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In this issue:

- Intelligence – as in Spies
- Author Spotlight: Colleen Adair Fliedner
- Reading Roundup: Books from the 1930s

## From the Editor

Hello everyone! I hope you're all doing well in the midst of this pandemic. The world still seems like a crazy place to me right now. But then I see the memes on Facebook – **Your grandparents were asked to go to war to save the world – you're being asked to sit on the couch.** So, I realize that as even feeling all the turmoil of these uncertain days, things could be much worse. Of course, that's also me being grateful and coming from a place where this virus hasn't touched anyone that I know or love. A little financial uncertainty and many canceled meetings and events doesn't compare to what others are going through.

The voting for the short story contest over this past week was fast and furious. Every story was in first place at several times during the voting. It was a close contest. But...what you've all been waiting for...the winner of the 2nd Flash Fiction Contest...

*The winner is -*

*Kathryn Wilson*

*For her story: Mr. Coolio...Not!*

Congratulations Kathryn! Stay tuned for future issues – Today we have a fascinating interview with Colleen Adair Fliedner, and in the weeks ahead we have author interviews coming up for Marilyn Pemberton, Madeline Tasky Sharples, Marion Kummerow, Mary Lingerfelt, Lindsay Downs, and more!

*Trisha*

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## Intelligence – as in Spies



Not everything is as it seems. I'm thinking of the spy-world here. Not being a huge reader in the genres that feature elaborate spy or espionage plots, when I think of 'spy' my mind goes immediately to one of my favorite shows growing up – *Get Smart*. I picture good ole Maxwell Smart pulling off his shoe and turning it over to answer a phone call.

Wikipedia reports on some of the many spy devices used in this series:

In *Get Smart*, telephones are concealed in over 50 objects, including a necktie, comb, watch, and a clock. A recurring gag is Max's shoe phone (an idea from Brooks). To use or answer it, he has to take off his shoe. Several variations on the shoe phone were used. In "I Shot 86 Today" (season four), his shoe phone is disguised as a golf shoe, complete with cleats, developed by the attractive armorer Dr. Simon. Smart's shoes sometimes contain other devices housed in the heels: an explosive pellet, a smoke bomb, compressed air capsules that propelled the wearer off the ground, and a suicide pill (which Max believes is for the enemy).

Agent 99 (Barbara Feldon) had her concealed telephones, as well. She had one in her makeup compact, and also one in her fingernail. To use this last device, she would pretend to bite her nail nervously, while actually talking on her "nail phone".

Other gadgets they report (bringing back many memories) are:

Gag phones also appear in other guises. In the episode "Too Many Chiefs" (season one), Max tells Tanya, the KAOS informer whom he is protecting, that if anyone breaks in, to pick up the house phone, dial 1-1-7, and press the trigger on the handset, which converts it to a gun. The phone-gun is only used that once, but Max once carried a gun-phone, a revolver with a rotary dial built into the cylinder. In the episode "Satan Place", Max simultaneously holds conversations on seven different phones: the shoe, his tie, his belt, his wallet, a garter, a handkerchief, and a pair of eyeglasses. Other unusual locations include a garden hose, a car cigarette lighter (hidden in the car phone), a bottle of perfume (Max complains of smelling like a woman), the steering wheel of his car, a painting of Agent 99, the headboard of his bed, a cheese sandwich, lab test tubes (Max grabs the wrong one and splashes himself), a Bunsen burner (Max puts out the flame anytime he pronounces a "p"), a plant in a planter beside the real working phone (operated by the dial of the working phone), and inside another full-sized working phone.

While these are all humorous incidents, they're not that far off-base. Although I don't read many contemporary novels with spy activity myself, I have been reading some World War II novels from the authors featured at Pages of the Past, and I've come to realize how imperative some of these undercover operations were to the success of the Allies during this war.

When I ran across mention of Phyllis Latour Doyle, a young woman who became a British spy and parachuted behind enemy lines in Normandy. She relayed messages about enemy movements and used the guise of knitting to hide her covert operations.

Although not used in the past, there is a term for people who hide secret data within ordinary pieces of everyday life – steganographers. The phrase is of more modern origin, but the concept is not. The practice of spies using written codes in routine correspondence and female spies transmitting coded data inside the skeins of yarn in their knitting baskets dates to the American Revolution.

Linda Harris, on her blog Strong Women in History, tells more about Phyllis Latour Doyle, and other women heroes who used gadgets and tactics to relay information.

<https://strongwomeninhistory.com/2019/12/02/phyllis-latour-doyle-the-knitter-was-a-spy-by-linda-harris-sittig/>

“But, back to Phyllis Latour Doyle. She was a British spy who parachuted into Normandy in 1944 prior to the D-Day invasion. Pretending to be a poor French girl selling soap, she bicycled throughout the area, chatting with the German soldiers. Then she returned to her quarters, knitting Morse code messages into her yarn. The yarn was put into her knitting basket and delivered through Resistance channels back to the British to help pave the way for D-Day.

How does one knit in code?

There are only two basic stitches in knitting: a purl stitch and a knit stitch. The purl makes a stitch looking like a horizontal line or small bump. The knit stitch is smooth and looks like a low V.

By using a single purl stitch and then three in an alternating row together, one can transmit in Morse code of a dot and then a dash. Other knitters tied small knots into the yarn with each knot’s placement denoting a unique code.”

You can read more about this topic here:

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/63516307/pippas-astonishing-story-recognised>

<https://www.amightygirl.com/blog?p=25020&fbclid=IwAR0Av5pTzRFynJ2dba3Kbiln2Umwpd7GiiVaValRJQWuURV9SKkfMw2VB-0>

For several excellent books about real-life female spies for adult readers, we recommend "Code Name: Lise" (<https://www.amightygirl.com/code-name-lise>), "Madame Fourcade's Secret War" (<https://www.amightygirl.com/madame-fourcade-s-secret-war>), and "A Woman of No Importance" (<https://www.amightygirl.com/a-woman-of-no-importance>)

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## Author Spotlight: Colleen Adair Fliedner

Colleen Adair Fliedner is no stranger to history. She has over 100 magazines articles written for a history publication, not to mention her many pieces of travel writing, along with a book about the people of the past from Park City, Utah. When she wanted to tell the tale of Josette Rogers, traveling on the ill-fated Lusitania, her knowledge of history and researching were a boon to her successful book set in 1915 - *In the Shadow of War: Spies, Love & the Lusitania*. Today Colleen joins us to share about her journey in writing.



**Hello Colleen. We welcome you as our spotlighted author today. You have a long resume of writing credits, from a wide range of genres. Today we're going to chat with you about historical fiction. Your book, *In the Shadow of War: Spies, Love & the Lusitania*, is set in 1915. Could you tell us a bit about how you jumped from a huge amount of travel writing to historical fiction?**

Actually, I've always loved history. I bought my first history book about Egypt when I was 13 and tried to write a western novel when I received a typewriter for my 12<sup>th</sup> birthday. In high school several of my research papers in history classes won prizes. In fact, I received first place in a statewide contest sponsored by the Bank of America for a paper I wrote about the Dead Sea Scrolls. While working on my Masters' Degree, I was hired by the California University system as a research historian. I worked on such projects as the California

Ranchos, the discovery of oil in Long Beach, and the blacklisting of prominent writers and screenwriters during the McCarthy era (the 1950s).

Part of my job was conducting oral history interviews with people who had done especially important and amazing things in their lives. One of those interviews was with the deep-sea diver and famous adventurer, Col. John D. Craig, who had hosted a few TV shows, including *Mysteries of the Deep*. During that interview, he told me about his dive of the RMS Lusitania wreck off the coast of Ireland. It was a fascinating story that stuck with me for years. But I was hired away from the university by Los Angeles County to write a massive history book that required five years of research and writing. I was busy writing to earn a living and never found the time to start working on the Lusitania novel until around 4 years ago.

One of my jobs was as a travel journalist. My most exciting press trips were to Turkey, Panama, Cancun, London, and Nova Scotia, Canada. One of my books, *Quick Escapes from Orange County*, was a work-for-hire by Globe Pequot Press. When magazines and newspapers began to go out of business, paying jobs in travel writing dried up. It was a perfect opportunity for me to

head to Ireland to begin researching my novel about the ill-fated Lusitania. Besides spending time in Ireland, I did research in London and Manhattan. Altogether, it took several years to complete the novel.

**What differences in writing did you find in writing in this historical era from over a hundred years ago?**

Writing a story set 100 years ago wasn't nearly as challenging as if I'd chosen, say, the Middle Ages! I incorporated some of early 20<sup>th</sup> century slang, both American and British. I needed to figure out what Josette's father would have done for a living that provided her with a lovely home in an exclusive neighborhood of New York City. I had to get her family on the Lusitania during World War I when it was dangerous to travel overseas. I did a lot of research about New York of that time period. Most amazing was the absence of material or museum exhibits about Manhattan's history.

Writing historicals is always a lot of work, because the authors have to research each and every bit they write. If not, and if they make mistakes it can really upset readers and usually results in fewer sales.

**In researching for *In the Shadow of War*, what research methods did you find were the most helpful to you?**

Of course, it's always best to go to the places you're writing about. I remember a conversation I had with Michelle Moran, one of my favorite historical fiction writers. I had read her book about Nefertiti and asked her about her research. She said she traveled to Egypt so she could simply sit in the area that had been the site of Armana, the Egyptian city that was built by Akhenaton around 1380 BC. After the pharaoh's death, the city was destroyed. Michelle said she could imagine what it had looked like. She saw how far it was from the Nile river, the terrain, the weather, and on and on, which truly helped her with creating the setting. I believe that going to the place where your story is set is very important, and I've done it with most of my writing projects.

For example, after reading tons of books about World War I and the Lusitania, I made a trip to Ireland. In Cobh, I spent time in places where hundreds of bodies were laid out after they were recovered from the site where the ship sank. I went to the cemetery where the mass burials took place. I walked the streets, prayed in the cathedral where special services were held to honor the victims of the devastating act of war perpetrated by the Germans on a passenger liner. I even stayed in one of hotel suites that had been occupied by a family of first-class passengers boarding the Titanic in 1912, and where survivors of the Lusitania tragedy spent days recuperating. I've used a lot of my observations and experiences into my novel.

**Your main character, Josette Rogers, is the daughter of a rich businessman. She ends up traveling on the ill-fated Lusitania, and suspects there is a spy ring on board. How did you use historical facts from this period to meld into your own Josette Rogers?**

First, I had to research what young ladies did during this time period. The nineteen-teens were a transitional time for women. It was no longer the restrictive Victorian era, with its severe requirements of women. One of my characters is a model for Harper's magazine, and she proudly has her long hair cut into a more fashionable bob. Like so many other girls in 1915, my main

character, Josette, was a Suffragette and followed the famous Jane Addams in the quest for women's right to vote. When the Great War broke out overseas, Jane Addams turned her attention to keeping America out of the bloody battles. Thus, Josette became a pacifist and protested in peace marches in New York City. She's also a student at Barnard College, the college for young ladies adjacent to Columbia University. I made her a strong character; strong enough to identify the German spies that had sneaked on board the Lusitania.

It's a fact that there were three young German men on board the Lusitania and, because there was so much espionage going on in Manhattan during this period, I wrote scenes from the German's point of view. I wove much of the factual information about the war, the spies, political events, and even real people into the novel.

**One of your books on your website caught my immediate attention – *Stories in Stone: Park City, Utah*. As someone who loves visiting cemeteries, I was intrigued with this book. It says that you started with headstones at the cemetery and you share over 100 stories about the miners, madams, merchants, and murderers who once resided in Park City. I know this is more a non-fiction book, yet, to tell tales of people from so long ago, we must utilize fiction to create the stories. With a project such as this, how do you see non-fiction and fiction working together?**

My love of history has almost always guided my writing choices...with the exception of when I wrote for a medical magazine! I had been visiting Park City for years before I decided to write a book about its earliest residents who were buried in the local cemeteries. Through the years, I've visited quite a few pioneer cemeteries, as it gives me a sense of the people who lived there. I've always been curious about who these individuals were and in writing the Park City book, it was a way I connected with them.

No, I didn't incorporate fiction in their stories. I found so many amazing facts while doing my research that I didn't need to embellish. It was a matter of analyzing and gathering the data and putting it into story form.

I began my research by using the dates of each individual's birth and death found on their headstones to search newspapers for obituaries, death records at the Family History Center in Salt Lake City, census records, and on and on. It took me well over a year to do the research, much of which I did while staying in Utah. The rest I did online from my home in Southern California. I'm honored to say that the Mormon Family History Museum in Salt Lake City has copies of my book for people to use as part of their families' genealogy research. As a result of my work, the Park City Historical Society held an annual event in Glenwood Cemetery in which local residents would dress as one of the people in my book and stand at their gravesite to tell people their stories (which I had written). The money they charged the public for the event helped them renovate the deteriorating pioneer cemeteries, as well as supporting the historical museum in Park City. I'm very proud of the book, and it's still selling!

**Do you have any other historical fiction works in progress? Can you give us a little teaser and let us know when we can look for it?**

Yes, I have several projects underway. Months ago, I began work on a historical novel that is set in Hawaii in 1898 when the U. S. annexed the islands. The story is based on true events as seen

through the eyes of a woman newspaper reporter who was sent to Honolulu to write about the events. She was a real person and I haven't decided if I should use her true name or make her a fictional character. I've already completed much of my research, and the first draft was underway...until another project demanded more immediate attention. I was invited to speak at a major event about California history in July. That's a topic about which I've written extensively in the past; in fact, I wrote 100+ articles for a now-defunct California history magazine about 10 years ago. I still own the rights to my work and have been rewriting and lengthening the articles to put into a nonfiction book to discuss and sell at the upcoming event. Hopefully it won't be canceled! I haven't decided on a title, but I'm leaning towards "Fascinating Stories from California's Past."

**You have written in many other genres besides historical fiction – screenplays, radio ads, magazine articles, newspaper columns, and non-fiction books. Out of all the different writing you do, do you have a favorite, and why is it your favorite?**

I love, love, love doing research, whether I use it for fiction or nonfiction. Magazine articles are particularly challenging because you must squeeze a big story into a small word count. I quit writing for magazines after one of the big projects I was assigned for a well-known magazine – a story about Hollywood's history and revitalization – was changed by my editor to include her favorite hiking trail. It had absolutely nothing to do with my story or the topic. My name was on the story, and I felt that it the editor really screwed it up. That's the kind of thing magazine journalists have to put up with, and because we have a byline, it reflects on our reputations.

I do love writing and reading historical novels because it's a way to learn about people, places, and things that you often know little about. Readers often tell me they hated their history classes in school, but they enjoy reading my books because it's a great way to learn about customs, food, clothes, and events that happened in the past.

**Thank you for joining us today, Colleen. We appreciate your time. Please leave a few links where our readers can find you and your books, and we will go follow and friend you.**

Thank you for having me as your featured author in your Pages of the Past newsletter. Please write to me if you have any comments or questions. Because my book wasn't self-published, but was published by Sand Hill Review Press, Ltd., in the Bay Area, I don't sell it directly. But it's available at numerous independent bookstores and booksellers can order copies through Ingram Distributors. Otherwise, you can get it at the usual booksellers as an eBook or print book.

Stay Safe and Take Care of Yourselves

Colleen Adair Fliedner



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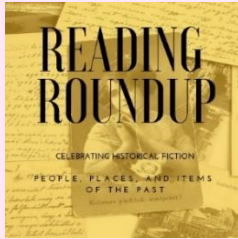
[www.colleenfliedner.blogspot.com](http://www.colleenfliedner.blogspot.com)

Colleen is an award-winning author, journalist and historian. She has written three nonfiction books, radio and t.v. commercials, screenplays, and hundreds of articles for newspapers, magazines, and online publications. She was a staff writer for the *Orange County Register* newspaper's travel website and a regular contributor to Talking Travel Radio Network on the East Coast. *In the Shadow of War* is her first novel. Colleen gives lectures about Fascinating Facts About World War 1, as well as how to write fiction and nonfiction historicals. She lives with her family and two dogs in Orange County, CA.

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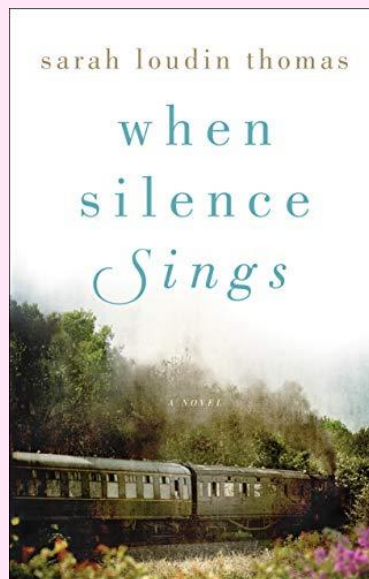




## The 1930s

### When Silence Sings

Sarah Loudin Thomas



Colman Harpe works for the C&O in the Appalachian rail town of Thurmond, West Virginia, but he'd rather be a preacher and lead his own congregation. When a member of the rival McLean clan guns down his cousin and the clan matriarch, Serepta McLean, taunts the Harpes by coming to a tent revival in their territory, Colman chooses peace over seeking revenge with the rest of his family.

Colman, known for an unnaturally keen sense of hearing, is shocked when he hears God tell him to preach to the McLeans. A failed attempt to run away leaves Colman sick and suffering in the last place he wanted to be--McLean territory. Nursed by herbalist Ivy Gordon--a woman whose birthmark has made her an outcast--he's hindered in his calling by Serepta's iron grip on the region and his uncle's desire to break that grip. But appearances can be deceiving, and he soon learns that the face of evil doesn't look like he expected.

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