

Vol. 3, No. 3, January 15, 2021

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From the Editor

This week we're chatting with two wonderful authors. Pamela Nowak is one of our authors who stopped by to chat with us in [2019](#). She has a new release scheduled – five more days! – and she popped in to tell us a bit about her new child – *Never Let Go*.

Also joining us this week is Sylvia Broady, sharing a wealth of information about her writing and her books.

I appreciate authors who are so willing to share of themselves. For other authors, their words are sometimes a springboard that goads us into action or are the inspiration that helps us keep plugging along. As readers, I think that finding out more about the behind-the-scenes research of a book enriches their stories even more.

Thank you, Pamela Nowak and Sylvia Broady, for sharing the fascinating background behind these books.

Stay tuned for future issues –In the weeks ahead we have author interviews scheduled with Mick Arnold, Gini Grossenbacher, Chrystyna Lucyk-Berger, Sherry Burton, EJ Barnes, Marina Osipova, Renata Stankova, Tom Palmer, and more!

Trisha

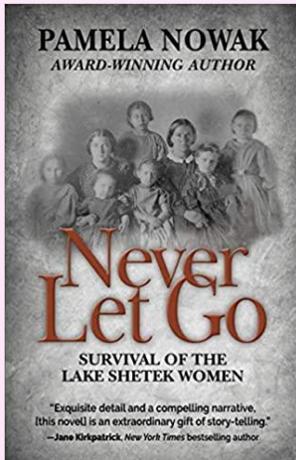
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New Releases

Never Let Go

Pamela Nowak



"Sacrificing dreams and risking family, five women follow their husbands to an isolated Minnesota settlement. Struggling to survive, they develop resilience, but none are prepared for the challenges they face when starving bands of Santee Sioux (Dakota) take up arms against the whites during the 1862 Dakota Conflict. Laura Duley left Indiana as a newlywed. Promised a perfect life, she endured years on the hostile frontier and the loss of family only to be taken captive by the Dakota. Independent and protective, Lavina Eastlick was shot, beaten, and left for dead after witnessing the death of several of her children. In the hope that two still survived, she stumbled miles to reach safety. Christina Koch was a headstrong German immigrant determined to make a new life in America. Challenging her captors at every turn, she finally escaped to safety. Almena Hurd, unwavering in her commitment to family, was already dealing with a missing husband when she was sent alone onto the prairie with two small children. She survived by carrying one, then returning for the other, a quarter mile at a time. Julia Wright, the honest, practical wife of an unscrupulous trader, used her language skills and understanding of the Dakota to help the captives during their ordeal, becoming so valuable that her captor refused to release her to her rescuers, the Yankton Sioux Fool Soldier Band. Their braided stories reveal a common will that allowed them to hold on no matter what and to never let go"--

*Releasing next week (January 20th) is Pamela Nowak's newest book – **Never Let Go**. Pamela, how does it feel releasing a new book so early in a brand-new year?*

It sure adds a bright spark of optimism for 2021! After all the “blah” of 2020, it's great to have something to celebrate and start the new year off.

Has this new release been any different from your prior books?

So different! First, this is a genre-switch for me. As a women's historical fiction, this book wasn't a fit with the romance review sites I sent to previously. That meant I had to seek new reviewers. As well, due to the pandemic, I had to adjust the kick-off. With all my prior releases, I planned a lot of signings and other live events. That wasn't viable for this book. I've had to learn a lot more about online promotion, Facebook boosting and events, and setting up Zoom events. If your readers want to participate, more information on my Facebook Release Party and Zoom Celebration is available on my FB author page (see link at end of interview).

I know that you'd planned to be announcing 'It's here!' for Never Let Go last year. But 2020 threw a monkey wrench into many plans, destroying some and greatly delaying many others. Did this Covid related delay impact the book in any way?

Tremendously, and in multiple ways. I'd intended a bigger, broader launch than I'd ever done before and was diligently working toward that goal.

Much of my effort went into setting up a book tour for August 2020 in Minnesota with thirteen confirmed venues and up to ten others not yet confirmed when Covid hit. That meant three months of uncertainty in terms of whether libraires, museums, and bookstores were going to be open in August or whether it would be safe to host events. In April, I began to work with them on Zoom options since no one was sure what would happen. The following month, my publisher announced a six-month delay in publication. That meant cancelling all events entirely. I'm currently working on rescheduling all those events for August 2021.

Then, there were the reviews. Advance review copies had already been sent out when the publication delay was announced. That threw everything off. Some reviews came out long before the book was available. Some of the reviews were dropped entirely. I think this disappoints me the most—my books generally receive review attention and the delay impacted that.

Within my own marketing efforts, I map out a timeline—which I was diligently following—and suddenly had an additional six months tacked on. My carefully planned format changed completely as a result.

Still, I'm fortunate the release was re-scheduled, and I have a lot to celebrate next week!

Most of the world thinks that we've had such a horrible year in the past year, and many truly have, especially those whose lives have been touched with the death of a loved one. But in looking at the five women featured in your new release, how do you think they'd compare the struggles they faced compared with the ones we've had in 2020?

It's difficult to compare the experiences.

First, our Covid experiences have all been so different. Mine have been largely inconveniences, adapting to social distancing, and the impacts of a delayed book (wasted marketing, loss of reviews, delayed royalties, extra labor). Others have lost income/their businesses entirely and lost personal health and loved ones. For them, the blows of 2020 have been intense.

Some of the women of Lake Shetek had already experienced death and loss of income by the time the war with the Dakota began. Those are shared struggles with those who have suffered the most in the past year. What makes the Shetek experiences different is the degree of violence and betrayal the women suffered, the harshness of the environment, and the shocks that resulted from the extreme cultural differences and misunderstandings of that era.

I don't think the experiences of 2020 and 1862 can be compared—the events aren't the same, the world is not the same. But, certainly, there are emotions that have been shared: helplessness, despair, grief, to be sure.

What was the nugget of inspiration that began the wheels turning for this new release to be birthed?

I grew up near Lake Shetek. Learning about the U.S.-Dakota War was part of the Minnesota school curriculum. I had the good fortune to have Bill Bolin as my history teacher and to be friends with his daughter. Not only did I learn in class, I'd also visited Lake Shetek State Park with the family where he showed us the cabin sites and talked about the families. What happened there never left my mind...I learned a lot about the larger events but always felt the women's stories hadn't been told at the depth they deserved.

From afar, it all looks so easy. Brand new year. Brand new book. Yet, as any author knows, it's never as effortless as it seems, especially with a book that requires so much research. What was your journey like as you researched and wrote this tale?

There is a lot of material available about the history of Lake Shetek in 1862. Prior researchers assembled letters, conducted interviews, and the Minnesota Historical Society maintained that information, so the larger events were easy to research.

What was more time-consuming was learning about the women's personal histories. I did a lot of research into census records, land records, births, deaths, marriages to shape their lives. I wanted to know where they came from and what their lives had been like so I could explore what was within each woman that would contribute to her ability to survive. What was it that empowered each of them? That took months. I also returned to Minnesota and walked the sites again and spent a week with my former teacher going through his research, gaining from his knowledge.

I planned from the start to write a novel rather than a non-fiction history because I wanted to delve into character and emotion, to make the events come alive. I had to make some leaps into what was "plausible" based on what clues were left by history. I had to create personalities and motivations and dialogue. And I had to convey it in five different voices.

NEVER LET GO is a celebration of these women and their empowerment.

It's always enjoyable announcing new books from my favorite authors. I think that there should be a 'New Release Happy Dance' that we can all celebrate with. I have one last question, and that is – at the time of 'Release Day', does it make the countless hours of toil worth it?

Absolutely! This story needed to be told and I couldn't be more pleased about it finally arriving in the hands of those as interested as I have always been.

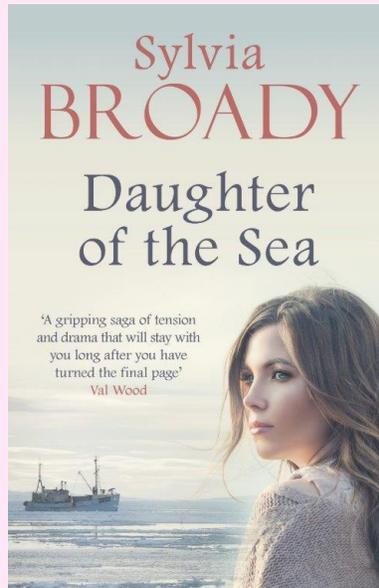
That dance I do...that's not a real thing?

You can find Pamela Nowak here:

<https://www.facebook.com/PamelaNowakAuthor>

www.pamelanowak.com

Author Spotlight: Sylvia Broady



Hello, Sylvia. Thank you for joining us this week at Pages of the Past. We're excited to be able to sit down and chat with you, from across the seas, thanks to this digital/virtual world that we now live in and find out more about your writing. What drew you to write historical fiction?

I studied and researched many centuries, beginning with the Romans in Britain and in particular, my area, the East Riding of Yorkshire, and the city of York. The period of the dissolution of the monasteries. Not far from where I live, stood Meaux Abbey. Now, all that remains are a few stone slabs. Whereas Beverley Minster still stands proud. At that time, with the wool industry, Beverley was an affluent town and paid off the marauders sent by the king. (Though there are many other stories). The author, Cynthia Harrod-Eagles wrote The Morland Dynasty series of over thirty books. The first one was *The Founding*. They are set mainly in North Yorkshire and the surrounding area, plus London, and following the linear of the family, and history.

The city of Kingston upon Hull, where I was born, has a rich tapestry of history and famous people. The work I was involved in, gave me access to ledgers of documentation concerning children and their families connected to seafarers. In the 19th century, children in care, were sent to live a better life in many countries, though not always for the best. I recall a couple from America, wanting details of an ancestor for their family research, who was in care, which I was able to give them.

All my life I have been surrounded by water, I live near to the River Hull, the Humber Estuary, and the North Sea. These waters and the surrounding land are multi-layered, and guardians of the wealth of history. So, it is deeply personified in my DNA and my writing.

Do you have a favorite era to write in? What do you enjoy most about the era?

1920s to 1960s is the period I am enjoying writing at the moment. It covers the time when women were classed as just mere housewives. Then, with the advent of World War 2, women proved their worthiness

of strength in doing men's jobs. Some of the years, I write are within living memory and I enjoy talking to women about their own experiences. One such woman was a retired nurse and during WW2, she flew with the air-ambulances to the frontline to bring back the injured forces. Because the plane, the Dakota, carried ammunition, they couldn't display the red cross and often came under enemy fire. Quite a dangerous undertaking for a "mere" woman. They were not recognised for their war contributions until most of the nurses, "the Nightingales" as they were affectionately named, had passed away.

Do you have any favourite methods you use in researching your books?

Over the years, my methods for researching my writing have changed. Initially, I wrote short stories and a serial for radio and anthologies. I attended a creative writing classes at the local university, titled "I Remember When...". Writing stories from memories, which taught me to use my own resources of my life, to add colour and to observe people more. Plus, I have always been an avid reader.

I enjoy studying old maps of the area I am currently writing about. Sometimes my findings can give a scene or a character a fresh slant to the storyline, adding a richness of complexity. My bookshelves are lined with research books. I have some gems of titles: *Every Woman's Enquire Within - Cassell's Book of Etiquette* by A Woman of the World - *Enquire Within On Everything*, in which I found this advertisement - "Widow Welch's Female Pills" – but so far I haven't used it in any of my books or novellas. I have more such books on various topics and subjects. I loved to spend hours reading these books and absorbing details of the period I was writing about. Today, the internet is a great source of information. YouTube for films on battles of WW2, and much more. I always research far too much for any one book like an iceberg, it provides hidden depths. My local library has wonderful books on specialist subjects, which I need to read and absorb. But to actually speak to a person who has witnessed what I am writing, that indeed is a true gem.

Tell us about one of your favourite characters, and which book are they from.

This is a difficult question to answer because all my characters are firm favourites. So, I have taken two characters, which I love from my latest book, *Daughter of the Sea*. The main protagonist is Jessica. It is her story, but she cannot live in a vacuum, so I create other characters who inhabit her world. Sometimes a character appears with no prompting from me, this is Billy, a young boy who appears in chapter five. Jessica, newly married and deserted by her husband, who has taken his mother out for the day. So, she decides to explore the area.

The front door key is attached to a length of string. She locks the door, puzzling where to put the key. When an impish voice behind her says, 'You shove it through the letterbox.' She turns to see a skinny boy, about nine or ten, grinning, with a front tooth missing and a thin face with dried scabs. 'I got chickenpox,' he announces proudly.

Writing those words, I had no idea of Billy's existence until he steps into my life and into Jessica's life. Jessica, a naïve young woman thrown out of her wealthy home now lives in the tight-knit fishing community and must prove her worth and she does so by fighting for the rights of women.

I love both these characters and as I wrote, I became so immersed in their lives, that I felt sad when I left them. So now it is for my readers to love them for me.

What challenges have you found with writing historical fiction?

The greatest challenge is to have historical facts correct. When researching for a novel, I have come across anomalies. I always, when possible, double check facts and especially dates. For example, a mode of transport in a particular area. And the telephone, in Hull you shared a party-line and could listen in to conversations. Customs, especially women's rights. My lovely copy editors found that a cinema, which I had always known it as the Criterion, was in fact the year before called the Majestic, the period I was writing about.

Your first full length novel, The Yearning Heart, from 1940 to 1960. Your second, A Time For Peace was set at the end of WW2 and victory. Your third, The Lost Daughter, from 1930 to 1950, as is your latest book Daughter of the Sea. What difference did this change of time frame make in your writing?

Strange, until I had actually written it down, I hadn't realised that three of my books have similar timeframes. Sub-consciously, I did know.

A Time For Peace is a story that I have wanted to write for many years. From my own memories, growing up in the aftermath years of WW2. March 1945 near to the end of the war, my late husband told me of a tragic incident he witnessed as a young boy, of the gunning down and killing of 12 people and injuring 22 by the Luftwaffe. And a dear friend also witnessed the pilot flying so low, she could see him in his cockpit as he dropped his last bomb. Victory and the aftereffects of war brings unforeseen problems. Women who showed great strength during the war, are relegated to being housewives and now fight for injustice with words and deeds.

My other three books have similar time frames. However, their stories are all so very different. *The Yearning Heart* is Fran's story, a young unmarried woman, seduced by her sister's husband, gives birth to twins. Sinned in the eyes of others, the twins are cruelly taken from her. She walks a long, lonely, hard path to find them. On the way are unexpected disclosures.

The Lost Daughter is Alice's story of a young married woman, escaping her brute of a husband is involved in a road accident. Injured and in a coma. When she awakes, her daughter is adopted. 1930 homeless, penniless, she must survive to find her daughter. Then WW2 is declared. She is a nurse flying with the air ambulance in a Dakota to the frontline, taking ammunition and bringing back the wounded forces, often coming under enemy fire. The war ends and her quest to find her daughter continues, though she often suffers despair, but never gives up hope to be reunited with her daughter.

In conclusion, for me, the challenges of writing different time frames depends on two main factors: the storyline and the characters.

Your latest book, Daughter of the Sea – released last year, is set for release in paperback February 18th. Can you tell us about Daughter of the Sea?

Writing *Daughter of the Sea*, as with all my books, I am passionate about writing and immerse myself in its creation. I lived and breathed the characters and the period they lived in. Set in the 1930s against the backdrop of the trawling industry, in Kingston upon Hull, in the area of Saint Andrews Dock, Hessle Road. An area described as a village within a city. Much is written about the trawlermen and the many tragedies at sea when fishing the dangerous seas around Iceland and Norway. Surprised, I found very little written

about the women, and how they survived financially when their husband was lost at sea. Researching, it intrigued me to delve more into the chequered history of this tight-knit community.

This is Jessica's story. A naïve young woman of privileged upbringing grieving the death of her father, a trawler owner. Quickly, her circumstances change. The woman she called mother wasn't her mother, and Jessica is thrown out of the family home. No one knows who her birth mother was or what is her name. Homeless, she is taken in by the kindness of strangers from the tight-knit fishing community. Here she falls for the charms of trawlerman, Rick, and soon becomes pregnant. They marry, and Jessica soon realises that Rick isn't the marrying kind. Their daughter, Kathryn, is born, delivered by Christian who Rick brought home to lodge with them. Christian and Jessica grown close, and she values him as a friend, and more. But for her daughter's sake, she tries to make her marriage work.

Visiting her father's graveside, an old woman, some distance away, calls, 'I was at your birth'. Then she disappears. Jessica tries to find the woman but is unsuccessful. Though she often dreams about a beautiful woman swimming in the sea towards her, but whenever Jessica reaches out to her, she fades into the waves.

Tragedy and a trawler is lost with all hands. Jessica is shocked to discover that as well as the wife grieving for her husband, her children will be taken from her and sent to the orphanage for financial reason. The trawler owners calling it an act of God offer no help. Believing it an inhumane act, Jessica's mission is to keep the children out of the orphanage,

The advent of WW2 and Jessica drives an ambulance through the heavily bombed city, rescuing the injured and saving lives. Her daughter is evacuated to the safety of a farm. Both Rick and Christian are serving with the armed forces on the high seas.

The aftermath of war, and Jessica receives two letters. The woman she once called mother is dying and asks to see her. And a solicitor has news for her connected to her father's wishes. Will she learn who her birth mother was? Rick or Christian? One of them is killed, so which one comes home to her?

Is there anything you'd like to share with us that I didn't ask you about?

I could write a book of what I would like to share with you, but I will keep it brief.

Writing is my passion. I couldn't imagine my life without it. A close second is reading. An avid reader since I could hold a book in my hands. My favourite place being the local library.

My first book of my very own was a Rupert Bear. I loved all his adventures. From, an early age, I had a vivid imagination. I recall sitting on the hearthrug in front of a cosy fire on a winter's night, where I wrote plays for my siblings and friends to act in.

Later, I became a pavement artist on the street where I lived. My specialty was drawing ladies in crinoline gowns and bonnets. Then in later years I graduated to painting in oils, belonging to an art circle, I sold many paintings. Painting in water colours was my demise of art. But a lucky one for me, because it was then I joined a creative writing class. And I have never looked back. I believe what we experience in life, helps to colour and enrich our writing.

Other authors have also enhanced my thoughts on writing. Once I belonged to a reading group and each month, we would select a book to read and discuss. My choice was *The Other Boleyn Girl* by Philippa

Gregory. I found this fabulous book in a wonderful shop in Ross on Wye. A town famous for its many bookstores and its Literary Festival. I am a great fan of the Bronte Sisters, I've read all their books and visited their home, the Parsonage in Haworth. I often wish I could go back in time, to talk and walk with them.

As a member of the Historical Novelist Society, I've had my books reviewed in their magazine. I am a member of the Romantic Novelist Association, and I love going to their annual conferences. I was short-listed for the RNA Awards, with my novella, *The House by the Mere*. As a member of the Society of Authors, I have attended many of their literary events. Alas, with the pandemic, every event for 2020 was cancelled, though interaction on zoom became popular. Hopefully, 2021 will be a positive year for everyone.

Thank you, Trisha, for inviting me to feature in your Author Spotlight in Pages of the Past Newsletter. I have enjoyed taking part and to express my beliefs and views and to tell you how passionate I am about my writing. I feel privileged and happy to share my thoughts with you all.



You can find Sylvia Broady's books here:

<https://www.allisonandbusby.com/author/sylvia-broady>

<https://www.bookdepository.com/author/SylviaBroady>

Amazon site: [Author Sylvia Broady](#)

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SYLVIA BROADY was born in Hull and has lived in the area all her life, although she loves to travel the world. It wasn't until she started to frequent her local library, after World War II, that her relationship with literature truly began and her memories of the war influence her writing, as does her home town. She has had a varied career in childcare, the NHS and the East Yorkshire Council Library Services, but is now a full-time writer.

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