I enjoy Timeline Eons because it doesn't involved a lot of setup and it's conceptually easier to manage. I can pop in things like how women styled their hair over the period in question or how a given road evolved over the years. Being able to use images gives me a sense of change that can be precise enough to follow local trends and broad enough to understand what the rest of the world was doing while my characters act out their personal dramas.

I haven't yet figured out how to determine a character's age without doing the math, but I do appreciate

being able to see at a glance if an event happened before or after St. Anne's Academy was completed or if my character was alive when the Baer Brothers opened the Boston Store in Fort Smith, Arkansas.

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